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Medieval and modern new towns : a comparative study.

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MEDIEVAL & MODERN NEW TOWNS.

A comparative study.

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Roger Harrison.

Ph.D Thesis University of Wales 1985.

CONTENTS page.

Summary
Introduction
Conway. The foundation of the new town 1.
Conway, Carnarfon and Beaumaris. The early settlers. 18.
The Welsh New Towns. Land acquisition. 39.
Conway. The administration and organisation of the town. 49.
Conway. The town's economy. i). Agriculture 66.
ii). Occupations and Employment. 80.
iii). Royal Service. 97.
Conway. Trade and external communications. 115.
The established towns. 140.
Runcorn. Planning. 147.
Runcorn. The land. 168.
Runcorn. External Communications. 180.
Runcorn. The early settlers. 190.
Runcorn. Organisation and administration of the new town. 205.
Runcorn. The economy of the new town. i). Employment. 224.
ii). Housing. 242.
iii). The development of the town. 248.
Runcorn. The New Town Development Corporation. 256.
Runcorn. The established town. 265.
Medieval and Modern New Towns. Comparisons and contrasts. 280.

Appendix.
Bibliography. i - xiii.
Maps and Diagrams. 1 - 31.

MEDIEVAL AND MODERN NEW TOWNS.
A comparative study.

Summary.

This study was generated by the writer's twenty years of responsibility for the architecture and planning of Runcorn new town in Cheshire. It draws on this experience to chart the development of Runcorn and the towns founded by Edward 1 in North Wales between 1277 and 1284.

The work is written in two principal sections dealing with Runcorn and Conway respectively and concludes with a chapter drawing together those points of comparison and contrast made apparent by the main body of the work.

The first section in each part examines how these new towns each formed part of a larger programme of town building designed to re-orientate regional economies in the aftermath of war. The process of planning the new towns is then discussed in the context of contemporary functional requirements and the constraints imposed by the selected sites. The origins of the settlers recruited to the new towns is analysed and a theory put forward concerning the methods whereby the medieval new towns were populated by the royal administration. The problems of land assembly are examined and the remarkably similar principles of financial compensation for acquired land that were adopted in the medieval and modern periods. The administration and internal organisation of the new towns are compared and how these related to local government which itself was reorganised contemporaneiously with the development of the new towns. The basis of the economic life of the towns is examined in the context of wider economic factors affecting the financial fortunes of medieval kings and modern democratic government. The trades and occupations of the early settlers are analysed and the relationship of the royal administration and the development corporation to the social and economic life of the new towns. Internal trade and how this was affected by external lines of communication is considered and the concluding part of each section of the work deals with the settled towns and their relationship to the regions in which they were planted.

MEDIEVAL AND MODERN NEW TOWNS.

Introduction.

This study arises from my work as chief architect and planner for Runcorn New Town. I joined the new town corporation at it's inception and have recently retired after seeing the completion of the planned phase of the new town's growth. For the first ten to fifteen years of such a rapid programme of construction little time was available to widen one's horizons beyond those of the job in hand. As the new town grew towards maturity it became possible to consider the broader consequences of new town developments and their influence on regional structure and history.

Escape from the pressures of Runcorn to a weekend home in North Wales was at first purely for relaxation but the realisation that Conway and Runcorn were both parts of a new town continuum that had been progressing for over two thousand years kindled an interest in the problems of medieval new town development. This was further enhanced by my responsibility in Runcorn for the archaeological excavation over a twelve year period, and the eventual construction of a site museum, at Norton Priory. Archaeological staff within my department imbued me with an interest in medieval life and the relationship of Norton Priory to Runcorn and Aberconway Abbey to Conway added another dimension to the area of potential comparisons.

It has not been possible to carry out a comparative study on a strictly statistical basis as surviving medieval records do not supply sufficient material for such analysis and this study, therefore, concentrates on the social, political, and economic development of medieval and modern new towns. For similar reasons it has not been possible to confine the study to two towns, each illustrating their period. although this has been the aim of the study in it's broad approach. But both Conway and Runcorn were constituent parts of programmes of new towns building that had effects on their regional economies and this factor necessitated frequent reference to the wider implications of new town development.

The paucity of medieval records does in certain areas lead to attempting to make bricks without straw whereas in the modern period the great volume of paper accumulated by the development corporation created quite different problems. Here it was more of a problem of directing attention to the saliert points by distillation of a great volume of material into a concentrated form.

Even in Runcorn, however, the records were far from complete for a retrospective study. The records kept by an organisation relate to it's function and the function of Runcorn development corporation was to build. For example, no statistical records of residential or industrial duration of stay, or relationships between the people of the old and new towns were kept by the corporation as these were not relevant to the ongoing task of the organisation. Such information, where required, had to be abstracted from general records or established by survey. Another problem with modern records is one of confidentiality. Much information given to the corporation, for example on the size of industrial workforces, was done so in confidence and, although available to me, could not be directly quoted. I have therefore had to generalise with regard to certain areas of the new town development where I would have preferred to be more explicit.

Another unfortunate factor affecting both the medieval and modern records was deliberate destruction. Carnarfon was sacked by Madog ap Llewellyn and many of the records of the royal administration in North Wales burned. When Runcorn development corporation was absorbed into Warrington development corporation in 1981 and the Runcorn offices vacated, the new town filing system was "rationalised." This involved the shredding of much duplicated material but also material that was thought to be of no future value. Amongst such 'worthless' records was the new town's press-cutting files from 1964 to 1981. Additionally I have been unable to trace such important files as those relating to the public enquiry into Runcorn's master plan although, in theory, they still exist. I have therefore had to depent for certain information on related files and my own personal, but far from complete, diaries and records.

Completion of this study suggests that much more research needs to be done into the long term effects of planned development of new towns and their influence on the economy and development of a region. The essentially confined scope of this work attempts to show how much North Wales and Merseyside have been affected by new town building and, if future decisions on the direction of government investment into such planned development is to be properly considered, then further work is essential.

In conclusion I must record my thanks to the very many people that have helped me in carrying out this study. I have appended a list of the organisation whose staff have always been willing to guide and assist but, in addition I must

mention some individuals. My thanks are due to Dr. Alan Dyer, at Bangor, for his patient and careful supervision of my research and to many of my former colleagues at the development corporation who have suffered my interruptions of their work without protest. I am also indebted to Anita, Denise and Joanne in Runcorn for their continuous assistance particularly during the final stages of my work. Finally my greatest tribute must be to my wife, who has not only typed this thesis but acted as adviser, on occasions as driver, has corrected both my grammar and my spelling, and has often made sense where none was apparent before.

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15th April, 1985.

Acknowledgements.

Chester City Record Office.
Cheshire County Record Office.
Cheshire County Library, Runcorn.
Cheshire County Library, Warrington.
City of London Record Office.
Clwyd County Record Office, Hawarden.
Clwyd County Record Office, Ruthin.
Conway District Planning Officer.
Gwynedd Archives Office, Carnarfon.
Gwynedd County Library, Carnarfon.
Gwynedd County Library, Conway.
Hampshire County Record Office, Winchester.
Liverpool University Library.
Manchester City Library.
Merton College Archivist, Oxford.
National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth.
National Maritime Museum.
Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Library.
New Town Development Corporations.
Norton Priory Museum.
Oxford City Library.
Public Record Office, Chancery Lane.
Shrewsbury Local History Library.
Staffordshire County Record Office.
University College of North Wales, Library and Archives.
Warrington and Runcorn Development Corporation.

CONWAY.

The foundation of the new town.

The history of the Welsh wars of Edward I and the consequent legal and administrative reorganisation of the North of Wales has been written in great detail by Morris and Waters respectively. (1). The administration of the new boroughs and the details of castle building have each been studied in great depth by Lewis and Taylor. (2).

It is not the intention to repeat these works but it is necessary to sketch in the background to the planning and building of the new towns in order to make sense of the more detailed examination to follow.

Edward I's personal interest in North Wales began in 1254 when his father, Henry III, granted him the four cantrefs of the Perfeddwlad between the rivers Dee and Conway that had been ceded to him by the Treaty of Woodstock in 1247. This territory, together with the county of Chester, was to be administered from Cheshire as a single unit and a chief justice, forest bailiff and escheator were appointed to operate from Chester. Such appointments had existed for the county of Cheshire alone from much earlier so the officials who were to take control of the larger area were experienced in their roles and a royal exchequer well established. (3). Continuing military pressure from the Welsh men from the uplands on the more fertile borders of England stopped the plan to expand the territory administered from Chester until 1284 when the Statute of Rhuddlan created the new Welsh counties and the sheriff of Flint was to be "subordinate to our justice of Chester and answer for the issues of that commote at our exchequer of Chester." (4).

In the intervening years war and peace alternated despite the peace made with Llewellyn by Henry III at Shrewsbury in 1267. After the succession of the new king in 1272 the situation deteriorated and Llewellyn failed to do homage to Edward even though in 1275 the king had travelled to Chester. The king soon left Chester "on account of the contempt with which the prince treated his invitation". (5). The following year the sheriff of Chester, Robert de Huxley, was killed in Wales, Llewellyn's bride to be, the daughter of Simon de Montfort, was intercepted on her way to North Wales and preparations were made for war. Although the king's council did not determine "a national war upon Wales" until November of 1276, by the preceding month arrangements were being made to ship corn from Dublin to stock the granary at Chester castle. (6). Even in 1275 the events of two years later were foreshadowed

in Chester by a clause in the lease of the town mills relieving the farmer of the responsibility for repair if the mills were to be damaged by war and also agreeing to pay the usual fee for corn-grinding if "through war a garrison stay in Chester and grinds its own corn without toll or if the king do stay there and do the like." (7).

The start of 1277 saw the commencement of military operations on a limited scale centred on the marches of Cheshire and Shropshire but by July Edward mustered his full army at Worcester. The army moved to Chester and, with engineers and woodcutters moving forward to clear the way for the passage of the main body of troops, reached Deganwy by September 1st. Within two months Llewellyn was obliged to concede to inevitable defeat and a treaty was signed at Rhuddlan on November 9th, 1277 by which the Perfeddwlad was surrendered to the English king. Immediate steps were taken to reinforce the king's hold and the new castellated boroughs at Flint and Rhuddlan were created to house English garrisons and to become commercial centres in the conquered territory. The royal castle at Builth in central Wales was reconstructed and the castle and town walls at Aberystwyth completed so that Llewellyn's remaining land in the north west of Wales was surrounded by English held strongholds. Grants of land were made to various nobles who had fought with the king, including Llewellyn's brother Dafydd. He received substantial lands around Denbigh and was granted the hand of Elizabeth Ferrers, daughter of the former Earl of Derby. Whilst on route from Worcester to the war in Wales the king stayed in Chester and on August 13th laid the foundation stone of Vale Royal abbey. This great project had originally been planned by the future king in 1263 to house a colony of Cistercian monks from Darnhall in Delamere Forest and the whole of the financial issues of the county of Chester were to be devoted to the abbey. Its main relevance to the creation of Edward's new towns in North Wales is that builders were recruited from all over England to work on the Abbey and some of these men, notably the master mason Walter of Hereford, were subsequently recruited to work and live in the new boroughs. (8).

The peace established in 1277 did not last and in 1282 war broke out again. Dafydd, dissatisfied with his rewards and the frustration of his personal ambitions, attacked and overran Hawarden castle near Chester. Attempts to storm the new castles at Flint and Rhuddlan were unsuccessful but the attacks caused the whole of North Wales to rise against the king. The news reached Edward on 25 March 1282 and his armies were immediately mobilised

in Chester and Montgomery. Attempts by the Archbishop of Canterbury to mediate failed and the war continued throughout that year culminating in the death of Llewellyn in December. Despite continued resistance from Dafydd the war was virtually over and in March 1283, the king was at Aberconway with his army, engaged in planning the construction of his next great castles and their accompanying towns at Conway, Carnafon, Criccieth, Harlech and Bere.

As with Rhuddlan and Flint these were to be both military garrisons and English towns under the direct control of the king. Other such foundations were established at Denbigh and Ruthin by the lords to whom they were granted for their part in securing the defeat of the Welsh. As will be described below work on establishing the English settlements continued apace and a relatively peaceful period of Anglo/Welsh relations commenced. This continued until 1286 when Rhys ap Meredudd rose in South Wales and skirmishes went on until 1291 when Rhys was captured. In 1294, when the King's attention was directed towards Gascony, trouble broke out again and Madoc, son of the late prince Llewellyn, sacked the new town and castle of Carnarfon. The widespread trouble was not supressed until the following year and caused the king to take the decision to strengthen his hold on North Wales by the establishment of his last castellated town at Beaumaris on the isle of Anglesey.

In a period of less than twenty years between 1277 and 1295 Edward had established eight new towns and peopled them with nearly five hundred English families. (9). The Kings of England had for a long period been involved in the plantation of new towns and Edward's Welsh programme was not carried out without considerable earlier experience in England and Gascony. Both his grandfather and father had founded new towns and, prior to 1272 when he became king, Edward had been administering Gascony on his father's behalf. Gascony had been planted with a sizeable crop of new towns and contemporaneously with the Welsh programme the king was engaged in the re-location of sea-inundated Winchelsea in Sussex by the creation of a totally new town. (10). Even after the end of the period of Welsh plantations Edward was engaged in new town planning. His attention by then had shifted to Scotland and he planned to rebuild the sacked border town of Berwick on the Welsh pattern. To consider the best way of proceeding he ordered that twenty four English Towns were "to elect men from among your wisest and ablest who know best how to devise, order and array a new town to the greatest profit of ourselves and of merchants." (11).

The plantations in North Wales were, therefore, not the first or last exercises undertaken by Edward I, nor were they unique in their physical concept. What was unique was their almost complete occupation by alien immigrant families drawn from origins many travelling days distant. Additionally the region where they were planted was relatively undeveloped in tems of existing urban centres and a money and market orientated economy.

Before the Welsh wars mainland north-west Wales had only two urban centres of any size. Both were west of the main mountain massif of Snowdon and respectively on the north and south shores of the Lleyn peninsula. Both Nefyn and Pwllheli were princely maenors and so became part of Edward's territory by right of conquest. Pwllheli in 1284 had only twentyone householders but Nefyn had fifty free tenants paying cash rents to their lord. (12). Nefyn was an important location on the pilgrim route to Bardsey and Llewellyn had a hall there which was appropriated by Edward in 1284. The functions of Pwllheli and Nefyn as market-centres was acknowledged by the king, who, by insisting on all rents and renders being in money, probably hastened the growth of a money economy on the Lleyn peninsula and with it the growth of the 'boroughs'. Nefyn had doubled its population by 1293 and by the middle of the fourteenth century both towns were enfranchised on a similar basis to the English boroughs. Notwithstanding the rapid growth of Nefyn it was, in 1293, no larger than the new town of Conway was from the date of its plantation in 1284.

Possibly larger than Conway in population and certainly in terms of annual value was the town of Llanfaes on Anglesey. The full range of borough activities were well established by the date of the conquest and it operated as the commercial centre of Gwynedd. (13). As with the two towns on the Lleyn peninsula Edward was content to receive the annual issues amounting to nearly £80 but otherwise not to interfere with them. But in 1294, ten years after the foundation of the mainland Gwynedd boroughs, the revolt of Madog ap Llewellyn broke out and considerable damage was done to English interests. Originating in Anglesey the rebels attacked targets on the mainland and succeeded in ransacking Carnarfon and killing the sheriff, Roger of Pulesdon. The success of this attack caused Edward to rethink his strategy once the revolt had been crushed. His 1284 policy of encircling Snowdonia with coastal towns and castles was clearly inadequate. He had thought that the isolation of Anglesey by the Menai Strait and the siting of new towns at either end of the strait would

ensure no danger from the island. The problems caused by Madoc made him decide to build a castellated town on Anglesey and Beaumaris was founded. Strategic and commercial considerations dictated its location which was virtually identical to that of Llanfaes. Two towns, one English and one Welsh, on one site was not acceptable and Llanfaes was, as a consequence, to be removed. Its commercial activities, its market rights, and even some of its houses were transferred to Beaumaris and most of its Welsh residents to another new town in western Anglesey at Rhosyr. In 1303 this new town, to be called Newborough received its charter based on that granted to Rhuddlan. Newborough, being Welsh, did not need the castle walls that were essential for the English boroughs and incurred little expense for its founder. By this date the expenses of the Welsh building programme had risen to a total of £80,000. (14). The king's attention was now principly focussed on Scotland and even the works at Beaumaris, so critical to the defensive strategy only five years earlier, were starved of funds. The castle remained unfinished and the town was not walled and did not become so until a century later. The king's great monastic project at Vale Royal suffered from the same problem of lack of funding causing the works to be largely unfinished even as late as 1336. What would have become a monument to the king's activities in Cheshire and North Wales and for which all the issues of Cheshire were originally intended lost its financial support to the king's military activities firstly in Wales and then in Scotland. (1

In August 1277 the king and queen had laid the foundation stone at Vale Royal and by 1280 over £1500 of Cheshire money was paid towards the work at the Abbey. In 1281 Reginald de Grey was appointed justiciar of Cheshire to farm the county at 1000 marks a year but with the outbreak of war in 1282 Grey became actively involved in the military campaign and the responsibility for administration of the county and the Perfeddwlad passed to a royal clerk, William Perton. (16). It was to be Perton who masterminded the organisation of finance and supplies for the construction of Conway, Carnarfon and Harlech from his offices in Chester, Flint and Rhuddlan. He was not a Chester official but a clerk in the royal wardrobe and his first experience of Welsh affairs was in June 1277 when he was despatched from the royal court at High Wycombe to recruit masons and collect money for their expenses from a merchant of Lucca at Boston Fair. (17). By August of that year he was in Wales as keeper of the works at Flint and organising the finance and establishment of the two new towns. (18).

By the outbreak of the second campaign he had experienced the whole process of castle and town building, the allocation of land and burgages, and the organisation of money supply and was undoubtedly an appropriate man to manage the logistics of the second and more ambitious campaign.

On December 11th 1282 Llewellyn was killed at Orewin bridge and the war was virtually over. Dolwyddelan fell early in 1283 and Edward pushed northwards up the western bank of the river to reach Aberconway by March. This remained the base of the English army for the remainder of the war which finally ended with the capture of Dafydd in June 1283. (19). The king, immediately upon his arrival in Aberconway, started the process of planning and arranging for the construction of the new town. On 30th March Richard the Engineer was despatched from Conway to his home town of Chester with a writ addressed to Perton instructing him to arrange tools and men for the construction work at Conway. (20). Richard went on from Chester to Newcastle under Lyme with a letter to the town bailiffs. (21). Newcastle was a town held by the king's brother Edmund and a centre of iron ore mining and metal manufacture and Richard's letter instructed that smiths and materials were to be sent as he instructed. Perton was also instructed to mandate various county sheriffs to send masons to Wales to supplement the considerable work force already working on the castles at Flint, Rhuddlan and Hope. As he had been during the period of the war when he was instructed to arrange forwarding of money, food and weapons William Perton remained under continuous pressure to arrange supplies. (22). From March 1283 the emphasis was on construction requirements. Perton was to send sawyers, carpenters, wax, string, canvas, brattices, wine, cart harnesses, timber from Liverpool and, above all, money. (23). As the king moved about England and Wales he was kept in close contact with progress and during 1283 Pertons instructions emanated from such diverse sources as Conway, Carnarfon, Rhuddlan, Macclesfield, Hereford, Worcester, and Leominster. Not only did Perton have to arrange the supplies for building but also personally carry out other duties as instructed. In November he was told to go to Rhuddlan to report on the health of the king's family and their entourage and to supply their needs in regard to money or anything else they needed. (24).

Meanwhile at Conway construction work under the direction of the king's chief architect, James of St. George and his deputy, Richard the Engineer of Chester, continued rapidly so that by October 1284 the abbey had been rebuilt at Maenan and the castle and town of Conway had already incurred expenditure

of over £5000. (25). Sir William Cicon was appointed as constable of the new castle and his garrison established also in October 1284. (26). The previous month had seen the granting of the royal charter to the new towns of Conway and Carnarfon on the 8th September. The first reference to 'burgesses of Conway' survives from that same day when two burgesses were given protection to go in the king's barge to trade. (27). Work continued in the following years on completion of the castle and construction of the town walls and all were substantially completed by 1287 when nearly all of the total cost of £14,500 for the works at Conway had been expended. (28). Contemporaneously with Conway the new towns and castles at Carnarfon, Harlech, Criccieth and Bere were constructed although the expenditure on the castles at the latter two was not commensurate with the major projects at Conway, Carnarfon and Harlech. From the beginning of the Welsh campaign and the construction of the castle at Flint until the completion of Beaumaris and the rebuilding of Carnarfon it has been estimated that approximately £100,000 was spent. (29).

The design and organisation of the building works was an extraordinary achievement of architectural creativity and organising skill, and the logistical support and financial organisation a triumph of medieval administration. Complementing these skills was the overall strategic concept of the coastal ring of sea-accessible sites and the peopling of the completed towns by Englishmen with the necessary variety of skills.

A great deal has been written about the design and building of the castles and it is not appropriate here to do other than briefly comment rather than expand on an already comprehensive literature. Their architectural qualities are still apparent today in their ruined form although modern appreciation tends to be conditioned by Victorian romanticism. They were not created as romantic follies in an idealised rocky sea-edge setting but as carefully considered architectural solutions to the problems posed by function, site and current military technology together with a requirement to express the power and invincibility of the conquering king. All of the sites were different in their relationship to the sea, their topography, and in relation to the surrounding country and different design solutions were evolved in relation to each set of problems. The same is true of the adjoining towns where, in each town, a simple general principle of 'grid' planning to facilitate subdivision was adopted but varied to suit the individual sites. The relatively flat land at Flint gave rise to a formal grid layout for the town with the castle peripheral to it. The plan of the inner ward of the castle was a simple square

with towers at three corners and a detached double concentric great tower accessible across the moat from the fourth corner. This regularity developed into a more complex plan at Rhuddlan with the opposing corners of an approximately symmetrical rhomboid being emphasised by double gate towers guarding the inner ward. At Conway and Carnarfon the formal symmetry of the earlier castles was abandoned and the castle and town plans moulded to the requirements of the site. At Harlech a different single-axis symmetry places the imposing double entrance towers to firmly face the hostile hinterland and protect the sea access to the rear. The final castle to be built at Beaumaris was not constrained by difficult topography and a formal double axis symmetry was adopted to produce the most intricate plan of all.

To build so many structures in such a concentrated period would suggest the adoption of a standard military plan that would suit all circumstances and could simply be repeated where required. Such a policy was adopted by the church commissioners in the nineteenth century with their 'modified gothic' standard churches or in the twentieth century by educational and housing authorities faced with a large building programme. That it was not and each site was given careful individual attention is a tribute to the team of designers employed by the king.

The master of the king's works throughout the period was Master James of St. George. He took his name from St. Georges d'Esperanche in the Savoy where Edward I did homage on returning from his crusade in 1273. He worked on the castle and tower of Yeverdon very close to the castle at Grandison owned by Edward's close confidante and the first Justice of North Wales, Otto de Grandison. (30). Master James' arrival in England coincided with the Welsh campaigns and that his was the guiding hand behind the variety of design concepts expressed in North Wales is now generally accepted. He was ably supported by a number of experienced and competent associates, two of whom require mention. Richard the Engineer was from Chester and acted as the deputy to James of St. George. He was involved in the arrangements for the construction at Flint in 1277 and worked in Wales throughout the entire period. Much of the detail design work must have been Richard's but his great strength was undoubtedly his organising ability and his knowledge of local men and materials. It is typical of the surviving records that matters of policy seem to involve James but day-to-day organisation was Richard's concern. Whereas James was despatched to Maenan to make an extent of the land required

for the abbey from the Earl of Lincoln, Richard was organising the ditches, masons and stonecutters at Conway. (31). Walter of Hereford was recruited to the king's service from Winchcombe Abbey in Gloucestershire where he was the resident architect/mason. He moved north to take charge of the work at Vale Royal Abbey in Cheshire before becoming master mason at Carnarfon Castle where he became a burgess and landholder. He took his workmen from Carnarfon to London to work on the new church at Grey Friars for the Queen and his designs for the church had a major influence on English church design particularly in the great churches in the two royal new towns of Hull and Winchelsea. In Wales he had complete charge of the detailed work at Carnarfon although the overall plan was conceived by James of St. George with Richard the Engineer. (32).

These three men were amongst the greatest of English architects of their day, but unlike their modern counterparts they were not only concerned with design and construction detailing but were often principal sub contractors carrying out major 'piece-works'. Although both James and Richard were salaried they undertook contracts at Conway for masonry and carpentry.

The building work required all of the skill of these architects but also considerable administrative support. William of Perton has been mentioned above as the organising mind in Chester who ensured the supply of men and materials. Money was also required in great quantities as unless it could be available on site to those in charge of the works then progress would be halted. The sheriff of Anglesey had to petition the king for £44-11s-5½d that he had paid to James of St. George at Beaumaris as "the workmen would have left if they had not been paid." (33). Similar problems had arisen earlier at Builth and Carnarfon and the transportation of the great quantities of silver pennies necessary to pay the workmen was also a considerable organisational problem. Men were sent to London, York, Chester and Dublin for cash and as the return journey to London took at least eighteen, and on one occasion forty two days, considerable financial pre-planning must have been undertaken. The expense of the Welsh war and subsequent construction programme put a severe strain on the royal finances and as early as 1282 the king wrote to Margaret, Queen of France, asking to be excused the subsidy he had promised as he needed all his resources for the war which "Llewellyn and his brother Dafydd are waging against him in Wales." (34). Availibility of ready money when the king's own exchequers at London, York, Chester or Dublin

were inadequate was ensured by borrowing from the Italian banking societies. The Riccardi were the king's chief bankers for the period of the Welsh operations up to 1294 and, in return for revenue concessions in respect of customs collections and wool marketing, were able to provide the king with whatever cash was required. (35). When the Riccardi of Lucca went bankrupt the Frescobaldi of Florence took over. In return they controlled the collection of royal customs and receipt of the payment of royal debts to the extent that on the king's death most of the financial administration of the realm was in the hands of the Frescobaldi. (36). The financial overstretching of the king had repercussions in Wales where shortage of funds left the castles at Beaumaris and Carnarfon incomplete. The stripping of the assets of the Irish Exchequer created resentment and agitation in Ireland where the Irish were reported as "more elated than is their custom; some make war and others move towards war." (37). The king was forced to various measures such as calling in coinage for re-minting in 1279. The imposition of a mintage charge of 9d in the pound raised over £36,000 in five years, most of which went to pay the Italian bankers. (30). Various aids from both clergy and laity were required and the tax of a fifteenth on movables imposed in 1294 to pay for the wars in Gascony could have been a catalyst that sparked off the rebellion of Madoc which in turn led to the repressive ordinances of the king forbidding the Welsh in North Wales the privileges of the English settlers. (39). Paradoxically the financial pressures that were a factor in the causes of the rebellion made necessary even greater expenditure for the reconstruction of Carnarfon and the building of Beaumaris yet eventually precluded their completion.

It is not surprising in view of the importance of money that one of the first activities of the king at Conway was to establish a treasury within the precincts of the Abbey. (40). By the time he arrived in Conway Edward's plan for the encirclement of Snowdonia by the castle towns of Conway, Carnarfon, Criccieth and Harlech must have been well formulated. The strategic importance of Conway was that it was on the west bank of the river and accessible by sea. His father's castle at Deganwy on the east bank had not proved satisfactory as the Welsh were able to retreat beyond Conway into the mountains and pursuing forces were liable to isolation and defeat. The problem posed by the choice of Conway was that the mountainous topography limited the area possible for settlement and that which was suitable was occupied by a Cistercian Abbey. The negotiations for the translation of the Abbey to Maenan are described below, but even with the abbey removed the site

was not easy to plan. A promontory of hard grit projecting into the river Conway was the natural location for the castle. The castle site could be directly served from the river which, together with the river Gyffin, provided a natural defence to two aspects of the castle and the town. The new borough adjoined the castle, although isolated from it by a moat and bridge, and spread north-westward from the castle. The topography of the site determined its form; the rivers providing the southern and eastern boundaries and the north and west boundaries being largely dictated by the slope of the ground. These latter two unprotected boundaries were the first to be provided with ditches and walls during 1284 and 1285 with the long southern wall being built the following year and the eastern wall parallel to the river Conway in 1287. (41). The land within the walls was of irregular shape and its subdivision constrained by the location of the old abbey church, soon to become the new parish church and other buildings outside the walls of the castle. An area immediately north-west of the castle was not made available for burgage plots but for official use. Excavations in this area have shown no evidence of burgage subdivision but revealed substantial footings of a group of buildings that may have been used by the chamberlain or his representative and the master of the king's works. (42). A hall had been constructed in this area for use by the king and queen during the construction of the castle and also to provide accommodation for the wardrobe and the wardrobe clerks. (43). Additionally the residence of Llewellyn built in close proximity to the abbey remained and was refurnished to provide accommodation for the young Prince Edward, the king's successor as Lord of North Wales. This building was subsequently dismantled and removed to Carnarfon for re-assembly as a store-house within the castle. (44). Other buildings for use by the justiciar, Otto de Grandison and the Hospital of St. John were also constructed but their sites are not recorded.

The pattern of development within the walls was therefore very constrained and a regular 'gridded' subdivision not possible. The burgage plot of the North Wales boroughs was not of standard size. From surviving ministers' accounts Lewis has shown that the burgage of Carnarfon and Criccieth was eighty feet long by sixty feet in width, whereas at Beaumaris each plot was of the same length but only forty feet wide. (45). No record survives of the original standard size of a Conway burgage although there clearly was an absolute standard size to which most burgages conformed. The earliest rental records the names of the holders of single burgages as holding one burgage "sine incremento." Any plot that deviates from this norm was carefully

detailed as being up to an extra twelve feet extra or three feet less in width. Variations in length up to twenty one feet are recorded as also are those burgesses who rented a quarter, half, or three quarter plot. Rentals did not normally vary with very minor variations in size but were adjusted 'pro rata' for fractional holdings. In some cases, however, the rent was adjusted to suit extra land incorporated into a burgage. Reginald of the Castle paid an extra twopence, or 16.6%, for a plot that was four feet wider and eight feet longer, or 16% extra in area, than a normal plot. The calculations made of Robert Fot's rent was less precise as he paid an extra one penny rent, or 8.3%, for a burgage only 4% larger than the standard. Analysis of the medieval street plan of Conway shows that it is unlikely that frontages were as wide as Carnarfon's but that lengths of plot were greater. In those parts of the modern town where the street plan has not been significantly disturbed as it has in the eastern sector by the railway and the Bangor road a plot length of about one hundred feet occurs both in island plots and in plots between streets and the town walls. Application of a fifty foot grid to frontages shows that this was the probable plot width. Subdivision into twenty-five foot frontages in some parts, or increases to seventy-five feet, probably reflects a later division of the property or reflects the original tenure of half or one and a half plots by the first burgesses. Frontages that vary from the fifty foot grid do so only in measurements that suggest the originally recorded deviations from the normal plot size.

The chosen plot depth dictated the location of streets and therefore influenced the position of main gates to the town. The only major entrance to the town was the Upper Gate in the short eastern boundary wall and this was sited 'one plot' away from the northern boundary wall. Roads from Carnarfon, Llanwrst and the Deganwy ferry would have converged to enter the town at this twin towered and drawbridged gate. A postern gate at the northern end of the wing wall protecting the quay may also have given access to the river and the ferry. The two other major gates in the town walls were 'internal' to the town in the sense that they lead to the town quay and the mill on the river Gyffin respectively. The position of the latter gate was determined by the point of access to the mill and not affected by burgage plots as that part of the town was largely devoted to royal administrative buildings. The location of the lower gate leading to the quay was determined by plot increments and this location together with the position of the upper gate created an island block to the north of the church with overall dimensions of 600 ft by 200 ft or twelve by

two burgage plots. At the south western corner of this central block a market square was located in which the regular fairs and markets were held and around which shops were sited. The market square at Conway was much larger than at Carnarfon. Here a small market was located next to the shambles at the cross-roads in the centre of the walled town, but a much larger market also operated outside the walls of the town under the Queen's gate of the castle. Each burgess of Carnarfon had the right to erect a stall around this market square. A tollbooth outside the east gate at Carnarfon would have controlled traders crossing the river Cadnant to work in the market. At Conway all goods brought by land from outside the town would have had to pass through the upper gate to reach the market and sea borne goods would have their entry and exit controlled by the lower gate. Conway had no extra mural market on the western side of the river but a market had been held in Deganwy since its foundation by Henry III. This continued after the foundation of the new borough and its issues were accounted for by the Conway bailiffs. The weekly market at Deganwy equalled that of Conway in its profitability but the tolls for the annual fair at Deganwy equalled that of Conway in its profitability but the tolls for the annual fair at Deganwy on the feast of St. Simon and St. Jude were only a third of those from the annual fair held in Conway market. From the the south-west corner of the Conway market square and two plot increments from the south wall a road lead to the Upper gate and from the south-east corner a road lead to mill gate originally known as King St. but latterly as Church St..(46). Within the constraints of the site, the church and the buildings of the royal administration the available land was tightly planned to accommodate the maximum number of burgage plots. This would appear to have been in the order of 124 plots of which 112 were rented by 1295, eleven years after the foundation of the town. Within ten years all of them were taken and a further ten burgesses were in residence in addition to the 99 in 1295. By the latter date the town, contrary to Tucker's view that Conway was "larger than it need have been" and "that the king had envisaged a larger colony", the town was expanding beyond the walls designed to contain it. (47). In addition to the complete renting of the burgages, fifteen sites were rented outside the walls of the town near to the ferry and a further seven dwellings under Twthill were built. Eight sites were also rented outside the walls and by the water, possibly on the quay-side. The borough also drew rents from nineteen sites in the dependent township of Deganwy. (48).

Little physical evidence remains of the thriving early town. The castle and town walls are largely intact in their general form although the advent of roads, bridges and the railway have had a considerable impact. The relationship of the castle and town to the river has been destroyed by the three bridges that now cross the Conway in close proximity to the castle with the consequence that the original principal gate of entry, the Upper Gate, is now relegated to a minor role in the road pattern. The planned sequence of ditch, wall, town, castle and river when viewed from the potentially hostile "Welsh" side of the town has been reorientated by the bridges and the new nineteenth century gate constructed to take the road to Bangor. The church remains much as it was in the early days of the town and the street pattern is very close to the original. No domestic buildings survive from the early period, the oldest being Aberconwy House which partly dates from the sixteenth century. (49). The north-eastern frontage of Aberconwy House measures almost exactly fifty feet and probably reflects a full frontage development on one of the original burgage plots. The 'backland' of the original plot has been subsequently subdivided into a further three sites and it is this later intensification of development that gives even the older parts of the present town a very different appearance from the early borough. Initially each plot or part plot would have been developed only as a single dwelling with outbuildings for livestock and the visual character of the town would have been more akin to the appearance of Winchelsea which still retains its relatively low density of development. The central island block of the town now contains nearly eighty properties whereas it originally held only twenty four complete burgages. The subdivision of plots appears to have taken place fairly early in the development of the town as most surviving deeds from the fourteenth century refer to single buildings or tenements and in one case to'one parcel of a burgage'. (50).

Other older properties in the town also reflect the original planning dimension. Eleven Castle St., built by John Brickdall, Vicar of Conway, in 1589, and "long connected with the borough" occupies the full frontage of a burgage plot. (51). Plas Coch in Lancaster Square and the modern borough library, formerly Plas Isaf, home of the Hollands who were resident in Conway from the early fifteenth century, also reflect the original burgage structure of the town.

From the evidence of the rentals showing that Conway was already expanding extra-murally within the first twenty years of its existence and that burgages

were being subdividied during the immediately subsequent period it can been seen that Conway was thriving even if in their petitions to the king for financial aid to rebuild the quay the burgesses claimed "that the town is so poor". As will be shown below the great majority of the early citizens were English and had migrated to Conway from considerable distances. What attracted the English to settle in a foreign and hostile land cannot be certainly ascertained but conditions in thirteenth century England suggest strong motives for moving. A period of rapidly expanding population and reclamation of land came to an end towards the latter years of the thirteenth century when extra land ceased to be easily available. (52). Migration, not only to Wales, but also to English colonies in Ireland, was a means of securing land in a land-hungry age. (53). In addition the offer of burgage tenure and the privileges that went with it must have induced many to migrate from servile overcrowded conditions in England. Furthermore new opportunities, however risky, were, and are, an attraction to those under personal or community pressures. Whatever the motivation hundreds of English families uprooted themselves to establish the Welsh new towns in furtherance of their king's policy of pacification. How they were recruited and from where they came will be discussed below.

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(26) Cal. Welsh Rolls. p. 291.

(27) Cal. Pat. Rolls. p. 131.

(28) H.K.W. p. 350. It is not possible to translate medieval cash into modern equivalents but in Oct. 1984, the average British Industrial wage was £8000 per annum and the average in medieval England about £4. Using this comparison as a multiplier the cost of the works at Conway would have been £29M in modern terms.

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CONWAY CARNARFON AND BEAUMARIS.

The early settlers.

No complete record survives of the names of the pioneer burgesses of Conway, Carnarfon and Beaumaris and to find names for the very early years it is necessary to abstract from various sources. Rental rolls survive for all three boroughs for a date about ten years after their foundation. For Conway, which received its borough charter in 1284, two rental rolls survive which probably date from 1284/5 and 1305/6. For Carnarfon, which also received its charter in 1284 a rental roll survives from 1297/8 and for Beaumaris, chartered in 1296, a roll from 1305/6 survives. The survival of two early rolls for Conway is particularly valuable as it enables a reasonably coherent picture to be drawn of both origins and period of occupancy of the early burgesses. (1).

The custom of surnames reflecting a person's place of origin was still prevalent in the thirteenth century. Analysis of names on the town rolls provides a basis for analysing the places of origin of the early settlers. About half of the surnames on these early rolls were place-related and reflected the name of a village, town or country. Analysis is, however, complicated by two factors; firstly a name may not reflect the town of origin of its bearer but of one of his ancestors, maybe his father or grandfather; secondly the burgage holder named on the rental may not himself have been resident in the town. For example, William of Doncaster is shown on the rental rolls of both Conway and Beaumaris. In fact he was neither from Doncaster nor was he resident in Wales. He was a prominent merchant in Chester and one of a line of William of Doncasters who lived and prospered in Chester, presumably having earlier brought their name from Yorkshire to Chester some generations earlier. In addition to his burgages in Conway and Beaumaris he had land in Chester, Flint, Rhuddlan, Denbigh, Abergele and in other parts of the county of Cheshire. In 1305 an attempt was made to deprive him of his burgage in Beaumaris due to non-residence but he was able to prove that he had sufficient attorneys in the town and was allowed to keep his burgage. (2). He also had attorneys in Ireland to represent his business interests. (3). His Irish attorneys had Cheshire names and it is probably reasonable to assume that his attorneys in Wales were also from Cheshire. (4). They would have been employed in Doncaster's considerable business of supplying and victualling the king's army and castles.

Where other documentary evidence survives for the origin of a burgess, as in Doncaster's case, surname analysis is unnecessary. Failing such evidence it is reasonable to assume that a place-related surname reflects a person's place of origin. This is probably a safe assumption particularly where the surname is unusual and can be related to other factors. Roger of Cockersand was a mason

recruited to work on the town walls of Conway where he stayed and became a burgess of Conway and bailiff in 1290. (5). He almost certainly came from Cockersand in Lancashire where his stone-working skills may well have been employed at Cockersand Abbey. The later Conway rental of 1305 lists two more burgesses named Cockersand but there is no way of knowing whether they came from Cockersand or were the sons of the original burgess who had settled in the town over twenty years earlier.

Even with place-related surnames that are unique to a town or village there can be no certainty of place of origin. William of Doncaster has previously been cited as an example of a person bearing an unique place-related surname that did not reflect his place of origin. He came from Chester and study of records for the city of Chester shows that surnames derived from other distant towns were frequent in Chester which was a thriving port. It's influence and trading links were widespread and Chester surnames reflect these links. Oxford, Northampton, Nottingham, Leek and Hereford occur as surnames both in Chester city records and also in the burgage lists of the Welsh new towns. First names do not, however, coincide between Chester and Wales and whereas there might have been family relationships no links can be proved. In contrast with the city of Chester the documents relating to the county of Chester for the period show surnames reflecting local origins from places within the county such as Bolington or Macclesfield. (6).

A further problem concerning identification of origin was the practice of changing surnames during a lifetime. A new place of residence could give rise to a new surname either because the bearer could be confused with another, because a new name gave him a more appropriate title in his new circumstances, or simply because he wished to change. Peter of Beaumaris is listed on the Conway rental of 1305 but cannot have been more than nine years old in 1305 if he had been born in Beaumaris after its foundation in 1296. Robert Russell of Flint is listed on the Conway rental for 1295 but Flint had only been established a few years prior to Conway. The Chester city court rolls have references to both Robert of Flint and Robert Russell. Whether either of these is the same man as the Conway resident can only be conjectured. In March 1291 Simon of Carnarfon appeared in the City of Chester court on theft charges. His name was taken from a town founded only seven years earlier. He must have been born elsewhere and moved to Carnarfon bearing a different name.

The Chester connection with North Wales was very strong and one of the earliest references to a person resident in Conway occurs in the court rolls for 1286. Thomas of Bolington, residing in Conway in the king's service, was accused of murder and the theft of £12 at Macclesfield. His accomplice was William Brayn, a mason, who, because of his occupation, may also have been drafted to Conway for the king's works. The decision of the court is not recorded but neither name occurs on the Conway rental of 1295.

Surnames also occur rhat refer to topographical features rather than to a settlement. William of Westgate was a burgess in Conway before 1290 but died later in that decade. An inquisition in October 1299 declared that the deceased's property was in the king's hands. (7). In 1292 William had been sent from Conway to Ireland by the king to seek money and where he stayed for twelve weeks together with four men and two horses at a total expense of £6. (8). His surname did not originate from Conway which did not have a West gate but in 1287 a William of Westgate had acted as arbitrator in Chester on behalf of Richard the Engineer in a dispute with Hugh de Brykhill, merchant of Chester, and later a burgess of Beaumaris. (9). From the similar nature of his employment in Ireland and Chester it is likely that William also originated from Chester, but, unlike other Chester worthies, he was resident in Wales and held property in Conway other than his burgage.

Some surnames occur that relate to countries rather than towns or villages. The surname Hibernia occurs a number of times in the rentals, indicating an Irish origin. One Irish burgage holder in Carnarfon was more precisely named and he was William of Drogheda. He was a masonry contractor who completed a contract worth £300 in Harlech in 1286, and subsequently worked in both Conway and Carnarfon. Although precisely named Dr. A. J. Taylor points out that William of Drogheda could have been the same man as William of Preen or William de Spineto or both!

Robert the English was a burgage holder in both Conway and Beaumaris and his surname is unusual in a community of Englishmen. Perhaps this could suggest his presence in Wales prior to Edward's conquest, maybe as an English resident of the trading town of Llanfaes, later displaced to accommodate the plantation of Beaumaris.

Settlers of French origin usually bore the name of their town of origin although the surname Le Franceys did occur in Rhuddlan amongst the immigrant burgesses.

Despite the intention that the boroughs were to be occupied by Englishmen some early settlers were Welsh. It is not possible from all of their names to identify their origin from within Wales but one who can be traced is Dafydd ap Einion. Like the Chester Merchants he was active in supplying Edward's military and building campaigns and his name consequently survives in the records. He held burgages and land in both Conway and Beaumaris and in 1286 is recorded as supplying ropes for use in the construction of Harlech castle. Dafydd came from Llanfaes, and by 1302 was successful enough to be named alongside William of Doncaster, Chester's most prosperous merchant, in a Chester customs account.

Other burgesses from Wales did bear place-related surnames showing their origins to be Cardigan, Deganwy and Giffyn, a small village near to Conway. William of Cardigan, noted as a 'king's' burgess of Aberconway as early as 1284, was given protection to go in the king's barge for the purposes of trade. (10). In 1295 a Simon of Cardigan, William's son, was a burgess in Conway and John of Cardigan held half a burgage and five acres in Carnarfon. John of Giffyn was on the rental list for Conway in 1295, together with a number from Deganwy. Adam, Andrew, Stephen, Nicholas and William of Deganwy held burgages in Conway and two of them retained their interest in land in Deganwy. Prior to their residence in Deganwy they were presumably of English origin. Henry III had granted a charter to Deganwy in 1252 and encouraged Englishmen to settle. The position of Deganwy overlooking the Conway made it a regular pawn in the continuing Anglo-Welsh conflicts and the occupants must have welcomed the construction of the defended town of Conway as a haven after many years of warfare.

The foregoing problems and inconsistencies show that ascribing the origins of settlers from their surnames cannot reveal a very precise pattern of migration. There are, however, sufficient names which almost certainly conformed to the normal practice of being derived from geographic origins and which together with evidence of individual origins from other sources enable a general picture of the pattern of migration to be drawn.

Even if some surnames reflect the immediately past place of residence of the holder, rather than birthplace, they can still help in analysing the scatter of migrant sources and perhaps indicate the mechanism by which settlers were attracted to Wales.

Half of the burgesses did not have place-related surnames. Many had surnames that related to their craft and these prove almost impossible to trace. The common trades of carpenter, smith or barber occur in all towns, and although William the Barber and John the Carpenter are on the Conway rental, they are also recorded in Chester and probably in most towns of the period. Even within Conway such surnames confuse. Simon, son of Henry the Carpenter was a burgess of Conway in 1295. Two carpenters, both named Henry, were also burgesses. Henry of Oxford and Henry of Chester could either have been the father of Simon.

Other names occur that are not place or trade related but, unless a fortunate correlation can be made such names are requally difficult to trace. William Godeswye was a burgess of Conway and someone of the same name had been involved in litigation in the Chester court with the Prior of Norton some years earlier. (11). There is no means of telling if the two William Godeswyes were the same man. Similarly Robert Fot was a burgess of Conway in 1295 and in 1285 the county court at Macclesfield had named Robert Fot as a common thief. (12). Perhaps he fled Cheshire to live a law-abiding life in Conway where he became the joint coroner of the town in 1316.

In his analysis of English surnames occurring in the period Peter McLure concludes that about half of all surnames were derived from towns and villages. (13). Place-related surnames were most common amongst manorial lords, free tenants, merchants, tradesmen and clergy and such names are primary evidence of betterment migration. The rental lists for Conway, Carnarfon and Beaumaris conform to this pattern although it might be expected that the commercial opportunities in the new towns would have attracted a higher proportion of betterment seekers. This class of migrants may, however, have been balanced by those, pushed into moving either by adverse conditions or by being 'volunteered' for military service or building work.

McLure also calculates that not more than about forty per cent of English medieval towns were uniquely named. The Welsh town rentals contain a higher percentage of unique place names, but, the proportion is increased by the inclusion of Welsh, Irish and French towns and also country names such as Hibernia.

In the rental rolls for Conway, Carnarfon and Beaumaris, one hundred and thirty five place-related surnames occur of which seventy four are unique. This provides a large enough sample to analyse in respect of origins of the

burgesses. Such an analysis, modified where other information proves a burgess's origins to have been other than from the town which gave him his name, demonstrates that recruitment to the Welsh towns was very widespread. The scale of the migration catchment area must raise the question as to what process of recruitment took place to ensure settlement of the towns. The king needed the towns occupied and garrisoned rapidly as this was the cornerstone of his pacification plan. From time to time senior officials were despatched to Wales to report on the vacancy rate in the boroughs and consider if any action was necessary to encourage take-up of burgage plots.

The distance of migration to the Welsh towns can contrary to the normal pattern in the thirteenth century and, indeed, in the twentieth century. E. M. Carus-Wilson's study of migration to Stratford-on-Avon, itself a new foundation earlier in the thirteenth century, demonstrated that ninety percent of those who migrated to Stratford did so from villages and hamlets within a sixteen mile radius. (14). The majority of these came from within a small radius probably coincident with the market catchment area of the town.

Peter McLure's study of migration to a number of major medieval towns showed Leicester to have a primary catchment radius of ten miles, Nottingham ten to fifteen miles, Norwich fifteen to twenty miles, York twenty miles and London forty miles. The Welsh towns' place-related surnames suggest a minimum catchment distance of seventy miles to Cheshire if the few immediately local migrants are discounted, and a maximum distance, if France and Ireland are discounted, of nearly three hundred miles to Norfolk and Northumberland. The average would have been greater than a hundred miles to central Lancashire or Shropshire.

At a time when both physical communications and communication of information were poorly developed such a pattern of migration must have been actively promoted if it was to take place. The actual journey to North Wales with family and baggage would have taken several days. The journey of the king's messengers from Chester to London, a distance of nearly two hundred miles, to deliver money to the exchequer took eight days. The unladen return journey took six days. (15). Such a rate of travel is confirmed by Stenton's study of the road system of medieval England which showed that an average daily travel distance would have been about twenty to twenty seven miles. (16). Most migrants must have faced the prospect of a journey of at least a week on poor roads and with the

considerable risk of molestation on the way. Moreover, on arrival in Wales, they would have faced the difficult conditions of an incompleted town packed with a temporary building labour force.

Much assurance to prospective migrants, and possibly protection 'en route' would have been essential if the king's plan to people the towns with Englishmen and women was to be fulfilled. Most migrants would have been illiterate and it is not unreasonable to suggest that both persuasion and assurance would have been given by people with first hand experience of conditions and opportunities in Wales. Such people would have been the clerks of the royal administration and of the great magnates who travelled widely to supervise their lords' estates.

Study of the pattern of migration confirms the possibility that a positive programme of recruitment took place. The seventy-four migrants with place-related surnames include sixteen who were recruited into the king-s service initially to take part in the building programme or subsequent administration of the towns. Some of these would have been personally recruited because of their expertise. For example, Master James of St. George, the architect, was brought from France by the king to manage the whole castle building programme. He came to the English court from that of the king's cousin, Philip of Savoy, and already had important works to his credit. These probably included the building in 1270/72 of Philip's palace at St. Georges-d'Esperanche, the place from which he took the surname by which he was known in England. H is recorded as holding a burgage plot in Beaumaris and was awarded the manor of Mostyn together with a pension in reward for his work in Wales and subsequently in Scotland. Master Manasser de Vaucouleurs, also from France, was in charge of the earthworks at Carnarfon where he settled and became a burgess and a town bailiff. Also from France was Sir William de Cicon; he was constable at Rhuddlan before becoming constable at Conway where he stayed for many years, holding a burgage and land. Other master builders from England and Ireland were recruited to manage the building programme and some settled in Wales. Similarly building tradesmen and labourers, who had been drafted to the works by the king's writ to the English county sheriffs, stayed on completion of the major works and took up burgages.

Approximately ten percent of all the recorded early settlers were builders or administrators who had initially been recruited to run the building programme.

They originated from a wide area of England, France and Ireland. The English towns of origin included Chester, Winchester, Wem, Eynsham, Hereford, Kingston, Leominster, Maghull, Oxford and London. Those of French origin were from Chalons, Vaucouleurs, St. George d'Esperanche in the Savoy, Cicon and Picardy. The only Irishman with a town-related surname was a mason, William of Drogheda. Drogheda was the centre of the king's building works in Ireland. (17) .

The scale of the military campaigns and construction in Wales caused severe logistic problems for the royal administration. The supply of victuals and arms necessitated merchants from all over England, together with some from France, Ireland and Wales, being employed to carry supplies. Numerous references in the Patent Rolls refer to merchants being granted protection in order to travel on the king's business and in support of the Welsh campaign. The English merchants included men from Shrewsbury, Chester, Liverpool, Preston, Lancaster, Bristol, Chesterfield, Lynn, Nottingham and Burton-on-Trent. French merchants from Bordeaux were also involved. (18).

The capital being invested by the king, together with the prospect of continuing financial input to support the castle garrisons and the trade protection being offered to the new towns was an attractive proposition to some of these merchants. A number took up burgage plots and, indeed, the earliest documentary reference to burgage holders is is the Patent Rolls for September 1284 when Roger of Lewes and John of Oxon, the "King's burgesses of Conway" were given protection to go in the king's barge for the purposes of trade in order to supply the army and towns of the king in Wales. (19). Both Roger and John were still burgesses of Conway in 1305. William of Cardigan received similar protection to trade in 1284 and Bernard de Anker in 1285 and again in 1288. (20) Both of these men were also resident in North Wales for a number of years. Bernard de Anker was from France and had debts to him recorded in London and the court record describes him as 'a merchant and citizen of Bordeaux'. (21). Another merchant of Bordeaux , John Frambaud, was a burgess of Conway in 1295 and remained there at least until 1305.

Three merchants from Chester were also early burgesses. Jordan of Bradford held a burgage in Carnarfon but relinquished his holding there, possibly as a result of the Welsh sacking of the town in 1294, and took a holding in the newly founded Beaumaris. He also had interests in one of Edward's earlier new towns Flint, where he was constable of the castle and mayor of the town.

Hugh of Brykhill and William of Doncaster had burgages in Conway and Beaumaris. All three of these Chester merchants had place-related surnames that belie their origins in Chester, and suggest Yorkshire and Buckinghamshire as their ancestral home. This tends to support the view of McLure that betterment migration of the merchant class resulted in misplaced surnames, although Jordan de Bradford's name is taken, not from the Yorkshire Bradford but from the hundred of Bradford in Southern Cheshire. Another merchant who firstly took part in the trade support for Edward's campaign and then took burgages in both Conway and Beaumaris, was Dafydd ap Einion, formerly of Llanfaes.

These two groups of early burgesses, the builders and the merchants, had been involved in the process of founding the new towns. They were present in person from the beginning and could choose to invest on the basis of their own evaluation of a town's prospects. The remainder of the pioneer burgesses were probably not fortunate enough to see what the prospects were before they made a decision to move. Their English origins range from Alnwick in Northumberland and Yarmouth in Norfold to Tonbridge in Kent and Winchester in Hampshire. A number came from the Midlands and had names derived from Dudley, Eynsham, Oxford, Fotheringhaye, Hinckley, Northampton and Nottingham. Most of the remaining English sources were in the north-west counties of Cheshire, Lancashire, Staffordshire and Shropshire.

What, then, could have been the agency that recruited them to Wales? There was no centralised national administration that could have organised such a population movement unless the king had issued a directive to the county sheriffs to draft people to Wales. There is no evidence that this was done as it had been for military and building personel. In this case the numbers of people involved were very much greater and each county was directed to supply certain numbers of people with appropriate nominated skills. The pattern of permanent migration does not appear to point to such a process having taken place. Isolated families moved from some counties but considerable numbers were recruited from others.

Evidence as to how migration might have been organised can be found in the Inquisition Post-Mortem held into the estate of Edmund, Earl of Lancaster, after his death in June, 1296. (22). The number of burgesses who had place-related surnames, excluding builders and merchants, if fifty-two. No fewer

than eight of the places giving rise to surnames appear in the Inquisition as being held by Edmund and the detailed study of the Lancaster estates made by Somerville reveal a further eight. (23). The names of places in the Inquisition that are echoed in the new towns' rental rolls do not represent larger towns where coincidence might produce pairs of names, but settlements such as Baddesley, Brassington, Hinckley, Keele, Lancaster, Latham, Tutbury and Wyresdale. The remaining eight are even smaller, generally relating to manors held by Lancaster.

Edmund of Lancaster, younger son of Henry III, began to acquire his estates in 1265 when the king granted him the honour of Leicester. Further grants of land in 1265, 1267 and 1269 brought him interests in a dozen English counties. He was, in 1267, granted the honour, county, town and castle of Lancaster and all the royal desmesnes in the county together with the wastes and forests of Wyresdale. By the same charter he was granted the Manor of Newcastle under Lyme. He also had Welsh interests, as, in 1264, his brother gave him the counties of Carmarthen and Cardigan. In the campaigns in North Wales in 1282 and 1294 Edmund was very much involved with his brother the king, having been in South Wales during the war of 1277. (24). The administration of his great estates would have been mobilised to provide him with the money and supplies necessary to mount his forces in the battlefield. Somerville suggests that a centralised administration existed in the earl's household and the clerks of the household must have travelled widely to supervise the estate. Edmund must have been party to the king's deliberations over his Welsh policy and his decision to establish the castles and the new towns. It is suggested that these administrators, having direct knowledge of the situation in Wales, were an element of the recruiting programme that was necessary to attract settlers to the towns. It may even have been the case that migrants accompanied the servants of the earl on their journey to Wales. This would have given them the protection necessary to undertake such a potentially hazardous and expensive journey.

If the estate administration of the Earl of Lancaster was responsible for the recruitment of people to the Welsh towns then it could be assumed that the other great magnates involved in Edward's Welsh campaign would also have used their resources to the same end. The greatest magnate was, of course, the king. Examination of the burgess rolls reveal that about a third of all the unique place-related surnames were associated with the king's own estate.

In 1254 Henry III gave to the future king, the Lord Edward, the county of Chester, his lands in Wales, Ireland, Bristol, Stamford and Grantham. For Edward's first Welsh campaign in 1277 the city of Chester provided the king with the organisational support necessary for a large-scale campaign. (25). It is not surprising, therefore, that recruitment for the Welsh new towns took place in the county palatine. The long established royal administration in Chester could certainly have provided as adequate support for recruitment of migrants as it did for both the military campaigns and the castle building programme that ensued.

The surname Chester occurs three times in the new town rental rolls but the city was also the origin of burgesses bearing such diverse names as Bradford, Brykhill, Doncaster and Eccleshall. A further five place-related surnames occur that originate from Cheshire; Bache, Hockenhull, Neston, Stanney and Wetenhall. A number of the non-unique surnames such as Sutton or Preston also occur in Cheshire as well as other parts of England. Further recruits from the area administered from Chester came from Hawarden, where the manor was held by the king, and Flint, which was the earliest of the new towns in Wales to be built.

Henry III's grant of land to the Lord Edward also included Ireland and the castle and town of Deganwy. Four burgesses named Hibernia and five named from Deganwy are lists on the rental rolls. Edward, both as lord and king, continued to acquire land and other names reflect the wide spread of his estate. The great castles of Bristol, Hereford, Northampton and Nottingham were in the king's possession and provided names for the burgesses. In the case of these castles the adjoining towns were large enough for their occurrence on the Welsh list as surnames to be no more than coincidence, but the probability of the royal estate administration being actively involved in promoting recruitment to the new towns is increased by two other castle names on the Welsh lists. Walter of Barnard Castle and Thomas of Fotheringheye were burgesses of Conway and Carnarfon. These castles were held by the king after being forfeited by John Balliol shortly before the dates of the Welsh rolls. (26).

Two other names relate to the king's extensive land interests. Alan of Copeland and David of Blythe were both burgesses of Beaumaris and could have originated from the king's estates in Cumberland and Nottingham. Copeland was part of the honour of Cockermouth whith passed to the king in 1295. (27). The honour of Blythe had been in the possession of successive kings since 1102. (28).

Another magnate of royal blood, the king's cousin, the Earl of Cornwall, was also in Wales with the royal army and stood as regent during the king's absence overseas. Four of the burgesses appear to have originated from Cornwall's lands at Fenne, Eton, Piddle and Wycome. (29). The proportion of migrants that could be argued to have come from the estates of the royal family is about eighty percent of those with place-related surnames if builders and merchants are considered apart.

Half of the remaining twenty percent can be traced to lands held by other magnates who were with the king in Wales. Robert Burnell, Bishop of Bath and Wells and Chancellor of England was from Shropshire where he and his family held extensive estates. Burnell was frequently in Wales and was present at the drafting of the Statute of Rhuddlan and also acted as regent whilst the king was abroad. Two of his family were killed in the Welsh campaign and on his own death he was in possession of land in nineteen counties, constituting eighty-two manors of which a quarter were in Shropshire. Two burgesses named Dudley and Ludlow may have been recruited through the estate administration of Burnell. It would have been entirely in keeping with Burnell's personal ambitions for him to use his own resources in furtherance of the king's aims.

Two magnates from Staffordshire were in the king's army in Wales and it was from the lands of the Audley and Bagot families that William of Betley and David of Blithefield probably emigrated to Carnarfon and Beaumaris. (30).

Finally is Richard of Alnwick, an early settler in Conway, and one of the furthest travelled if he originated from the place of his name. Alnwick Castle was built by the Vesci family and John de Vesci was an important figure in the king's army. He was made responsible for the recruitment of Gascon mercenaries and personally commanded the king's army in Anglesey. It could have been through his agency that Richard of Alnwick was recruited to Wales and possibly also Thomas of Edlingham, a village very close to Alnwick. John de Vesci's younger brother William was also active in the king's cause in Wales and subsequently in Ireland where he was accompanited by a Lancashire knight, Henry of Latham. Henry was a burgess of Conway and commanded the fleet that kept the sea for the king between Snowdon and Anglesey in 1295.

It has been assumed hitherto that only merchants and builders were able personally to assess the potential of the towns before making the decision to invest in a burgage. The relationship of many of the other settlers to some of the magnates prominent in the king's army might mean that they were also in Wales as soldiers prior to settling there. There is a little evidence for this possibility. Henry of Latham, mentioned previously, was in Wales as a naval commander and took a plot in Conway. It is doubtful whether he personally settled there as he had land interests in Lancashire and was later with the king's army in Scotland. Adinet Patyn undoubtedly was a resident of Conway from the early years of the town's foundation until at least 1305. He is also recorded as a soldier, possibly a sergeant, in the king's service in Wales in 1284 and was awarded compensation for his bay pack'horse that was killed whilst he was in the king's loyal service.

Whilst these two cases illustrate the possibility of war veterans settling in Wales there is little other evidence to support the argument. Most of the great magnates in the land who were in Wales with the king do not appear to have provided settlers for the new towns. The place name relationships of the rental rolls are as significant for the lands they do not relate to as those that they do. The great estates of the Earls of Gloucester, Warwick, Norfolk, Herefore and the Lords Marcher appear not to have provided men to take up burgages. (31). Only a small circle of the king's close relatives and supporters seem to have used their resources to support his aims. This is, perhaps, not surprising as the reason for the creation of the towns was to provide not only garrisoned castles but commercial centres that would control the economy of the region. To do this successfully it would have been necessary to ensure that the towns were peopled as far as possible with loyal subjects; it would clearly have been safest to draw the new burgesses from royal lands or lands of trusted supporters rather than from the estates of the great barons.

The evidence strongly supports the thesis that it was the administration of some of the great estates that made the migration possible. To examine the validity of this thesis it is instructive to consider the development of a new town where a lord, other than the king, was the developer. The creation of Denbigh as a walled town with a strongly garrisoned castle and English burgesses was part of the king's overall plan for North Wales but was implemented by the Earl of Lincoln rather than the king.

Prior to Edward's campaign Denbigh was a small Welsh settlement, but in October 1282 was granted to Henry, Earl of Lincoln. The construction of a baronial castle and walled town begen immediately. The earl has served with the king in Wales since 1277 and in the final stages of the campaign in 1282 commanded a powerful squadron of twenty-five knights, sixty-eight troopers and over a hundred lances. His first experience of castle building in Wales was in 1280 when he supervised the start of construction of the new castle at Aberystwyth. The grant of Denbigh was in recognition of his military service and the king was present with him when construction of the castle began. The castle was probably designed by the royal architect, James of St. George and the initial stages were funded by the king.

On the first day of October, 1285, the earl granted the new town of Denbigh it's charter. The original burgesses of the town are individually named on the charter and their names give strong indications of their origins. Nineteen place-related names are on the charter and at least ten of these relate to places in the earl's estate. He held three great castles in England at Pontefract, Halton, and Castleford. (32). These castle names occur as surnames in the original charter and also in the survey of Denbigh made some fifty years later in 1334. (33). Other place names from the earl's estate that coincide with names on the charter are Burnley, Blackburn, Eccleshill, Adlington, Chirche, Symondston and Hinckley. The remaining apparently place-related surnames can neither be identified with the earl's estate as recorded in the inquisition post-mortem nor do they appear to relate to other known places.

The evidence from Denbigh supports the proposition that the migrants to Conway, Carnarfon and Beaumaris were recruited through the agency of the estate administration of selected lords. These early settlers and their families, probably over a thousand people, came from a range of social, economic and ethnic sources. (34). Such a mixed new community in a new environment and surrounded by a hinterland with an ancient and distinctive culture would have been subject to great social and economic pressures. But, whatever the motivation that attracted or drove the migrants to Wales, evidence suggests that the new communities were relatively stable. Such records that do survive are not extensive but from the two rental rolls for Conway and other more fragmentary sources it is possible to attempt an analysis of the burgage turnover in the towns and the duration of stay of individuals

and their families. Such an analysis must be put in the context of what is known of population characteristics for the period.

A number of studies of life-expectancy in the 13th and 14th centures have been done and from the range of probabilities produced by these studies a general pattern emerges that can be applied to Conway. The rental rolls that survive for Conway date from about ten and twenty years after the town's foundation in 1284. Other references enable some burgesses' presence in Conway to be traced to both before and after the dates of these rolls. It is reasonable to make two assumptions about these early settlers; that they were at least twenty years old when their names first appear and that the population in the early years did not include many, or any, old people. The adult population in the first ten years of the town probably averaged twenty to thirty years of age and in the second ten years from twenty-five to thirty-five years. Such assumptions possibly underestimate average ages but consequently do not overemphasise death-rate as a reason for population turnover.

Russell's study of the British medieval population shows the life expectancy for 20 year olds to be about 25 years; for 25 year olds an expectancy of 23.5 years; for 30 year olds an expectancy of 22 years and for 35 year olds a further life expectancy of 19 years. Each of these figures for life expectancy is almost precisely half those for adult males in England and Wales in 1982. Razi's study of Halesowen for a contemporary period produces a crude annual death rate for landowners of between 36 and 40 per thousand. (35). Postan and Titow calculated a higher annual death rate of between forty and fifty per thousand in their study of heriots recorded in the accounts of the manors of Winchester. (36). These rates confirm the low range of medieval life expectancy illustrated by Russell. The correlation between death rates and food prices, demonstrated by Postan, show the medieval economy to have been operating at little above subsistence level. The pressures caused by population growth and subsistence farming could have been one reason why people chose to move to new opportunities in new towns. It is unlikely however that the relatively poor soils of North Wales produced an unfamiliar abundance for the migrants and it must be assumed that life expectancy was similar to that in the rest of Britain. In the context of these studies an annual adult death rate of between 3.6 and 5 percent could be assumed for medieval Conway.

A sophisticated analysis of the population of Conway is not possible as the basic demographic data is not available. All that can be assumed is that the town in it's early years had a relatively young population in common with most new communities both in modern and medieval times. The two rental rolls cannot be precisely dated and the period between them could be from ten to twelve years. Using the crude death rates noted previously the population of Conway in the period between the rentals rolls could have changed by between 36 (3.6% for ten years) and 60 percent (5% for twelve years). Allowing for the possibility of a younger population the probable change in population due to death in the period between the rental rolls would be between forty and fifty percent.

Of the ninety-eight burgesses on the roll dating from about 1295, fifty-three remained in 1305/6, a turnover of forty six percent. This rate approximates to that which might be expected to have been caused by death alone and suggests a community from which where was little out-migration. Certainly some did exist and death was not the only cause of changeover of burgage tenants. John of Candover who had been clerk of works for the construction of Conway Castle held a burgage and forty acres in Conway. He left Wales to become trasurer of the Agenais in France and his plot, after being in the king's hands, passed to Gerard de Pyney who held it at the date of the first rental. Henry of Latham left Wales to take part in the Scottish wars and appears to have vacated his burgage but many did remain in Conway for the rest of their lives and passed their burgage interests on within the family.

A French mason, William of Chalons, worked in Rhuddlan and then in 1285 on the town wall of Conway. He settled in Conway where he had three'quarters of a burgage plot. His tenure is recorded on the 1295 roll but by 1305 his part plot was held by his son William of Chalons. In addition William rented a further one and a half burgages and a shop site. His name appears twice in other records of the town. In 1305 he was in dispute over payment for herrings and in 1313 he was pardoned for allowing a prisoner, John of Doncaster, to escape. (37). The Chalons are therefore recorded as being in Conway for at least twenty-eight years. Another mason, Roger of Cockersand, was also in Conway by 1285 where he settled and became town bailiff in 1290. He is still on the rental roll in 1295 but by 1305 he had gone and two other Cockersands, possibly his sons, were in residence. A number of those recorded as being in

the town in 1285 were still on the rental roll in 1305. Henry of Chester was a carpenter originally working on the king's hall and in 1296 was building a new watermill. Two traders, both noted as king's burgess of Conway, John of Oxford and Roger de Lewes, were both in the town from 1285 until at least 1305. Robert Fot, possibly the common thief referred to in the Macclesfield court, was resident from 1295 until 1316 when he was joint coroner of Conway.

The castle's first constable, Sir William de Cicon, held various burgage and land interests in Conway from 1285 until at least 1305 and in 1316 the king awarded his son John a payment of £30 per annum in consideration of his and his father's service both to him and the late king.

Burgage interests also passed on within other families. Positive confirmation of a family relationship is given by the 1295 rental roll showing Richard the Clerk as a burgess holding one and a half plots and the 1305 roll noting that William, son of Richard the Clerk held two burgages. Other families in which the burgage appears to have passed from father to son in the period between the rental rolls were the Barbers, Midwinters and the Wyresdales. John of London was succeeded by his son after the second roll and records show the Londons as being resident in Conway from 1295 or earlier until at least 1355. This length of residence in Conway is exceeded only by the Goodenough's who, although not recorded as having a burgage before 1305, were still in the town in 1421. There may be other families who remained in Conway as long or longer but the Londons and the Goodenoughs are interesting not only for their duration of residence but that their records show them as active in the town both before and after the Black Death.

The Goodenough name appears to pass out of the records when in 1421 Alice, wife of Thomas Walton, burgess of Conway, is named as daughter and heiress of Thomas Goodenough. The succession of land holdings to daughters or wives is recorded several times in the rentals. Eleven women's names in total are on the two Conway rolls and the sum would have been twelve if William of Westgate's daughter had been allowed by the court to inherit her father's burgages and land in Conway and Carnarfon. (38). Other daughters were more successful than Margaret Westgate and the 1295 rental rolls show one burgage as being held by the daughter of John Marshall.

Widows also succeeded their husbands and the one and a quarter plots held by William le Conbere in 1295 were held by Cecilia le Conbere in 1305. Five other women are recorded on the 1295 rental but only one of these, Felicia Godtyme, survived until 1305. All three women on the 1305 roll had the same surnames as other burgesses in the town at the same time. This further suggests the development of extended families within the town already noted from the male succession of family holdings.

The above factors, death rate, duration of residence and burgage inheritance illustrate a relatively stable community despite the newness of the towns and the problems of post-war conditions in an occupied land. Comparison with other new towns of the period is difficult due to lack of complete data. Fragmentary evidence for Flint and Rhuddlan show a number of burgessess to have been resident for at least ten or twelve years and the Denbigh records list some families that were in Denbigh for a period of at least fifty years. (39). Established towns are also difficult as complete rental rolls rarely survive and Lay subsidy rolls are not usually comprehensive enough to be safely analysed. For example two Lay subsidy rolls for Stafford for the period survive but show a higher turnover rate than Conway. This is possibly due to differing tax thresholds being used for the two assessments.

In conclusion a number of factors emerge that characterize the occupation of Edward I's new towns in Wales. The population of the towns was drawn from a very wide catchment area. This was much greater than for contemporary new towns, established medieval towns and even modern new towns. The evidence suggests that the administration of the king's estates, together with their counterparts for estates of the king's closest family and supporters, were the agencies that recruited migrant families to the new towns. The protected trading arrangements offerred to the new towns attracted a number of traders and merchants to invest in burgage plots. The continued financial support given to the castle and garrisons increased the attraction to these merchants and must also have been a factor in the decision of a number of the castle's original builders to settle in the town. The population of the new towns was relatively stable and a pattern of family residence and inheritance emerged that probably did not differ greatly from established towns of the period.

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THE WELSH NEW TOWNS.

Land acquisition.

THE WELSH NEW TOWNS. Land acquisition.

King Edward I's final victory effectively transferred the title of the land of North Wales from the Welsh princes to the crown of England. Edward devised a new pattern of shire administration based on the English system which remained intact in principle until the reorganisation of local government in Wales nearly seven hundred years later. In 1277 he planted the new towns of Flint and Rhuddlan and five years later, after the death of Llewellyn, was able to annex the whole of Wales to the English crown. The Statute of Rhuddlan which set out the pattern of shire administration was issued in 1284 and the counties of north-west Wales were delineated. (1). The land known to the Welsh as Perfeddwlad, east of the river Conway, was, apart from the county of Flint, made into Marcher territory. The Lordship of Denbigh was granted to Henry de Lacy, Earl of Lincoln, who created the new town of Denbigh on the Edwardian pattern as it's administrative centre. The borough of Ruthin was established by Reynold Grey, Lord of Wilton and Justive of Chester who was granted the cantref of Dyffryn Clwyd as a reward for his part in the military campaign of his king. Both Ruthin and Denbigh followed a similar pattern of development to the royal new towns with English settlers being recruited largely from the English estates of their founders.

The land that had formerly been Llewellyn's was divided into the new shires of Anglesey, Carnarfon and Merioneth. A justice resident in Carnarfon exercised central control over all three shires, but each of which had it's own county officers. (2). The Statute of Rhuddlan set out the requirement for county sheriffs, county coroners and commotal bailiffs and the outline of the legal system to be adopted. It acknowledged the basic unit of local government as the cantref or commote and this tier of administration remained in being. Many of the local offices remained in Welsh hands but responsible to the royal administration created for the counties and North Wales. English influence was strongest at local level in the districts around the new towns but the Carnarfon sheriff's account for 1303-4 shows that local officers in the commotes were predominantly Welsh. (3).

Despite the complete reform of government that took place at the most senior level, and the passing of the title to the land from Llewellyn to Edward, at commotal level little had changed. The local officers were still Welsh and the land remained in possession of it's established occupants. In

order to pursue his policy of town plantation Edward needed to dispossess the existing land-holders. The practical politics of the long term settlement of the region by alien immigrants and a foreign administration could not be approached in the same heavy-handed way as the pursuit of victory in battle. Once the royal army had withdrawn from Wales, leaving the towns and their small castle garrisons to undertake any necessary defence, a 'modus vivendi' had to be worked out that was not too oppressive. Those dispossessed of land and suffering losses due to war damage would require compensation, and none more so than the powerful forces of the church.

A careful programme of compensation was undertaken for those suffering land loss or war damage. The level of compensation undoubtedly varied in proportion, not only to the damage or loss suffered but to the strength and 'trouble potential' of the claimant. Surviving documentation is incomplete but, superficially, compensation claims appear to have been dealt with in a considerate and compassionate manner. In practice the motivation of the king was more probably guided by the possible consequences to his long term programme than a sense of fairness.

Whatever the motivation the result was not unreasonable in the context of the aftermath of war and was a policy that would be considered liberal in some nations of the twentieth century. The resettlement of ethnic majorities by a military powerful state minority in modern South Africa is undertaken with much less tolerance than Edward exercised in medieval Wales. The balance of military strength and weaponry is, in South Africa, totally one-sided whereas, in Wales, Edward knew that the Welsh could defeat his settlement objectives by force of numbers. Too many dissatisfied claimants for compensation would not have created the environment in which his new towns could prosper.

The question of compensation for war damage is of little direct relevance to the development of the new towns except that the principal claimants were the two powerful religious foundations that were to be important influences on them. The Bishop of Bangor's land and, more particularly, his market rights, were to become a long standing issue between him and the new settlers. He remained a very influential figure after the cessation of the war and was treated accordingly. The king appointed a commission to enquire into the extent of war damage to the Welsh religious houses in response to pressure

from John Peckham, the Archbishop of Canterbury. Peckham had been involved in Wales to the extent, at one stage during the wars. of attempting mediation between Edward and Llewellyn. His commission was formed in January 1284 and reported to the king by November of that year in respect of war damage in the dioceses of St. Asaph, Bangor and St. David's. (4).

The total damages assessed for the See of Bangor amounted to £430 (5) in addition to a grant that the king had previously made of fifty librates of land in England. The decision to grant land in England, rather than from the newly acquired demesne lands of Llewellyn appears to have been an attempt to make retribution without adding to the local power of the bishop.

The other religious house to suffer from the ravages of war was the Cistercian Abbey of Aberconway. Here the issue of compensation for damage was over-ridden by the king's decision to locate one of his new towns on the land occupied by the Abbey. In planning the locations of the two new towns planted on the north coast of Wales after the 1282 war Edward's only considerations were the strategic and economic suitability of the sites. Availability and possession of the land was of little consequence and functional requirements dictated his choice. The principal requirements were that the sites must be able to be supplied by sea-going ships, have sufficient agricultural land available and provide a defensive site with ground conditions adequate for the construction of a massive castle. Additionally the sites were required to be westwards of the great barrier to English advances in previous wars, the river Conway, and to 'surround' the mountain stronghold of Snowdonia.

The sites at Aberconway and Carnarfon were ideally suited to his requirements, both being at the mouths of estuaries and, together, forming the 'cornerstones' of Snowdonia. Both sites were, however, occupied and required the dispossession of the existing land-holders and settlement of consequent claims for compensation. This was also to be the situation when the third new town on the Menai Strait at Llanfaes was planted a decade later as a consequence of the Madog rebellion.

The site chosen by the king on the west bank of the Conway was occupied by the Abbey of Aberconway. The brothers of the abbey were not strangers to the consequences of warfare. In both 1246 and 1251, Henry III had ordered

compensation for war damage to be paid to the Abbey of Aberconway. (7). The king's wish to establish a new town on the site of the abbey and totally relocate the abbey in new buildings on another site cannot have been received with total dismay by the brothers. They had for so many years been the pivotal point in battles between the Welsh and English that removal to a new site was probably not unwelcome. The question of compensation for war damage was of lesser importance to the Cistercians than an adequate replacement site and buildings.

Negotiating for land on which to build a new town was not a new problem for the king's officers. They had, only three years earlier, been instructed to buy or exchange land suitable for the new town of Winchelsea in Sussex. This was being relocated due to the inundation by the sea of the old town of Winchelsea. (8). Ironically the sea was later to recede and leave the new town of Winchelsea to decay several miles from the sea. This fate was also to befall one of Edward's castle towns in Wales at Harlech where the sea today is very distant from the water gate of the castle.

The problems of negotiation were greater at Conway than at Winchelsea. Not only had the land to be acquired and war damages agreed but a new site was to be found and new monastic buildings were to be constructed. An essential prerequisite to the move was the agreement of the General Chapter of the monastic order at Citeaux and this was obtained on the understanding that the monks were not to be disturbed until their new buildings were ready for them to follow the ordered life of the monastery in their new surroundings. (9). The whole of the monastic site at Aberconway was to be surrendered. The abbey lands on the western bank of the river were to become the new town of Conway and the eastern bank land was to be retained in the royal demesne. The new town's boundary was to be coincident with the abbey's lands although a western extension outside the monastic lands would have been advantageous to the agricultural holdings of the town. The western boundary was, however, largely formed by the Bishop of Bangor's township of Gwerydros which it would not have been politic to acquire.

A site was selected for the new abbey at Maenan, eight miles south of Conway on the eastern bank of the river. The site was larger than that to be surrendered and was not without complications. It was tenanted and had only recently been granted to Henry de Lacy, Earl of Lincoln, as part of his new

marcher lordship of Denbigh. This latter problem was overcome by simply transferring the land back to the king without any question of compensation arising. On September 11th 1283, the king's master of works, James of St. George, was despatched to Maenan with instructions to make an extent of the site and to convey it from Henry de Lacy to the abbot and convent of Aberconway. (10). Two days later William de Perton, king's clerk, was ordered to deliver to the abbot of Aberconway forty pounds of silver in accordance with the extent which the king has made of the Abbey of Aberconway and the lands adjacent, in the eleventh year of his reign, and in payment of the first year. (11).

A further one hundred pounds was then paid in respect of war damages and 580 marks in compensation for the transfer itself. (12). Characteristically Edward found much of the money necessary for the transfer to Maenan from another ecclesiastical source. Anian, Bishop of St. Asaph, was required to pay 500 marks in recognition of the king's good will. On October 23rd 1284, four days after finally conveying the site and buildings at Maenan to the monks at Aberconway, the king issued an acquitance to Anian in respect of 200 of the 500 marks "which sum the king assigned to the abbot for the works of his monastery at Maenan." (13).

The problem of relocating the former tenants at Maenan was dealt with by the grant of new lands, partly on the lands taken from the monks in Creuddyn and partly on the newly acquired royal demesne in the Conway valley at Glyn and Gronant. (14). The day following the grants of new land to the dispossessed tenants of Maenan (15) the king formally granted the new site to the abbey. (16).

The Statute of Rhuddlan, promulgated earlier in 1284, had defined the new counties to be formed pf the land formerly held by Llewellyn and, logically, the eastern boundary of the new shire of Carnarfon would have been the river Conway. The regranting of Maenan from the Lordship of Denbigh to the king and the king's own retention of Creuddyn made this inappropriate and these two areas became part of the shire of Carnarfon.

Having negotiated the transference of the abbey the king was able to establish the new town of Conway with it's charter. The customary freedoms of a borough were granted to the new settlers including their right, as burgesses, to pass on their landed interests to their descendants. (17).

The relatively simple situation at Conway, where the town's lands were designated from a site in single occupation was not repeated at Carnarfon. The new town was to occupy the lands of the old princely maenor of Carnarfon and most of the villein tref of Llanbeblig. (18). Over fourteen hundred acres were assigned to the new town. These must have been subject to multiple tenancies, but it is not clear whether any money or land was made available to compensate the former tenants for loss of their holdings. Their tenurial status may have been such that the king did not consider them worthy of compensation for land that was his by right of conquest. There are. however, two surviving references that suggest that some compensation may have been paid. These both refer to small amounts of money being paid in compensation for houses demolished to make way for the walls of the new town.

William of Grandison, brother of Otto and "supplying the place of the justice of North Wales" wrote to Chancellor Burnell that certain moneys had been paid in respect of works carried out in North Wales. (19). Amongst the recorded payments is one to the burgesses of Carnarfon for their houses "demolished because of making the wall." (20). This payment is confirmed in the pipe roll contrarotulus account for 1286 as being £6-16d. (21). The reference to the payment being made to a burgess may indicate that it was not the original Welsh tenants who were being compensated as they did not have burghal status. A possible explanation is that this compensation was paid to English settlers, some of whom had been resident in Carnarfon for over two years at the date of the payment. The reason for demolition of their houses may have been due either to a realignment of the original plan of the town wall or a surveying mistake when the original burgage plots were set out. Such a mistake would not have been difficult in the confusion of the early years of the town's construction. Whether English or Welsh houses were demolished the number can only have two or three if their total value was only £6-16d. In 1284 the constable of Carnarfon had paid £4-3s-4½d for the construction of two houses; "a bakery and a house to lay hay in." (22).

William de Grandison's interest in compensation for property taken for the development of the king's new towns was not confined to North Wales. Contemporaneously with the plantation of the North Wales boroughs the king was engaged in the arrangements for a new town of Winchelsea to replace the old town which was steadily being inundated by the sea. The site chosen for

the new town was at "Ihamme.....which site the king had of the grant of William de Grandison and Isabel his wife." (23). It must be presumed that William received adequate compensation for his land either in money or preferment and that he probably arranged a more satisfactory 'compulsory purchase' for his own land than he did for the occupants of old Carnarfon. It may be that the destruction of records in Carnarfon that occurred during the Madog rebellion also destroyed evidence of compensation or, alternatively, that none was paid. However, in a new town founded as part of Edward's Welsh programme only a few years before Carnarfon , surviving records do show that compensation was paid to both English and Welsh land holders for their property.

The new town of Rhuddlan was, like Carnarfon, on the site of an older Welsh settlement. In January 1280 the king appointed Masters William de Perton and James of St. George to arrange for the rooting-up of the king's woods at Rhuddlan and to grant to anyone who cleared the land the right of occupation for three years rent free. He also empowered his agents to "grant to Welshmen there licence to sell their land to Englishmen dwelling there and having houses in the town of Rhuddlan". (24). In the preceding year the king had ordered recompense be made to Master Richard Bernard, parson of the church at Rhuddlan, who complained "that the king's men had taken land pertaining to his church in order to build burgages near to the castle." (25). In 1290 the king ordered his justice in Chester to make delivery from the king's lands the equivalent of five burgages and fourteen acres which Dafydd ap Kenwrik had held in the old town of Rhuddlan before the commencement of the last war in Wales. (26).

In this latter case the compensation was very slow in being granted but nevertheless the claim was accepted and satisfied. It could have been the case in Carnarfon that those with sufficient influence and persistence received recognition of their claims whereas others received nothing.

At Beaumaris the situation was different again from Conway or Carnarfon. The new town and castle were not founded contemporaneously with the two on the southern shore of the Menai Strait but as a consequence of the Madog rebellion of 1284. The need then became apparent to establish a military and economic presence on the northern shore, not only to pacify Anglesey, but to control the waters of the Strait. The strategic requirements were paramount and a site was selected immediately adjacent to the old Welsh town of Llanfaes and on the town's lands. It would not have made military sense for the garrison

of the new castle, or economic sense for the new town, for Llanfaes to remain as a strong competitor. The king was not quick in coming to the decision to relocate the residents of Llanfaes in a new town of their own, and initially the old commercial centre of Gwynedd had its trading liberties suppressed whilst Beaumaris was developed. This was not a satisfactory situation for the residents of Llanfaes who petitioned the king accordingly. (27). "They show that they are English in blood and nationality, as also their ancestors from ancient times by occasion of which fact, when the dominance of the Welsh was in its vigour, and especially at the time when Madog was raging in his fury, they were oppressed by the Welsh and deprived of their property, and because to tell the simple truth, they reside in Wales amongst the Welsh, they are reputed Welsh by the English, and in consequence are less favoured by them so that they have neither the status of Englishmen nor even that of Welshmen, but they experience what is worst in either condition. They therefore pray that for the love of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the King mercifully regards all Wales in common, so may it please him for the good of his soul and his parents' souls, to establish them in an assured position before he departs from Wales and to confirm it by his letters so that they may not fall into an indubitable state of beggary." Clearly the situation demanded action but the king was in no hurry to act. He endorsed the petition to the effect that when the town of Beaumaris had been built he would determine what to do about Llanfaes.

The comment in the petition that the citizens of Llanfaes were neither English nor Welsh is possibly an indication that the commercial strength of the town was such that English and foreign merchants had settled and traded with the town as they had with the newly established town of Conway and Carnarfon. Additionally there were certain interests in the town who found the trading opportunities thrown up by the war and the subsequent construction programme so attractive that they ran both with the hare and the hounds. The foremost citizen of Llanfaes, Dafydd ap Einion was trading in support of the English military adventure at least as early as 1286. He had supplied ropes to the builders of Harlech castle (28) and is later recorded as selling beef to the castle at Carnarfon. (29). His commercial interests outweighed any nationalistic interest and such an attitude if typical of the community in Llanfaes, could have alienated the town to the Welsh.

In November 1295 the king ordered that the Llanfaes market should, in

future, be held on the same days, but in Beaumaris. Also that the two annual fairs should likewise be transferred to Beaumaris. (30). This further suppression of the commercial activities of the old town in favour of the new occasioned another petition from the residents of Llanfaes. (31). They complained that ships were not allowed to use their port, that they were excluded from their pastures, and that they had not been compensated for their houses which had been carried off by the king's mandate to the town of Beaumaris. It seems that by the date of this petition the possibility of their moving to another location was being discussed. The petitioners asked "that they may be able to live quietly where they are now or elsewhere." The king's reply was to ask the Justice of North Wales to tell him why the people had not been compensated for their houses.

The decision was then made to offer the citizens of Llanfaes an equivalent site in a new location. This was at Rhosyr, the centre of the commote of Menai, and twelve miles westwards from Llanfaes. This new town, appropriately named Newborough in its charter of 1303, was to be the same acreage as Llanfaes and to render the same rents. The site designated was partly unoccupied and partly occupied by Welsh bondmen. (32). Settlement took place around the bondmen and in 1305 the new residents petitioned for their removal and clarification of the boundaries of their town. This petition appears not to have been successful as in1353 the 'puri nativi' of Rhosyr still held substantial lands in Newborough. Superficially the people of Llanfaes were fairly compensated for the land that was taken from them but this was a quantitative settlement as qualitatively the land in Newborough was very much poorer than in Llanfaes. The old town had been on some of the better soils of Anglesey whereas the new site was on deposits known geologically as windblown sand. This proved to be a very apt description as, later in the fourteenth century, Newborough suffered considerable land loss due to erosion of the soil and shifting of the sands.

The land required for the king's new town programme was not simply acquired by right of conquest. In all three towns it appears that recognition was given to the claims of some, if not all, of the dispossessed landholders to receive compensation. The most complete compensation was made to the Abbey of Aberconway where a new site and buildings were provided by the king. As will be seen later, this policy of "equivalent reinstatement" of a religious house is of particular relevance to the new towns of the twentieth century.

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(2) See the "Welsh Shires" by T. F. Tout, Collected Papers Vol. II

(3) Account of the Sheriff of Carnarfon 1303-4, BBCS 7. W. H. Vickers

(4) Littere Walliae (Var.) Cal. Chanc. Rolls (Var.)

(5) Aspects of Welsh History. Glyn Roberts p. 225

(6) Cal. Anc. Corr. (Wales) IX(102)

(7) History of the Abbey of Aberconway R. W. Hays p. 69

(8) English Historical Documents 1189-1327 p. 799

(9) Littere Walliae p. 203

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(11) Cal. Anc. Corr. (Wales) XXX (146)

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(13) Littere Walliae p. 203

(14) History of the Abbey of Aberconway and T.C.H.S. 1979 (The Commotal Centre of Arlechwedd Isaf. C. A. Gresham)

(15) Cal Welsh Rolls p. 290 (18th October 1284)

(16) Cal. Charter Rolls p. 279 (19th October 1284)

(17) British Borough Charters 1216-1307 A Ballard and J. Tait (Camb 1923)

(18) Medieval Boroughs of Snowdonia. E. A. Lewis 1912

(19) Cal. Pat. Rolls 1281-1292 p. 318

(20) Cal. Anc. Corr. Wales XXIII (188)

(21) Pipe Roll (Contrarotulus Acc.) 1286

(22) Cal. Chanc. Roll (Wales) 18 Oct. 1284

(23) English Historical Documents 1189-1327

(24) Cal. Chancery Rolls (Wales) Jan 7, 1280

(25) Cal. Chancery Rolls (Wales) March 3, 1279

(26) Cal. Close Rolls October 4, 1290

(27) Cal. Anc. Pet. (Wales) (57) 2803.4.

(28) History of the King's Works p. 1033

(29) Pipe Roll (Contrarotulus Account 1297)

(30) Cal. Close Rolls

(31) Cal. Anc. Pet. (Wales) (57)2803B

(32) Medieval Boroughs of Snowdonia

CONWAY.

The administration and organisation of the town.

It has been noted above how Edward I organised Gwynedd on the English county system with a regional administrative headquarters and treasury at Carnarfon. A similar regime had long been established at Chester and it had been officers of the Chester administration who had organised the logistics of the conquest and castle building with admirable efficiency. Although the new administration of the three counties of Gwynedd had some functions centralised at Carnarfon, the counties had their own officers and the new boroughs were granted charters giving them a degree of autonomy.

The borough charters were based on the liberties granted to the English town of Hereford, but originated in the Norman garrison town of Breteuil. (1). The rights granted by the charters were similar to those enjoyed by many towns at this period, but in North Wales boroughs there was one significant difference. The function of the new towns as military outposts was codified by the king's appointed constable of the castle being the nominated mayor of the town. In his dual role the constable first swore allegiance to the king and then to the burgesses of the town. The other officers of the town were elected by their fellow burgesses annually in the normal manner. Other rights granted by the charter were the right to exercise jurisdiction in all but Crown pleas and to keep a town prison. The boroughs were by this right independent of the county sheriff in most matters of law and this independence extended to the right of those burgesses dying intestate not to have their property confiscated. The town lands were to be diswarrened and disafforested and therefore free from the particular laws governing warrens and forests. Jews were forbidden to reside in the boroughs but any man residing in a town and holding property for a year would be free from recovery by his lord. The town was granted the right to a gild merchant and burgesses given freedom from town tolls such as murage and pontage. the most fundamental right, however, was that granted to the town and giving it the independent status of a free borough.

The constable, in his role as ex-officio mayor, presided over assemblies of the burgesses, sat as chief magistrate and nominally supervised trading within the borough. As the military leader of the town he controlled the castle and it's occupants. The day-to-day management of the borough rested with two bailiffs elected each Michaelmas by their fellow burgesses. Their responsibilities included the collection and payment to the exchequer at Carnarfon of the burgage and town land rents, presiding with the mayor over borough courts and generally supervising the business of the borough in respect

of fairs, markets, customs and administration of justice. The bailiffs, rather than the constable, were the men to whom royal instructions concerning the borough were sent. In the early years the bailiffs of Conway and the other boroughs were generally drawn from the body of building craftsmen who had been conscripted by the English county sheriffs to work on the castles and had settled and acquired land and burgages. They were men, who by virtue of their occupations were familiar with dealing both with the royal administration and with financial matters. Much of their building work was carried out by fixed price sub-contracts, with individual master craftsmen and these men would necessarily be familiar with trade accounting. The qualities made them eminently suitable to manage and account for the borough's finances. The earliest named bailiffs of Conway were William Seysil, mason, and John the Carpenter who, in 1286, submitted to the exchequer thirty shillings and sixtyfour shillings respectively collected as part of the town's dues. (2). By the financial year 1305/6 the bailiffs of Conway were responsible for the collection of over £14 in respect of burgage rents, town land rents, extra-mural property rents and also rents for sites across the river in Deganwy. The rental for this year contains 221 individual financial accounts for property ranging from one penny that Richard the Porter paid for one and a half rods of land to 18s-7d that Simon of Chilton paid for two plots, one of forty and the other of eighteen acres. (3). The work of the bailiffs in collecting rents was, therefore, very considerable but many other duties were also expected of them. With the constable the bailiffs were responsible for the administration of justice within the borough and sat with him at the court leet, the view of frankpledge, the borough three week court and the 'piepowder' court. Additionally other matters of an administrative nature were their responsibility. In 1297 a writ was issued instructing bailiffs of all coastal towns, including Conway and Carnarfon, to prohibit anyone from leaving the realm without special licence. (4). In the same year the bailiffs were charged with sending all ships over forty tons to assemble before the king at Winchelsea. (5). In 1313 the bailiffs were mandated with preventing anyone within five leagues of the borough from buying or selling wares other than in the town market. (6) Some years later they were instructed to prevent the export of coinage and silver from the realm. (7).

Such duties were an onerous burden for the bailiffs and their work was not made easier by the apparent difficulties that they experienced in collecting rents. On a number of occasions they are recorded as rendering payments to the

exchequer in respect, not only of the current year, but for earlier years. In year twenty of Edward's reign Adinet Patyn paid in thirty shillings in respect of his obligations as bailiff during the nineteenth year. Similarly in the king's twenty third year Adam of Deganwy paid thirty shillings owing from when he was bailiff four years earlier. (8). On occasions the office of sub-bailiff is noted in the accounts but it is not clear whether this officer was a regular assistant to the bailiff or a substitute when he was precluded for some reason from carrying out his duties. As the office of bailiff was held only for one year, the incumbents would need to carry on with their normal occupations during their year of office, so making the need for sub-bailiffs to assist them a probability.

The Statute of Rhuddlan included the requirement that each of the king's boroughs should elect coroners. The bailiffs accounted for the regular business of the borough but the coroner's role was to account for irregular sources of profit. Persons dying intestate, sea wrecks, and property forfeited by order of the borough courts were amongst the responsibilities of the coroners. The first recorded coroners of Conway were William of Nottingham and John the Mercer who, in 1295, returned 6s-8d to the exchequer. The pipe roll account does not give the source of this money and for most years contain no record of coroner's submissions. One account that survives concerns the goods of one of the coroner's servants who had abjured the realm leaving behind him belongings to the value of twentyone pence. (9).

Another town officer was the porter who had the responsibility of keeping the town gates. The pipe roll account for 1291 nominates three men as keepers of the town gates of Conway and another man as keeper of the castle gates and prison. Hugh the Porter was employed at the castle and his wife, Isabella, was paid 71s-7d for the expenses of keeping prisoners in the castle during 1286. (10). From 1296 to 1301 prisoners from the Scottish wars were kept in the castle gaol and an allowance of threepence per day was paid for their keep.

Other burgesses were responsible each year for the supervision and issues arising from the town mills and the Deganwy ferry. It is not clear whether these men were officers elected by their fellow burgesses or whether the mills were farmed out as commercial opportunities. The town mills were of vital importance to the town and construction of the Conway mills started almost

simultaneously with the castle itself. In June 1284 the sum of £22-15s-3d was paid to carpenters building the king's granary and starting work on the king's mill. (11). By 1288 the first receipts from the king's mill at Conway are recorded on the pipe roll. One mark was paid for the farm of the mills by Gilbert of London, four pounds for the farm of the mills and ferry by Richard the Clerk and one hundred shillings by John of Oxford for the same farm. (12). In the same year the issues of the town of Conway were accounted for by the sheriff of the county and not by the bailiffs. For the following year the town bailiffs, named as Andrew Cryer and his fellow bailiff, accounted for the issues of the town, Henry Cornmonger for 15s-6d from the issue of the mills under the castle and Henry Midwinter for 33s-0d from the farm of the town mills. No receipts from the ferry are recorded for that year. In the years following a similar inconsistent pattern of financial receipts continues in respect of the town, the mills and the ferry. In 1291 another town mill was built at Gyffin by two master carpenters, one of whom, John of London, was one of the town bailiffs for that year. (13). Three years later the town mills were destroyed in the Madoc rebellion and for a number of years the accounts show no return from them. It appears that the mills were not operational again until about 1316 and subsequently two stewards were appointed annually, along with the other town officers, to supervise the operation of the mills. (14). From the variety of the people who annually answered for the mill receipts in the very early years it may be that this system of stewardship operated 'ab initio' as a professional operator would surely have farmed the mills for periods greater than a single year. Richard the Engineer, even whilst working in North Wales, farmed the Dee mills at Chester at an annual rent of £200 for many years; his rent making the few pounds paid for the Conway mills each year seem quite insignificant and possibly not a paying proposition.

The list of different names answering each year for the mills and ferry is echoed by the variety of people filling the post of bailiff. It has been noted above that the town officers were generally drawn from the ranks of the senior building craftsmen and this appears to be as true for the coroners and the farmers of the mill and ferry as it was for the bailiffs. John of London was typical of these men. He was a carpenter and built the mill at Gyffin and was, in turn, both bailiff and coroner of the town. He served the king in Scotland after he had settled in Conway and, in recognition of his service and imprisonment in Scotland, was granted the offices of rhaglaw and woodward

for the commotes of Arlechwedd Uchaf and Isaf. His name appears first on a list of jurors in 1340 when a fellow burgess was accused of theft. (15). Another such man was William of Chalons the mason who was bailiff on two occasions and also farmed the Deganwy ferry. Adinet Patyn, first recorded as a sergeant in the king's army in Wales, was also both bailiff and farmer of the ferry. It was such experienced and trusted men who formed a small group that, with the constable, controlled the administration of the town in its formative years. They were mostly master craftsmen, held land in addition to their burgages and were, presumably, able to supplement these sources of income from the 'profits' of their various offices.

The local administration was, however, not much more than an agent of the royal office at Carnarfon. Although responsible for the day to day management of the town and the onerous job of rent collection the town's officers submitted itemised accounts to the exchequer in respect of all tenancies, the ferry, courts and mills. A system whereby they submitted a single lump sum each year was clearly to be preferred, probably by the exchequer staff as well as the bailiffs. The borough of Conway, obtained royal consent for the town to be farmed at a fixed fee in 1316. The fee was fixed at £33-6s-8d and appears to have been an increase on the sum of the individual items accounted for previously. The privilege was worth the price for it gave the town independence from the detailed scrutiny of the auditors at Carnarfon and, perhaps more importantly, meant that any profits in excess of the agreed farm would accrue to the town and not the exchequer. This independence and awareness of the town as an economic unit manifested itself in a corporate demand for more land. After an unsuccessful attempt at expansion by taking land in Creuddyn in 1305 the burgesses of Conway were eventually granted the villein lands at Llechan for an additional annual fee of 118s-0d. (16). Whereas the men of Conway were successful in obtaining the privilege of farming the town, the burgesses of Carnarfon were refused and in Beaumaris only part of the town lands were granted to be held at fee farm.

Even after the grant of the fee farm to Conway some central supervision remained. Just as William of Westgate's burgage passed to the crown in escheat after his death in 1299, so in 1353, when Conway was held at fee farm, did the half burgage of Philip, son of Hulle, who was convicted of killing John of Cardigan. (17). Even after the grant of the fee farm the right to escheat property within the borough remained a royal prerogative as did the right to grant licences permitting alienation in mortmain of borough lands. Such

licence was usually granted as will be noted below in relation to Henry of Ellerton's grant of a burgage in Carnarfon for the construction of the chantry of St. Mary. (18).

In matters of jurisdiction the boroughs were guaranteed a limited independence by their charters. The burgesses were able to try minor criminal matters in the borough courts with only matters of life or limb being heard in the royal courts. Even in these courts burgesses of the new towns had the right of trial before a jury drawn from their fellow burgesses. For matters within borough jurisdiction offenders could be committed to the town prison whereas the higher court used the prison in the castle. Even in the higher court burgesses had right of bail subject to sufficient guarantors and this right to trial by their fellow burgesses extended outside their own borough to certain defined geographical limits. Thus the burgesses of Conway enjoyed this right from the river Clwyd to Carnarfon and the other towns had correspondingly sized areas written into their charters. (19).

The principal court of the borough was the court leet, held twice annually, and presided over by the mayor and bailiffs with a jury of twelve burgesses. In addition to it's judicial functions it also considered matters of borough administration and the swearing of new burgesses. Another function was the view of frankpledge by which each burgess within a group of ten pledged himself to the borough in relation to the behaviour of his fellows in the tithing. Criminal matters within the scope of the court were theft, assault, and what today would be called consumer protection matters in relation to weights and measures. The ultimate sanction available to the court were the town gallows. The existence of gallows in Conway is confirmed by a number of entries in the 1305/6 rental referring to land near to 'Gallows Hill". (20).

In addition to the court leet the borough held a lesser court every three weeks presided over by the mayor and bailiffs. Matters such as trespass, battery, wrongful raising of a hue and cry and slander were dealt with in a summary fashion. By virtue of the borough's chartered right to hold markets the bailiffs held a 'piepowder' court to deal with matters concerning fairs and markets. Conway's market was held every Friday with another at Deganwy each Monday. Fairs were held on the feast days of St. Bartholomew, August 24th and St. Simon and St. Jude on October 28th. The function of the piepowder court was to settle disputes between buyers and sellers and ensure that the rules of the market, such as carrying arms or starting business before the appointed time, were obeyed. (21).

The courts were an important element in the financial arrangement of the borough. The average yearly profit calculated for those years between 1301 and 1316 for which records survive totalled £3-6s-8d. The biggest contribution to this total arose from the piepowder court with 38s-0d and the court leet with 21s-2d. After 1316, when the borough was farmed at fee, these profits were a more significant part of the town's income than the profits arising from the purely commercial side of the town's activities. For the same period of years the average income to the town from the operation of the port, fairs and markets was only £2-10s-9¾d.

Conway claimed monopoly market rights over the neighbouring commotes of Creuddyn, Aberconway and Arlechwedd Uchaf and Isaf, and all buying and selling within these localities was expected to take place in the borough fairs and markets. The burgesses were free of tolls and customs within the borough and the profit must have largely been taken from those in the rural hinterland obliged to buy and sell in Conway.

The principle of a newly created town usurping the existing pattern of local markets was not unique to North Wales and colonisation by it's English conquerors. The thirteenth century had been a prolific period for the plantation of new towns in England and most were established by a lord, a bishop or the king in order to reorganise the commercial pattern of the locality and maximise the potential profit to the founder. Monopoly market rights were implicit in the grant of a market charter to a new settlement and many were very profitable for their owners. Indeed the Welsh new towns compare poorly with some English examples in terms of profitability of their markets. In Conway the borough income from fairs, markets and courts, totalling less than £6 annually, was less than half that from land and burgage rents. At the same date the new town of Newport in Shropshire generated a burgage income of only £4-1s-0d compared with profits from markets and fairs at £7-6d-0d and court profits of £5-13s-0d. (22). It has been calculated that the increase in income to the landowner arising from the urbanisation of a rural manor averaged 88% and this provided the incentive required for the designation of a new town. (23). In England the cost of development to the founder would be minimal as the new town would not require the major capital elements of castle, wall and quay that were necessary in Wales. Whereas the king would have wished to maximise the return of his considerable investment the creation of new profit centres was not the reason why the towns in North Wales were established.

Indeed it can be argued that the principal financial beneficiaries of the new towns were those who could take the opportunity to trade in the new fairs and markets. The importation of a significantly large population without adequate land to feed themselves must have created a demand that meant increased prices were paid for commodities. But any such inflation, whereas possibly beneficial to those with surplus to sell, would have increased the resentment of those on whom the new community was imposed. The consequent articulation of this resentment was not unique to medieval communities where the settlers and the natives were of different ethnic origins, but occurred, and still does occur, when external decisions are taken about patterns of settlement.

Local objections to the imposition of a new commercial regime were heightened by the abuse of the new system by the responsible officials. Even the English burgesses of Carnarfon found cause to petition the king that the castle administration was not paying for goods taken for it's use. The "king's free tenants of North Wales" petitioned that goods were being appropriated and not being bought fairly at markets. (24). Such complaints would appear justified by the list of grievances about dishonest administrators submitted to the king by Thomas Esthalle shortly before his own arrest and imprisonment for arrears in his account as chamberlain. The constables of the castles appear to have exercised a right of pre-emption on goods brought into the boroughs and it was the abuse of this right that eventually caused Edward III to impose a schedule of fair prices. (25).

The proscription of trading outside the boroughs was a continuing source of frustration for at least 150 years after their plantation. Welshmen continued to be amerced for extra-mural trading and the English continued to object to the Welsh intransigence throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Even in 1447 the mayors, aldermen, bailiffs and burgesses of the English towns in North Wales petitioned the king "to ratify in Parliament all manner of statutes made against Welshmen, afore this time not repealed, and to ordain that all grants of franchises, markets, fairs, to buy or sell, to bake and brew, and to sell within the towns of North Wales be void." The implication of this was that such rights were to be confined to the English boroughs and the king confirmed that the statutes made in the time of previous kings should be observed. (26).

It was not only the English boroughs who complained about monopoly market rights. The Bishop of Bangor contined to enjoy his right of holding markets and fairs at Bangor and he also petitioned the king about infringements of his

rights. He twice complained that the sheriff of Carnarfon was interfering with the free operation of his market and twice the king instructed his chief justice in North Wales to ensure that the bishop's rights were maintained. (27). Furthermore the tenants of the bishopric continued to enjoy their right of trade amongst themselves. Gwerydros, one of the bishop's vills, came immediately up to the western boundary of the borough of Conway and this mutual trading right must have been very provocative to the burgesses. Further erosion of the borough's monopoly was the confirmation that religious houses, such as the Abbey of Aberconway, could trade free from tolls in local fairs and markets. (28). The subsequent granting of market rights to Aber and Trefriw further weakened the domination of Conway as the market centre of the locality.

Apart from the political and national reasons for the protracted arguments over market rights, the economic potential of the area was not great enough to support more markets. What was possible in the fertile lowlands of England was not necessarily applicable to the topography, soils and consequently low population of North Wales. With it's increased population the region could not feed itself and depended on importation of much of it's foodstuffs from England and Ireland. The cake was too small for further slices to be cut from it and attempts to do so were bound to lead to confrontation.

Within the town of Conway buying and selling was not confined to fairs and markets. The 1305 rental accounts for seven shillings as the rent from twelve shops. A further eightpence was received for stalls set up in the market place. These were presumably permanent stalls in comparison with the pitches taken by traders on periodic market and fair days. The conveyance of a dwelling in Conway refers to the pocation of the property 'between the shops of the aforesaid William (Russell) and a tenement of William of Doncaster." (29). William Russell was the son of Robert who was one of the more prosperous citizens of the town, holding thirty seven acres of land together with his burgage and a site in Deganwy. The family were in Conway from before 1295 until the date of the deed in 1331 and, if related to Peter Russell of Conway and Beaumaris, were resident for many years after that.

Reference to the commercial administration of Conway would not be complete without reference to the mills and the port. The quays and mills were essential components of the town and built contemporaneously with the castle. The hinterland of Conway was not good cereal growing land and much of the corn needed was brought into the port from Chester, Dublin or Anglesey. To convert

the grain into flour a mill was essential and the burgesses would have been restricted to the use only of the king's mills. One of the town mills had a malting house where the grain barley would be partially germinated to convert the starches into the sugars essential for making beer. (30). Thus the port and mill together were essential for the provision of the staples of a medieval diet, bread and beer. The beer was as important as bread at a time when water was generally contaminated and not safe to drink. When the king was under siege in Conway in 1295 he ordered all the brewsters of Chester to brew good beer to bring to the king and his host by all the vessels they could muster. He said that he had sufficient oats and wheat for the present but the chroniclers made a point of the king's refusal to take for his own use the last small cask of wine remaining and report that water mixed with honey was drunk by the king and his men. (31).

The monopoly of brewing was, in theory, reserved for the English in the new towns, although it was undoubtedly brewed in rural homesteads. Within the towns it was probably brewed by families for their own use but was also sold in taverns. In 1365 Agnes the Souster appeared in court at Carnarfon and was amerced forty pence for selling he own beer along with that of Robert of Paris, the tavern owner. (32).

Although untreated water was probably dangerous to drink a reliable supply was essential in a garrison town and a well was dug within the walls of the castle. There must have been other wells within the town itself and it is possible that use was made of wells originally dug for the abbey. Little is known about the health of the early population but in a relatively densely occupied town contagious disease would have spread rapidly. Within the town no organised sanitation would have existed although the bailiffs may have exercised some control to prevent excessive problems. In contemporary London ordinances were issued governing street obstructions, street cleanliness, tavern opening hours, working in the street in such trades as fulling and keeping pig sties in the street. (33). As part of Conway's town defences twelve privies were built corbelled out from the top of the town wall west of Mill gate and issuing towards the river Gyffin. It is not known whether any provision was made to flush the effluent by using the water of the tidal river but this was certainly done in other contemporary situations. At Norton Priory in Cheshire, which could have been familiar to some of the masons in Conway, penstocks were built to control the flow of a stream under the reredorter and

flush the effluent through a stone conduit to clear of the monastic buildings. (34). Alternatively the deposits could have been used to fertilise the soil and it is, perhaps, just conceivable that the unusually high rent paid by Isonda Welythewyt for a half acre plot related to the plot's benefit from such enrichment.

Some provision appears to have been made for the sick in the new towns. An early reference relates to the Hospital of St. John in Conway when, in 1286, the king's masons were paid £3 for their part in it's construction. Where it was, and any details of it are lost, but Dr. Taylor suggests it may have been sited where the building known as the 'old college' is on the west side of Castle Street. The Templars are said to have had a hospital in Rhuddlan and an edict issued by Edward I refers to a new burial ground lying near to the hospital. (35). An early deed in Carnarfon refers to land lying near the house of the lepers beyond the river Seiont. (36). Leprosy was endemic in medieval Britain and many districts had a house set aside for lepers, and, in some places it was an offence to harbour a leper at home. (37). The monks at Maenan may have had some skill in the care of the sick but otherwise such care was probably in the hands of the barber-surgeons. The early rental of Conway list two men as barbers and one of these, William, worked on the construction of the castle and his doctoring skills were presumably secondary to his main occupation as a builder.

Severe illness, despite the attentions of the barbers, generally lead to death and the early records do note the death and burial of one of the veterans of the Welsh wars and the castle building programme. Bertram the Engineer died in 1284 and Thomas Maidenhead, constable of Carnarfon castle, claimed reimbursement of 12s-10d he had spent on Bertram's burial. (38). His death appears to have been sudden as he had clearly made no provision for his soul in the event of his death, leaving the constable to make arrangements and to pay for candles and prayers for him. Peter Russell, burgess of Beaumaris, was more prepared as in 1330 he obtained a licence after an inquisition by Roger Mortimer, Justice of North Wales, to alienate in mortmain thirty four acres of land. These were worth 14s-3d annually to the chaplain entrusted with saying a divine service daily for the souls of Peter and his ancesters. (39). He appears to have lived for many years after ensuring the safety of his soul.

A similar licence had been granted earlier to Henry of Ellerton, a burgess of Carnarfon, allowing him to alienate a burgage and build on it the chantry

chapel of St. Mary. Henry was a master mason who had been involved in royal works at Vale Royal before working in North Wales on the castles and where he eventually became, in 1318, master and surveyor of the king's work in all the castles of North Wales. (40). The chantry of St. Mary was a chapel of ease to the parish church at Llanbeblig, which was outside the walls of the new town of Carnarfon and near to Segontium. Similarly the new town of Beaumaris was within a parish with the church sited outside the walls of the town. Llandegfan church is two and a half miles south west of Beaumaris and in 1315 the burgesses petitioned the Bishop of Bangor to consecrate the chapel they had built within the town as the distance they had to travel to the parish church was too great. (41).

Unlike these two boroughs Conway had a church immediately available and within the walls of the town. In June 1284, as part of the agreement to transfer the abbey to Maenan, the monastic chapel became the parish church of the new town. (42). The church was to be held by it's former incumbents with all rights of patronage and ownership and "all tithes of land and sea on both sides of the river." A conditional clause in the agreement was that the new parish church was to be served by "two fit and honest English chaplains" and one Welsh chaplain "by reason of the difference of language."

There were, of course, native Welshman within the boundaries of the parish and the appointment of one Welsh chaplain was appropriate even if the church itself was within the walls of the new town. In theory Welshmen were not to reside within the town by ordinance of the king but, in fact, they did so from the earliest years. (43). The earliest Conway rental contains the name of one burgess. Anian ap Guere, who was undoubtedly Welsh and two others, John of Gyffin and Martin Griffyn, who probably were. Additionally a number originated from Deganwy, although probably of English stock, and one from Cardigan in South Wales. Ten years later four burgages were held by Welshmen along with two sites in Conway and two in Deganwy. Dafydd ap Einion, merchant and burgess of Beaumaris, also held seven acres of Conway's town lands. The Irish and French were also resident in the town from the earliest days and a more appropriate qualification for residence than "English" would have been those "loyal to the King of England". Within this context the claim of the displaced Welsh residents of Llanfaes that "they were English by blood and nationality" is comprehensible. (44). One ethnic group expressly forbidden to reside within the new towns by a clause in their charters were the Jews.

The social structure of the new society in the new towns was largely determined by economic status and royal patronage. It was led by the senior officers of the administration who by virtue of both office and income formed a privileged elite. Ranking with them in financial terms but not in local influence were the more successful merchants and builders. Their wealth had been accumulated from the great quantities of money poured into North Wales by the king, not only into capital works, but to support the garrisons once they were established. They were often absentee burgesses either because their commercial business was centred elsewhere, or because they had to move with the king in support of his programme of works. William of Doncaster remained a citizen of Chester and, although he had burgages in Conway, and land and a burgage in Beaumaris, operated his merchant's business from his established base. Other merchants of Chester and possibly those from France also had agents representing them in the towns but were themselves non-resident. Similarly Dafydd ap Einion of Llanfaes and then Beaumaris held land in Conway but had no residence there. James of St. George, the master architect of the whole programme of works in North Wales, held land and a burgage in Beaumaris, but during the formative years of the town, was in Scotland serving the king in his professional capacity. John of Candover, clerk of castle works, retained his burgage interest in Conway long after he had been drafted on official business to the Agenais. These most successful merchants, technicians and administrators may well have exercised great influence on overall royal policy and their money and skills undoubtedly contributed greatly to the physical and economic development of the towns. Their absentee interests, however, meant that they had little interest in the day to day fortunes of the fledgling boroughs. The group that filled this role and provided the managers of the towns were a financially less-successful but relatively affluent middle class of craftsmen and landowners. These were mainly drawn from the craftsmen originally brought into the town to work on castle construction, the group of men who held the larger parcels of the town lands, and local businessmen and traders. A typical example of the local businessman who served as a town officer was Robert Fot who held a burgage in Conway and later one in Beaumaris where he was listed as non-resident. He held no land but employed a servant and owned a boat which traded as far afield as Dublin. He was joint coroner of Conway in 1316. The bailiffs and coroners were invariably drawn from the middle class group and in the business of running the town they would have close associations with the few 'professionals' resident there. They were attorneys, churchmen and clerks employed in the royal service and would have been the few literate burgesses.

Smallholders, independent craftsmen and traders formed the rest of the society reflected in the rental lists and many of these would have struggled to make ends meet. The least fortunate tier of the new society generally remain anonymous unless their name survives in a court record as it did with Robert Fot's servant. Sub-tenants, servants and hired labourers must have numerically made up a significant part of the society but, as they did not hold property, their names and occupations remain unknown.

Where the Welsh had interests in the towns it would appear that the individual fitted into society at the level appropriate to his economic status. Outside the towns the population was almost entirely Welsh and in the early years had mainly Welsh officers acting on behalf of the new administration. This latter position changed in the 1330's with many more official posts being awarded to Englishmen for services rendered, but even in 1361 an impression is made of an English urban society and a Welsh rural society. More than half of the cases dealt with in the Carnarfon court for that year were between Welshmen, and this situation is reflected in surviving conveyances of land. The majority of rural transactions were between Welshmen and between Englishmen within the boroughs right up to the period of expansionism in the early fifteenth century when the great landed estates were founded. (45).

Frictions were bound to arise between a relatively affluent urban society, in receipt of outside financial help, and an indigenous poorer rural population. Such antagonism would be heightened by perceptions of ethnic differences and abuse of power by those placed in control. A new society in a new town inevitably has problems of adjustment and is both physically and financially difficult to manage. Notwithstanding these problems the central administration at Carnarfon does not appear to have been either honest or efficient even by the standards of the day. Such dishonesty and inefficiency undoubtedly would have exacerbated any urban/rural or English/Welsh problems that might have arisen. Additionally the shortage and lateness in funding from England would have increased the problems of the provincial administration. This problem appears to have increased as the initial drive and enthusiasm of the king reduced and his attentions were directed elsewhere.

The physical and financial operations involved in the early years of the establishment of the new towns can be seen as a remarkably efficient undertaking both in the technical and organisational skill of the responsible royal officers.

Such men were valuable and moved on to other things once the pattern of settlement had been established. The permanent administration was staffed by men who would appear to have been of a lesser calibre. The problems of Esthalle in the exchequer at Carnarfon and his alleged shortcomings in the county administration are illustrative of a situation becoming out of control. Within the towns themselves the situation was more stable, particularly in Conway, where the original constable served for such a long period with a small group of resident bailiffs.

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CONWAY

The town's economy. i) Agriculture.

It was a characteristic of most new towns founded in medieval England that the boundaries of the town were coincident with it's walls and that the surrounding agricultural land remained in possession of the village or parish invaded by the town. (1). Most of these towns in England were founded as a 're-ordering' of a great estate to maximise financial returns and, as such, were very different from Edward I's plantations in Wales. The castle towns of North Wales needed to be as self-sufficient as possible and were granted their surrounding lands for their own cultivation.

As a site on which to plant a self-sufficient community the land chosen for Conway was not particularly good. As a defensive site it was excellent, establishing a foothold on the western bank of the river Conway and capable of being supplied by sea. Near Conway the heathy moorland comes down to sea level and tough igneous rocks in juxtaposition with relatively soft sediments bring about precipitous slopes with thin soils, often on hill wash. The annual rainfall in Conway is 30/35 inches a year but on the higher surrounding hills it reaches 70 inches. (2). None of the land designated for Conway new town was of good quality, much of it being mountain pasture with poor grassland overrun with gorse and bracken or sandy heath at sea level. Some relatively better land along the northern banks of the river Gyffin was probably the only area suitable for arable farming. (3). In respect of the quality of it's agricultural land Conway was less fortunate than both Carnarfon and Beaumaris. Carnarfon is on a wide, flat coastal strip that was amongst the best farming land in the county of Carnarfon and Beaumaris was founded on the maerdref of Llanfaes, the most fertile land in Anglesey. (4). Giraldus summed up the difference in the agricultural values of Conway and Beaumaris in writing that "if all the herds in Wales were driven together, the mountains of Snowdonia could supply them with pasture. In the same way Anglesey is so productive that it could supply the whole of Wales with corn over a long period." (5).

The later of the two early Conway rentals, dating from 1305/6, sets out in detail the acreages of land rented by individual burgesses and the rent payable for each holding. (6). Unfortunately it gives little information that might help to locate any of the holdings and there must be some doubt about the interpretation of the stated acreages as a variety of 'acres' were in common use in the thirteenth century. In Wales the acre used up to the time of Edward's colonisation differed from the English 'statute acre' and, although its

use may well have continued for local purposes, its use is unlikely in the rolls of the king's new towns. (7). The clerks compiling the rentals were English but some of them originated from Chester where a local acre was in use. The Cheshire 'acre' measured over 10,000 square yards, or more than twice the statute acre, and approximated to the acre used in the march of Wales and in Ireland. (8). It appears that most medieval Cheshire records are drawn up in the local measure and this practice survived until well in the nineteenth century. The estate books of Norton Priory in Cheshire in the nineteenth century had double column entries for field areas and gave both statute and 'customary acres'. (9). By the eighteenth century contemporary plans of Conway (10) were drafted in statute acres and the balance of probability is that the early rentals, being 'royal' documents were also in this measure. This tends to be confirmed by examination of what the recorded acreages mean on the ground and also by reference to agricultural rents in England. Rents recorded in Cheshire were more than twice the range of rents in the Conway rental as would be expected if the statute and customary acres were in use in Conway and Cheshire respectively. (11). In addition the Conway rents were broadly consistent with those of southern England. (12). The assumption will be made in this study that Conway acreages are in statute measure, but, if positive evidence can be revealed that shows that the 'Cheshire acre' was in use in Edwardian Wales, then many of the conclusions in regard to economic viability drawn in this work and, indeed, much other work, will be wrongly based. A final point to be made about medieval land measure is that it was a ground surface measure which on undulating and sloping sites can differ considerably from measures made by modern methods of orthographic projection.

Conway was founded on land formerly occupied by the Abbey of Aberconway. The abbey was granted its lands by the charter of Llewellyn ap Iorwerth at the end of the thirteenth century. The charter is very precise in describing the boundaries, and many of the topographical references in the charter can be identified today. The abbey lands at Aberconway were divided into two approximately equal lots on the east and west banks of the river and each of 1100-1200 acres. On the west bank, around the new town itself, most of the charter's references can be identified and the boundary plotted with considerable accuracy. On the eastern bank the references are now obscure and few can be located. (13).

The boundaries of the land on the western side of the river coincides with

those that became the boundaries of the modern borough. The sea is the boundary on the northern side, the river Conway on the east, the river Gyffin on the south and the Bishop of Bangor's township of Gwerydros on the west. The site includes both Conway mountain and morfa. On the Creuddyn side of the river the abbey charter includes Eglwys-Rhos and Bodesgallen amongst its references, but otherwise the boundaries are obscure. Equally obscure is the question of how much of the abbey's former lands were granted to the new town and how much was retained by the king as demesne land or leased to others.

The early Conway rental accounts for 650⅝ acres; equal to not much more than half of the abbey land on the western bank of the river and less than half of the land accounted for by the bailiffs of Carnarfon (14) and Beaumaris. (15). All of the land in the Conway rental is accounted for as being leased to named individuals and there is no record of any land being held in common. One plot and burgage is noted as being "in manu domini principis" but this undoubtedly refers to a transitional situation where the land of a former tenant was awaiting re-allocation.

It does not seem probable that Conway would have been granted only half the land of Carnarfon or Beaumaris or that half of the former abbey lands on the west bank would have been retained as royal demesne. It appears that all of the former abbey land on the western side of the river was granted to the borough of Conway and that the area not accounted for in the rental was held in common. As common land it would not appear separately itemised in the rental as the right to use common grazing would be paid for in each burgage fee. This view is strengthened when examination is made of the nature of the land itself. An analysis of soils and slopes shows a limited area suitable for cultivation as arable land. This is in a single block bounded on the south-east by the river Gyffin and on the north and west by the 400 ft. contour, above which slopes are much steeper and rock frequently outcrops. This area of the better land would have been suitable for sub-division leaving the peripheral land, largely comprising the mountain and morfa, to be held in common. This analysis of the potential arable land shows an acreage very close to that accounted for in the Conway rental. The non-arable land equates to the acreage claimed as common by the Borough of Conway over 500 years later in 1846. The survey for the apportionment of rent in lieu of tithe charges lists 285 acres of marsh and 261 acres of mountain as being held in common together with a number of other small tenanted holdings. (16).

The scenario of the castle-town with its arable land tidily located immediately to the west and common pasture on the adjoining mountain and heath is not echoed on the eastern bank of the river. Here the boundaries are not recognisable and the subdivision of the land to various interests can only partly be traced.

The Abbey of Aberconway held about 1200 acres in the commote of Creuddyn on the eastern bank of the river. This was surrendered when the abbey was moved to Maenan but, probably due to the strategic importance of Deganwy, was not included in the lands granted to Henry Lacy to form the Lordship of Denbigh. Instead the commote Creuddyn and the abbey's new lands at Maenan became the only land east of the river Conway included in the new county of Carnarfon. (17). Deganwy became a dependant vill of Conway and the 1305/6 rental accounts for small sites "in villa de Gannon" at rentals only a fraction of those for Conway burgages. The rental accounts for no town lands in Deganwy or Creuddyn whereas precise details are recorded for Conway itself. It is improbable that the royal castle and town of Deganwy would have been within the monastic lands as a borough charter was granted by Henry III in 1251. This gave the burgesses the right to have half an acre of land in the borough and two acres of arable land outside. In the same year Henry issued an order to the sheriff of Shropshire to allow the abbey of Aberconway fifty marks for war damage to the abbey's buildings and granges. (18). No mention of compensation for abbey lands taken to establish the new borough of Deganwy is made and the payment is, in any case, too small. Henry's right to the land would have been won from Llewellyn and confirmed by the Peace of Woodstock in 1247. Creuddyn subsequently passed back into Welsh hands and remained there until the war of 1277. The conclusion drawn by R. W. Hays that the abbey lands were separate from and south of Deganwy appears highly probable, (19), and there are a number of factors that suggest that after surrender by the abbey they were not then granted to the new borough of Conway.

The receipts of the commote of Creuddyn were accounted for to the exchequer at Carnarfon separately from those of Conway. Sir William de Cicon, in addition to being constable of Conway and 'ex officio' mayor of the town, also held the office of bailiff of the commotes of Creuddyn and Arlechwedd. Sir William accounted for the receipts from Creuddyn and the town bailiffs of Conway for those of the borough. (20). An additional factor is that some of the land in Creuddyn taken from the abbey was immediately leased back to them.

The value given for the monk's leaseholding varies from £5 per annum in 1284 to £1-13s-4d in 1291 but either figure would represent a substantial acreage. Further land in Creuddyn was granted by the king to Welsh landholders in Maenan as compensation for the land they lost by the enforced relocation of the abbey. (21). Any land held by the borough of Conway and leased to individual burgesses appears on the rental but no reference is made to land in Creuddyn. Common land would not necessarily appear on the rental as no separate rent was commanded by such land and only the poorer grades of land with no arable potential appear to have been held in common. Generally the Creuddyn land was of better quality than that in Conway, although, in 1835 common land was claimed in Creuddyn when the town was visited by the commissioners for the Enclosure Acts. (22). Similarly, in 1846, when the town was assessed to apportion rent charges in lieu of tithes, a small acreage in the parish of Eglwys-Rhos was mapped as belonging to the Borough of Conway (23) but whether this had been common since the foundation of the town is not recorded. It must remain uncertain as to whether the borough held land on the east bank from the date of its foundation but what is certain is that individual burgesses did hold land in the area. William of Westgate, an attorney, held two burgages in Conway but died sometime before December 1299. The inquisition post mortem held that month in Conway found "that the lands of the said William are in the king's hands as escheat; whereof Helen his late wife holds two burgages in Aberconway, 33½ acres at Kylmaytin (Cilmeityn) and twelve acres in the fields of Gannon (Deganwy) for life and held of the king at a yearly rent of 20s-9d to the king." (24). William's daughter Margaret tried to claim inheritance of the property but in March 1300 a grant by letters patent was made "to Simon, son of Vitalis, of Chilton of the lands of William of Westgate and also the lands which Elena (Helen) held in dower, when they fall in, the yearly value being 20s-9d." (25). The wording of the inquisition and consequent grant suggest that William's land in both Deganwy and Creuddyn was held of the king and did not form part of the town lands of Conway. It is interesting to note that the rental paid for this land was substantially higher than the level of rents in Conway suggesting, perhaps, either that the quality of the land was better or that the king was more 'commercial' in his transactions than a new town community struggling to establish their borough in a difficult and potentially hostile environment. In 1305/6 Simon of Chilton is listed as holding two burgages and 40 and 18½ acres in Conway, but the Conway rental makes no reference to 12 acres in Deganwy or 33½ acres in Creuddyn. A later Inquisition, made in 1324, refers to lands belonging to Simon Flint of Conway

in "Eyros in North Wales." (26). Eirias was a township in Llandrillo yn Rhos, immediately east of the Creuddyn commotal boundary and within the Lordship of Denbigh. The possibility of a fish-weir at Eirias ever belonging to the monks of Aberconway is discounted by Hays (27) but its later tenure by a burgess of Conway might suggest that it had been part of the land surrendered by the Abbot in 1284. The fish-weir was still functioning in 1809 when Hyde-Hall reported that "it adequately supplies the adjacent county with herrings and mackerel." (28).

Other Conway burgage holders also held land outside the town but, as they themselves were not resident, the land probably contributed little to the economy of the town. Two merchants, William of Doncaster and Dafydd ap Einion, both held burgages in Conway where Dafydd also rented seven acres. Both merchants had extensive land interests in Beaumaris and William also had interests in Abergele, Rhuddlan, Flint and many places in Cheshire. If their new town lands were sublet to agricultural tenants, as seems probable, they would have had some direct benefit to the town, but any surplus would have contributed little to the local economy.

The fore-going extra-mural land holdings appear to have been exceptional. In the early years of the new towns interest in land outside the towns by burgesses was limited and examination of surviving deeds shows that landholdings in the rural hinterlands were generally in Welsh hands. (29). This was also true of the rural administration as in 1304/5 only eight out of fortythree rural office holders in the county of Carnarfon were not Welsh. (30). Where English names do occur they are often matched by a Welsh name; the rhingild of Eifionydd was English but the rhaglaw was Welsh. This situation changed markedly in the 1330's, some fifty years after the foundation of the new towns, but in the early years the English towns were set in a rural Welsh hinterland. The Bulkeleys, who settled in Beaumaris in the early fifteenth century, had built up holdings of over 40,000 acres by the nineteenth century including the extensive estate of the Boldes of Conway. (31). The Boldes were not early settlers in Conway and their estate, mainly in the Conway valley, did not accumulate until 1420 and after. (32). Similarly the Hollands extensive interests in the town of Conway were not initiated until the late fourteenth century.

Prior to this, for the first hundred years of the town's existence, the land held by the borough of Conway and its residents remained much as it was at the date of foundation. A small extension of borough territory had been

granted to Conway in the mid-thirteenth century when they acquired the grant of the fee-farm of Llechan, a former villein tref, for 118s. (33). The borough had previously acquired the right to hold the town at fee-farm in 1316. (34).

The original grants of land to the three towns, Conway with 1200 acres, Carnarfon with 1400 and Beaumaris with nearly 1500 acres, did not prove adequate. Conway burgesses pressed for more land, eventually acquiring Llechan, and individuals rented land outside the franchise of the borough. The burgesses of Beaumaris petitioned the king for more land less then ten years after the town's foundation and succeeded in extending their acreage both in 1315 and 1366. (35). The original grant of 1464½ acres to Carnarfon was never officially extended but the Welsh freemen of Arfon found cause to petition the king that the burgesses of Carnarfon were expanding their land and cutting their woodland in the process. (36).

In making the original grants of land the king must have been advised that the areas granted were sufficient to ensure agricultural self-sufficiency. To have granted too little land would have been to build-in to the new town situation a potential for resentment that would have largely defeated the object of the enterprise. The towns were established, not only as defensive bastions around the rim of Snowdonia, but to promote pacification through commerce. It would not have made sense to starve towns of land 'ab initio' when the king had within his gift sufficient conquered lands to grant. In the event all three towns found it either necessary or economically attractive to press for more land.

The land granted to Conway appears to have comprised one block of about 1200 acres, half suitable for arable cropping and half for pastureland, all of which had been farmed by the Cistercians for a hundred years before the foundation of the town. To assess the adequacy of this to support the population of Conway it is necessary to consider the size of the population.. The rental roll of 1305/6 lists 109 burgesses within the walls and up to another twenty families living in the developing 'suburbs' of the town under Twthill and at the ferry. Some of the burgessess, certainly the rich merchants, would not themselves have been resident but possibly had agents resident on their plots. Any shortfall due to non-residence would have been balanced by those families and those that had servants resident with them. Robert Fot is recorded in 1316 as having one such servant, John the Shepherd. (37).

The garrison of the castle must be considered apart as they were fed by the importation of victuals from outside the town. A reasonable estimate of the population dependant on the agriculture of the town would therefore be about 125 families.

Peasant land holdings in England had been declining during the latter half of the thirteenth century and by 1300 many holdings were only at subsistence level. (38). Various historians have attempted to assess the area required by a family to subsist in the light of knowledge of levels of agricultural production and their conclusions range from ten to sixteen acres. The many families who held less than this were not able to fully feed or employ themselves on their own holding and had both the time and the necessity to day-labour on the larger farms.

This must also have been the situation of many of the new settlers in Conway although in one respect their problems were worse. As burgesses of the town they enjoyed rights and privileges denied to many rural dwellers but these rights had to be paid for. They were locked into a money economy and subsistence farming was not adequate; they needed to generate cash for their rents and the other financial demands or urban living. If a surplus could not be produced agriculturally then the cash would need to be raised by paid employment.

The area of land recorded on the Conway rental rental was only 658⅝ acres. To this must be added about the same area of poor common land on the mountain and morfa. The total area for each family averaged about ten acres and this placed the whole town on or below the margins of subsistence. A little garden produce could have been cultivated within the walls on the burgage plots but as these were only one-tenth of an acre and many families had only a half or quarter plot this would not have materially altered the situation. Any extra-mural land held by individuals in Deganwy or Creuddyn and cultivated as part of the local economy would have helped but does not appear to have been of sufficient acreage to ensure self-sufficiency for the community.

The Conway town lands have been discussed in terms of the average acreage available for each family but the land was not distributed in an even pattern. Only one in three of the residents held arable land although all burgesses may have had access to common pasture. The town's 658⅝ acres of arable land was divided into only thirty-five holdings varying in size from 1½ to 58½ acres.

This is in marked contrast to Carnarfon where five-sixths of the burgage holders also held land in plots ranging from five to seventy acres and the average available for each burgess was nearly twenty acres or double the Conway average. (39).

Of the thirty-five holdings in Conway, twelve were less than ten acres, fifteen were between ten and twenty acres, and eight were greater than twenty. Holdings of over twenty acres would have required some paid help in addition to the family of the farmer, whereas those under ten acres would not have been large enough to fully occupy one family. Some of the larger farmers, such as Sir William de Cicon constable of Conway castle and bailiff of Creuddyn and Arlechwedd would not have worked the land themselves but depended entirely on hired labour. On balance it would appear that the agricultural community of Conway was about the right size to manage and cultivate the arable land and supervise the common pastures. The smaller farmers would have had time to work for the larger landholders who often had other commitments that would have kept them off the land. A small number of full-time paid helpers may also have been employed in certain capacities such as shepherding.

Conway's land was not all of the same quality and the rents varies from 1-1/3d to 8d per acre. Unfortunately the Conway rental does not relate the rent to the quality of the land as does the contemporary Beaumaris rental. This refers to 'best land', 'next to best land', and 'mountain land' but quality can only be inferred from the variations in rent level in Conway which were:-

1-1/3d	per acre	- 31.75 acres
2d	per acre	- 116.25 acres
2½d	per acre	- 253.9 acres
3d	per acre	- 181 acres
3¾d	per acre	- 62.5 acres
8d	per acre	- 0.5 acre

There is no apparent reason why half an acre of land rented by Isonda Welythewyt "apud galwhulle" should command a rental equivalent to eightpence an acre when the general range of rents was from 1-1/3d to 3¾d.

The implications of these rents and the cost of burgage tenure can best be explained by examination of what is known about one of the smaller landholders, John de Colton. He held a single shilling burgage and eleven acres of poorer land which he rented at 2d per acre. He consequently had to find 34d in cash

every year from this holding and his share of common land. At eleven acres his holdong was on the margins of subsistence and could not have provided any surplus crop to realise cash for rents. This he would have had to earn by labouring for a larger landowner and possibly selling livestock from his share of common land. To earn 34d he would have had to labour for eleven to seventeen days, probably at harvest time when his own land needed him most. His share of common would probably only have been able to produce a single carcass of beef or three or four sheep annually. The accounts for victualling the castles value a carcass of beef at four or five shillings. (40). John de Colton would have had a very difficult time in raising sufficient cash to pay his rents let alone any fines or tolls that he may have incurred. To purchase articles of clothing, food or farm implements would have strained the budget even further and yet a dozen farmers held less land than John. Their role in the agricultural economy of the town must have been one that is still familiar in the marginal uplands of Wales today - working their own small-holding but also selling their labour whenever they could to the more affluent landowners.

These larger landholders often had other interests. Sir William de Cicon held over thirty acres but was a paid official of the castle and county. Henry Baldwyn was a trader who got involved in a court case over the payment of £10-11s-0d for herrings and who, between 1295 and 1305 increased his burgage holding from a single plot to three and a half in Conway and a site in Deganwy. (41). Andrew the cryer and Adinet Patyn both held office as town bailiffs and Patyn, who had come to Conway with the king's army in 1282, farmed the Deganwy ferry for several years. William le Shermon, if his name is indicitive of his profession had an interest in wool-clipping, in addition to his own thirty-seven acres in Conway. William, or someone bearing the same name, also held land in both Carnarfon and Beaumaris. (42).

Hitherto this account has been about land holding and little has been said about the type of husbandry practised. What Giraldus wrote about the Welsh over a hundred years earlier was probably also true of the English settlers: "the whole population lives almost entirely on oats and the produce of their herds." (43). Little positive evidence survives of what crops the Conway burgesses grew but the range cannot have been dissimilar from the wheat, barley, oats and peas cultivated across the Menai Strait in Anglesey. (44). Less corn would have been grown on the poorer soils of the mainland but, when necessary, additional grain could have been bought-in from Anglesey. Cattle

were raised and occasionally beef carcasses would be sold to the castle garrison. Dafydd ap Einion, Isonda Welythewyt and Robert of Northampton, all burgesses of Conway supplied eighteen beef carcasses in 1297. (45). Generally castle supplies were not bought locally and the accounts show wheat, oats and malt were frequently imported, often from Ireland but occasionally from Cheshire, Staffordshire or Shropshire. Honey, herrings and cheese were supplied from Bristol and wine from France. Additionally extensive herds of cattle were kept on the king's demesne in the counties of Carnarfon and Merioneth. Ririd ap Cadugan, the king's 'vaccarius' in the county, regularly accounted for the herd between 1287 and 1302. (46). His accounts for 1301-2 reveal details of a herd comprising 14 oxen, 75 cows, of which 55 were pregnant and the remainder barren, eight young oxen, eighteen bullocks and 22 calves. (47). Pigs were grazed in the royal forest and in some years 15/- was paid to the Carnarfon exchequer for pannage. Before the conquest honey is recorded as being bought in Aberconway and carried to Rhuddlan for the king's household. (48). The castle regularly bought honey, sometimes from Bristol, but possibly also from local sources. One of the two annual Conway fairs became known as the honey fair and this title persisted until modern times.

The overall impression of the Conway agricultural economy is of one balanced between inadequacy and a very basic self-sufficiency. In good years a few surplus cattle could be sold but in poor years severe problems would have occurred. Disease of livestock was a recurring medieval problem and Henry Somer, burgess of Conway, pleaded "murrain of his animals" when asking relief for a debt of £60 to the king owing from his duties as lieutenant to the sheriff of Carnarvon. (49).

Bad weather caused great difficulties as illustrated by a contemporary chronicler; "....in the past year there was such plentiful rain that men could scarcely harvest the corn or bring it safely to the barn. In the present year (1316) worse has happened. For the floods of the rain have rotted all the seed.. ... and in many places the hay lay so long under water that it could be neither mown nor gathered. Sheep generally died and other animals were killed by a sudden plague." (50). At Frodsham in the Mersey valley the reaping of the Marsh dragged on for five weeks in 1316 (51) and the situation must have been equally desperate just along the coast in Conway. The men of both Conway and Carnarfon had to seek protection to travel to Ireland to buy victuals during that disastrous year. (52).

Three years with cold and wet summers would have been difficult to manage in any agricultural community but in mountainous North Wales the effect must have been calamitous. Cereal crops were not easily grown on the cold, wet, poor soils and these years must have caused great hardship. The spoilage of seed corn, murrain of animals and reduction or loss of the hay crop to feed both cattle and horses through the winter must have spelt disaster to many of Conway's burgesses. Adversity does not affect all men in the same way and one Conway burgess seemed to prosper greatly during these three years of famine. William of Doncaster, burgess of Conway and Beaumaris and mayor of Chester in 1316, considerably expanded his interests during this period by the acquisition of a number of burgages and plots of land in both Flint and Rhuddlan. (52).

If Doncaster's gains were the result of the collapse of small interests because of lack of money it well illustrates the problem of the small farmer in the poor years. Although less than a half, possibly as few as a third, of Conway's settlers depended directly on agriculture for their living, the entire population depended indirectly on the product of the town lands to a considerable degree. The advantage that the non-agricultural worker enjoyed, whether merchant or smith, was that he could widen his horizons and make his living from not only within the town but a far wider area. The occupations that the other part of the population of Conway followed and their privileged trading position will be discussed in the next section of the work.

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CONWAY

The town's economy. ii) Occupations and employment.

A major employment element in a new town in comparison with an established town is the work created by the construction and administration of the town itself. Whereas an established town draws upon its own population resources to manage, construct and re-construct its fabric a new town must import these skills. Such is the pace of construction in the early years of a new town that full time jobs are created that otherwise might be done as part of their work by residents of the town. It cannot have been typical of small medieval towns for a salaried mayor, architects and engineers to be resident but this was the case in Conway, Carnarfon and, later, Beaumaris where the scale and pace of building required their presence. Also untypical was the role of these new boroughs as garrison towns with a nucleus of professional soldiers resident in the castle.

These new towns were, however, much more than military garrisons and fulfilled all of the requirements of a town as opposed to a military camp or an enlarged settlement appended to the castle. Only a third of the residents were engaged in agricultural work, about the same proportion either in or on behalf of the castle administration with the remainder fulfilling those commercial and trade occupations characteristic of any medieval market town.

From the surviving town records of Conway the assignment of the early residents into occupations in agriculture, town administration, commerce or craft probably over-simplifies the role that many would have played in the busy early years. The edges between occupations were blurred and some of those involved in agriculture still practised their craft or profession. Some of the administrators would have dabbled in trade when the opportunity arose and all groups of occupations would have provided candidates for the elected offices of the town. For convenience, however, the occupations of the early settlers in Conway will be discussed where surviving records appear to place them within the four broad classifications of agriculture, town administration, commerce and craft.

It is appropriate to start with the first citizen of the town, the constable of the castle and mayor of the borough. The borough charters granted by King Edward I to the North Wales new towns granted the burgesses the right to elect their own bailiffs but imposed the constable of the castle on them as mayor. The constable, as the permanent representative of the king in the town, was a powerful figure, being only junior to the justice and

chamberlain of North Wales. A single man, therefore, headed both the civil and military administrations of the borough.

The first constable of Conway was Sir William de Cicon who originated from Cicon in the Jura and was probably introduced into the royal service by Otto de Grandson. Sir William was appointed to Conway in 1284 where he remained until his death nearly thirty years later. (1). His son was then granted £30 a year in honour of his own and his father's long and loyal service to the king. (2). Before arriving in Conway he had fought in South Wales in the war of 1277 and served as constable at Rhuddlan. (3). From the earliest years the garrison under his command was not large and declined as the financial and political situation changed. In 1284 the first garrison numbered only thirty men. (4). Fifteen of these were cross-bowmen, ten were employed on general duties such as gatekeepers or sentries and the remaining five were a chaplain, a mason, a carpenter, a smith and a master at arms or 'attiliator'. As the military situation demanded the skills of this group were supplemented by specialist skills. The accounts refer to payments to clerks, lorimers, plumbers, falconers, carters, and masters of the king's barge. (5). In times of conflict the military strength of the garrison was increased and esquires with their horses, sergeants-at-arms and archers were added to the payroll for the duration of the crisis. The constable was paid an annual fee from which he was expected to pay the regular garrison and, in 1284, this amounted to £190. (6). The fee stayed at this level for the remainder of the century but in some years only part payment was made. In 1291 Sir William received only £140 in part payment of his fee, presumably because at that time the regular garrison was less than full strength. Supernumerary staff were paid according to the length of the duty they performed. John of Hornmouth, master of the king's barge, was paid for the twenty-one days in 1295 that he and his crew of nine sailors took to sail the return journey from Conway to Criccieth. John Passanant, sergeant at arms, was paid for serving in Carnarfon castle during 1297-8 for a period of four hundred and twenty-nine days at one shilling a day.

Sir William de Cicon's responsibilities in Conway extended beyond the role of military commander of the garrison and mayor. He was bailiff for many years of the two commotes around Conway and, as bailiff of Creuddyn and bailiff and woodward of Arlechwedd, annually returned nearly £70 to the exchequer at Carnarfon. (7). His appointment as bailiff of Arlechwedd in 1296

followed soon after the Madoc rebellion and appears to have required his military powers to suppress any continuing unrest. His letter of appointment committed Arlechwedd to him "so that the men of these commotes do what they ought". (8). Similar problems in the preceding year caused John de Havering and Sir William de Cicon to be empowered to enquire into hardships and injustices complained of by the men of North Wales. (9). These quasi-judicial tasks were in addition to Sir William's military command but he also had a considerable administrative responsibility. The supplying and victualling of the castle had to be supervised and authorised by the constable. He authorised the work and finance for repair of the castle and town walls and also for repair of the king's ferry boat. (10). When stocks in the castle were excessive and in danger of deteriorating he had to sell them and in 1293 he paid £100 to the exchequer at Carnarfon in respect of the sale of such stock. (11). Further duties included supervision of the castle gaol, which housed not only Welsh but English and Scottish prisoners. In 1303 Sir William administered the ferry across the Conway at Tal-y-Cafn (12), returning a fee of 53s-4d. He also had routine paper work to do such as the letter of recommendation and protection that Jack of Salop took with him when, in 1292, he drove ninety three cattle from Conway to London "at the risk of the Lord the King." (13).

Unlike some later constables, who entrusted their work to deputies, Sir William was active and resident in Conway during his long office at the castle. He rented a burgage plot and is listed on the rental rolls of both 1295 and 1305. The latter roll also shows him to have rented over 31 acres of the town lands. For this acreage he paid 3s-6d per annum which was the lowest rate per acre in the town. He either chose the poorest land or exercised his considerable powers to fix the rent at a level he found acceptable.

The constable could not have carried out his considerable duties without a clerical staff and two clerks who each became important figures in their own right were at Conway in the early years.

John of Candover was a senior wardrobe clerk who was keeper of the works at Conway in 1283/4. Before this he had been at Rhuddlan and experienced the problems of obtaining building materials to supply a rapid building programme. His letters from Conway to William of Perton, clerk in charge of supplies at Chester, concerning shortages of iron, steel, and nails are illustrative of

the constant pressure that needed to be exercised in order to ensure adequate supplies. (14). One of his letters to Perton also requested the supply of two dozen parchments "of the kind which he will know best suits my requirements and I will send him the money."

His duties in Conway also included certifying the value of and paying for items of the castle building programme (15), and during 1984/5 accounting for the receipt of money at Conway from the Treasury in Ireland to the value of £1133-6s-8d. (16). Whilst resident in Conway, John of Candover was granted the rectory of Swarraton in Hampshire near to his home town of Candover (17), and did not stay in Conway later than 1285. In that year he was appointed Treasurer of the Agenais in Gascony. Although resident abroad he did not relinquish his messuage and forty acres in Conway. In July 1295, after his death, his lands were in escheat and then granted to a Burgundian knight, Gerard de Pyney. (18). Gerard's name appears on the rental for that year, although not on the subsequent one of 1305, and it must be doubted whether he even resided in Conway. In the year in which he died, John of Candover was back in England working near to his home town. He accounted in Portsmouth for 123 casks of wine sent from that port to Mathew de Colombers, the king's butler in the castle at Conway. (19).

Another king's clerk, Hugh of Leominster, worked and held a burgage in Conway from the very early years until at least 1306 (20), by when his interest had expanded to 1½ burgages. Although a burgess of Conway he was clerk of the works at Carnarfon in 1283/4 and subsequently at Harlech. As with Candover, he was granted a rectory whilst a burgess of Conway (21). This was at Carnarfon where he also acquired a burgage and over sixty acres of land. (22). In July 1295 Hugh was appointed to be chamberlain of North Wales (23) and also represented Queen Eleanor's interests in North Wales. (24). As chamberlain he would have worked in Carnarfon rather than Conway but, in 1296, he was temporarily back working in Conway. He wrote to the king from Conway to report on the rebuilding of the town walls after the sacking of Carnarfon by the Welsh. (25). In 1301, when responsibility for the administration of North Wales was passed from the king to Prince Edward, Hugh of Leominster was transferred to Chester as chamberlain. (26). He later became keeper of the wardrobe of Edward of Windsor (27) but, although away from North Wales, he kept his interests in Conway just as Candover had. Once these senior clerks had been promoted and left the town it is not known whether

they kept agents in the town, sublet their properties or left them vacant. The latter situation appears unlikely as it would not have made economic sense to pay rent for years with no prospect of return. They would have had no real need for agents in the town, unlike the great merchants, and it must be assumed that the property was sub-let. A number of names occur in the records of the town that appear to belong to residents but which do not appear on the rental lists. An example is the pipe roll account for the disposition of small amounts of the castle's surplus victuals. Some of the names on the account are recognisable as burgesses of the town but others are not, and these people may well have been resident in the town as sub-tenants of absentees like John of Candover or Hugh of Leominster.

Other clerks of less prominence were undoubtedly employed on the castle staff. One such was probably Richard the Clerk who was on the 1295 rental roll. He accounted to the Exchequer at Carnarfon for £4 from the receipts of the ferry and mill at Conway, but whether he did this as a royal clerk or officer of the town is not recorded. It is probable that he was a royal clerk as other men in the same year accounted for further receipts from both the ferry and mill and one of these was bailiff the following year and the other regularly farmed the mill and ferry during the period. (28). Richard the Clerk does not re-appear on the 1305/6 rental but his son, named as William the Clerk (son of Richard), is entered as holding two burgages. This was an increased holding over the one and a half plots held by his father ten years earlier.

Amongst the duties of another castle employee was the responsibility for any prisoners held there. Isabella, wife of Hugh the Porter, was paid 77s-7d for the keep of prisoners in Conway castle during 1286. (29). Ten years later the castle received Scottish prisoners from the battle of Dunbar and considerable sums are noted as being expended by the constable on sending men to Dunbar castle to escort the prisoners back to Conway and then for their keep.

Others by the name of Porter held burgages in Conway in 1295 and 1305 and may have been employed at the castle or town gates as their name suggests. Roger the Porter was a burgess in 1295 and bailiff in the same year. He was probably the same man as the burgess listed as 'Roger Cole, porter' in the 1305 rental; one of the very few instances where the records directly attribute a job to a person. The earlier roll, again unusually, notes that

Roger's burgage was in the market place and this suggests that he may have had commercial interests in addition to his role as gatekeeper. This appears to be confirmed by him being one of four Conway burgesses who petitioned the king over £10-11s-0d that the king's butler, Mathew de Colombers, alleged that they had not paid for 'store herrings' during the last Welsh war. (30). Such a sum represented a great number of herrings and the reference to 'store herrings' suggests salting or smoking fish was part of the local economy. The chamberlain's accounts regularly refers to the purchase and re-sale of surplus 'lasts' of herrings. Some stock had to be written off as "in putrefaccione et perdicione per longam tenacionem." (31).

Outside commercial interests do not appear to have been incompatible with holding public office at the castle. Reginald Page de castro, increased his burgage interests from half a plot to one and a half plots and a site in Deganwy between 1295 and 1305 and in the latter year farmed the Deganwy ferry for an annual fee of £5-6s-8d. (32).

The castle and its garrison also provided work for other burgesses of Conway although not necessarily on a regular basis. In the early years a number of residents were given protection to trade in the king's barge and in the year after the Madoc rebellion another burgess, John of Hornmouth, was engaged for specific periods to work as master of the king's barge with his nine sailors. (33). Such employment appears to have coincided with periods when the castles were occupied by large numbers of construction workers or military personel. This would have been true in the early years during the construction period and when John of Hornmouth was engaged ten years later it was to take wine and victuals to Harlech from Conway. At that time the garrison at Harlech would have been increased as a result of the Welsh rebellion.

Of the four early barge masters, John of Oxford and Roger of Lewes were still on the rental roll twenty-one years later in 1305. Roger of Lewes held only one burgage plot and no land and may have continued to make his living by trading. John of Oxford had built up his holding to two and a half burgages and 12½ acres of land and, in 1288 and 1289, had been elected a town bailiff.

It is not clear from the records whether a butler in charge of victualling was regularly employed at the castle but Mathew of Colombers is referred to in

1294 as the king's butler at the castle of Conway. (34). He accounted for the receipt of wine sent from Portsmouth and was involved in the royal petition over the alleged non payment for store herrings. It seems probable that this duty at the castle, like the king's bargemasters, was not regular but occasioned by the pressures of war. In years of peace the castle supplies were accounted for by the clerk's working for the constable.

Mathew of Colombers was not a burgess of Conway and would have lived in the castle but Sir Henry of Latham, also in Conway for a period as a result of the Madoc rebellion, rented a burgage. (35). Sir Henry was charged with the command of the naval force keeping the sea between Anglesey and Snowdon. He had earlier been in the service of William of Vesci in Ireland (36) and was subsequently in Scotland. (37). As with many of the senior officers of the king, Sir Henry moved about in response to the military pressures of the time and, although nominally a burgess of Conway, he could not have been considered a resident. The same is true of other senior men and of the other new towns. The king's master of works, James of St. George, was resident in Conway in 1285/6 where he had a chamber, and in 1305 is listed as a non-resident burgage holder in Beaumaris. He held six burgages of which three were vacant. The other three and the croft and small amount of land held by James must have been sub-let.

Another of the king's most senior masons, Walter of Hereford, had substantial interests amounting to two burgages and eighty-five acres of land in Carnarfon. He also had a burgage in Flint. Although resident in North Wales for the periods of intense building activity in the early years of the new towns and again after the sack of Carnarfon and the building of Beaumaris, he worked where the king required him and must generally have been absent from his property. It appears that it was Walter of Hereford's intention to live quietly in Gloucestershire until the call came to serve the king. firstly at Vale Royal and subsequently in North Wales. In 1278 he covenanted with the Abbey of Winchcombe for lifelong service, the only exception permitted being work for the king. (38). The terms of the covenant secured employment, housing and food for Walter and two grooms during his working life and for him and one groom after his retirement and until his death. Precise rations of food, wine, candles, firewood and robes were prescribed for him and his grooms, his horses were to be fed and stone and timber provided for him to construct a house for himself. The ink can hardly have been dry on this agreement before Walter was

recruited to play a very significant role in the construction of the castles and towns of North Wales and live the footloose life of a senior servant of the king. His work also took him to Scotland and London and he must have spent a relatively small amount of time resident in the new towns of Wales.

Other building workers of less renown than Walter of Hereford, having been recruited to the king's works, remained in the new towns after the completion of the castles and continued to work on repair and maintenance of the castle and the walls and mills of Conway. The castle and its administration continued to be an important element in the economic life of the town. The constable's annual fee and the payments to all those others carrying out tasks for the castle brought a considerable amount of new money into the town regularly. The payment of this money to the castle staff and other casual employees with its subsequent redistribution amongst the craftsmen and tradesmen of the town formed an economic foundation on which the town could build. The fetching and carrying of money itself provided work for the townspeople. Envoys were sent to London, Chester and Dublin to bring back both goods and silver coin. Three burgesses of the town were amongst those sent on such journeys in the period between 1290 and 1292 and were paid accordingly. (39). William of Westgate was sent to Ireland to 'seek the king's money,' as was John Russel of Conway, described as a mariner. William of Nottingham, burgess of Conway and coroner of the town in 1295 (40), made several journeys to London to bring back money. Expenses of £6-3s-0d were paid to William and two other named messengers for their forty two day round trip to London accompanied by eight servants and six horses. William of Nottingham remained in Conway until at least 1306 by which time he had increased his burgage holding to two, although he is not recorded as holding land. His living must have been derived from his work for the castle administration and his term as coroner was typical of the role played in the town by the minor officials at the castle.

Unlike William, John Russel the mariner held a substantial acreage of land in Conway, his 1305 holding being nineteen acres. His agricultural land must have provided him with his main income and his maritime activities a useful supplement. The third Conway envoy noted above, William of Westgate, was one of the few residents of the town who could today be classified as of the professional class. He appeared as attorney in the Chester courts, and on one occasion represented one of the main figures in the new town construction programme. (41). Richard the Engineer, deputy to James of St. George, was in

dispute with his co-farmer of the Dee mills, Hugh of Brykhill, over the division of the annual fee between them and chose William to represent his case. This was probably before William took up residence in Conway where his skills as an attorney or envoy were employed by the castle administration.

The other 'professional' person named was Simon, Vicar of Conway, who in 1305 rented a 'placea' next to the cemetery. No other church official is named at this date, although when the old abbey church of Aberconway became the parish church of Conway in 1284, the king directed that "it be served by two fit and honest English chaplains and by a third honest Welsh chaplain by reason of the difference of language." (42).

The demand created by the castle caused many merchants to deal with the town, particularly in times of war. Very few of these continued to trade in times of peace and invest in holdings in the town. William of Doncaster supplied a great variety of materials and victuals for the castle and also acted as carrier to some of the money needed to be brought to the town from Ireland. By 1305 he had established a permanent 'branch office' in Conway as he had in most other towns of North Wales. His wide variety of commercial interests would have precluded his own residence in Conway but it appears probable that he maintained a permanent representative in the town. He regularly appointed and sought royal protection for his agent in Dublin (43) and the same arrangement probably existed for Conway where he held two and a quarter burgages. A legal conveyance dated 1331 refers to land in Conway next to the tenement of William of Doncaster and confirms his long term interest in the town. (44). William of Doncaster dealt with the North Wales towns from the very early years of their foundation but did not establish his permanent presence in Conway until at least 1296. It appears probable from the sequence of the two rentals that the one and a quarter burgage plot he held in 1305 had formerly been held by Sir Henry Latham who had left Conway to take part in the Scottish wars in about 1296. His other plot appears to have been held by Simon Albon, a burgess about whom nothing is recorded.

A merchant who did invest in a burgage in Conway from an earlier date than Doncaster was John Frambaud of Bordeaux. He is listed on both the 1295 and 1305 rentals but it is also doubtful whether he personally lived in Conway. That he did not but was represented by a resident agent is suggested by the

wording of the letter of protection he received from the king in 1295.This gives him freedom to trade 'by himself or through attorneys', strongly indicating that he himself was not resident.

Apart from Frambaud and Doncaster many of the residents of Conway would have engaged in trade but only these two appear to have been major professional merchants. Dafydd ap Einion, of Llanfaes and Beaumaris, held land in Conway and was a merchant on a similar scale but did not have burgage interests in the town. The smaller traders, such as those noted above in the 'herring' deal would have traded as a subsidiary activity to their main occupation on the land, at the castle or as craftsmen.

Evidence of craft occupations survives largely in the building records but also, if less reliably, in the names of the burgesses. Approximately one in ten of the early settlers were building craftsmen who had been recruited to work on the king's works and had stayed in Conway. A number of these carpenters, masons and dykers had served with the royal building teams in Wales before working in Conway. One of them, Ralph of Ocle, a mason, went on to Scotland to work for the king eighteen years after settling in Conway. He was at the siege of Caerlaverock and worked on the construction of Linlithgow castle although retaining his burgages in Conway. John of Maghull, a master carpenter, saw service in Aberystwyth, Bere and Harlech before settling in Conway. (46). The building craftsmen who had worked on the castle construction and then settled in the town clearly established themselves as a reliable group of citizens. More than half of them became officials of the town and soon built up considerable property interests. Some continued to practise their craft but others appear to have concentrated on their agricultural interests. Despite the presence of a number of carpenters in Conway when specialised work was required experts had to be brought in. In 1299 a ship of considerable size and costing £29-16s-6d was constructed at Conway for the king. (47). Two exchequer clerks supervised a team of twenty six Welsh and English carpenters led by six specialist carpenters brought in from Chester. Local men, Roger of Lewes and Richard Purling, were employed to bring wood by water from Llanwrst and the ubiquitous William of Doncaster supplied caulking material. A Conway burgess and smith, William of Brassington made nails and rivets for the ship but the specialist work of making the anchor was entrusted to a burgess of Beaumaris, Roger the Smith, and his three fellow smiths. The work of preparing the timber in the forests was done by Hywel Goch and fourteen other Welsh carpenters.

William of Chalons originated from Isere in France and was probably recruited by the master of the king's works, James of St. George. He worked as a mason at Rhuddlan where one of the castle towers was named after him and arrived in Conway in 1285. In 1313 he was still in Conway (48) having increased his burgage holding from three-quarters by the addition of a further one and a half burgages and a 'placea'. He cultivated 21½ acreas of land and twice was elected bailiff of the town. (49). He was involved in trade, having been involved in the 'herring' dispute with Mathew de Colombers and, in 1307, farmed the Deganwy ferry.

Other builders contined to follow their trade either as the carpenter or mason listed on the garrison strength or by carrying out contract work. The construction of the castle and walls continued until 1291 but subsequent royal works were intermittent. In 1296 two master carpenters were awarded a contract to construct a new watermill at Gyffin. (50). One of the carpenters was John of London, burgess and bailiff in 1290. John held no land and must have made his living by his craft and various public offices. He temporarily left Wales to serve as one of the king's engineers in the Scottish campaign. He was captured by the Scots and imprisoned. On his release he petitioned the king for the rhaglotry and woodwardry of Arlechwedd Isaf and Uchaf in recognition of the five years and seven weeks he had spent imprisoned in various Scottish castles. (51). He petitioned for the renewal of this office in 1309 and this was granted by the king. (52). In 1316 he served as town coroner jointly with Robert Fot, another long resident burgess of Conway. (53). Despite his years in prison John of London lived to a considerable age. In 1335, fifty-one years after the foundation of the town he was granted a messuage in Conway by John of Boys, another very long established burgess of Conway. (54). In 1340 he appeared as a witness with other senior burgesses of the town to testify to the innocence of a fellow citizen who had been accused of theft of the property of the late chamberlain of North Wales, Henry of Chiversdon. The town elders not only swore to the innocence of the accused but charged the chamberlain with bringing a malicious accusation. (55). By 1355 John of London was dead but Thomas, his son, remained in Conway and was, in that year, party to a mortgage on a property called the Sheepcote lying between King St. and the marsh. (56). The other party to the mortgage was Lewis, son of Gilbert of London who had been farmer of the mills and ferry at Conway on a number of occasions at the end of the previous century. (57).

A mason who contined to follow his trade was William of Thornton who worked on the construction of the town walls in 1285. In 1298 he was paid £3 for quarrying and dressing stone for the construction of a new tower between the castle and the river. (58). William did not confine his interests to masonry and the one burgage he held in 1295 had been added to in 1305 by a further burgage, a site in Deganwy and seventeen acres of land.

Generally, however, the building craft burgesses did not hold much, or any, land and lived from the income they derived from their craft. There must have been work to carry out for their fellow burgesses in the construction of houses, stables, barns, tanhouses, stys and other buildings in addition to continuing work for the castle administration. Although the castle itself was completed by 1291, other work such as the new mill noted above was regularly accounted for. Work continued past 1300 on the town walls and in 1313 flooding caused severe damage to the walls' foundations and parts required re-building. Similarly the town quay, by 1315 over thirty years old, regularly needed attention and in 1321 the castle itself was in need of major repair.

Little direct evidence survives for the occupations of the remaining burgesses. The rental roll of 1305 names only five occupations in relation to individuals. Simon, vicar of Conway, and Roger Cole, porter, have already been noted but Simon of Ebey, carpenter, Reginald the page of the castle and Robert Pumfroyt, cook, are also listed. None of the five people held any agricultural land and this tends to confirm that the occupation noted on the rental roll was their sole, or main, means of living. As with place-related surnames, trade-related surnames can give a good, if not precise, idea of the occupations people were engaged in. Nicholas the Fisherman's trade is neatly confirmed by his house being "under the walls of the town by the water." Henry the Cornmonger's name relates well to his renting the mill under the castle, but such confirmation does not exist for most names. The other surnames do indicate a wide variety of trades including cook, farrier, butcher, miller, baker, shearer, cryer, scourer (of hides?), smith, swine-herd, shepherd, gold-smith, brewer, tailor, clerk, carpenter, barber and shoemaker.

These surnames do appear to reflect the range of occupations that were necessary to the economy of a small medieval town and demonstrate a wide variety of specialist skills. However this group of craftsmen, excluding builders, appear to have been the least prosperous of the town's burgesses. Many of them

rented only half a burgage for an annual sixpenny rent, held no agricultural land and, as a group, they provided hardly any of the elected town officials. Although the town required such a range of specialist skills it was hardly large enough to provide some of them with an adequate living. A high degree of self-sufficiency amongst the remainder of the population would have limited the work for the tailor or shoemaker. The butcher would have been limited to selling meat to the non-agricultural urban population as those holding land and rearing animals would probably have slaughtered and butchered their own animals for their own consumption. The butcher is not recorded as supplying beef carcasses to the castle although he may have found employment there butchering animals purchased 'on the hoof'. The goldsmith cannot have made a living dealing and working only in precious metals and probably made and repaired small articles in both precious and base metals.

The fisherman who rented a sixpenny site on the quay could have been more fortunate. Herrings were traded in considerable quantities and may well have been salted or smoked in the town. In 1304/5 sixteen boats with catches of herrings and other fish were each taxed at fourpence by the town bailiffs. (59). Fish had been a major item in the diet of the monks at Aberconway, who had established fish weirs in the river, and continued to be after their move to Maenan. Analysis of bones from the abbey cemetery at Maenan indicates that the brothers enjoyed a high proportion of fish in their diet (60) and this was probably also true of the townspeople of Conway.

If available cash to pay burgage rents is considered as a measure of prosperity, the craftsmen fared less well than the building tradesmen, castle employees or agricultural landholders. The table below sets out the relative positions of these four groups in respect of their ability to find cash for burgage rents.

	Average burgage holding	% more than one burgage	% less than one burgage
Non-building craftsmen	1.1	21%	58%
Building tradesmen	1.4	45%	27%
Castle officials	1.4	50%	0%
Agricultural land holders	1.5	55%	18%

Such an analysis cannot claim to be a precise reflection of the relative affluence of the various occupational groups but it does reveal an economic

"pecking order" that is consistent with what else is known about the individuals of the town. The four groups listed are not capable of exact definition and there is a degree of overlap between the groups. For example some of the craftsmen held agricultural land but if the three men who held land of any significant acreage are removed from the analysis of that group then the average burgage holding of craftsmen drops to under three-quarters. This appears to be a truer indication of the economic position of the craftsmen and contrasts with those regularly employed by the castle administration. All of these held at least one whole plot whereas 60% of the craftsmen rented only a part of a single plot.

Any classification of a complex, if small, society into general groups is an over-simplification of the economic and social standings of people within that society. The foregoing analysis serves only to illustrate the broad relative positions of occupations in the economy of Conway. Within each group a very wide range of affluence or poverty would have existed.

The biggest land-holders were men of considerable substance like the constable of the castle who derived an income from the land, from his salaried occupation and also the profits of offices he held in the regional administration. Not only was he rewarded well whilst alive and working but he could look forward to a pension on retirement and even some continuing compensation for his dependants after his death. At the other end of the scale some landholders struggled on the margins of subsistence, hiring out their own labour to make ends meet.

Within the public service in the castle administration a similar range of rewards existed. At the top was the constable and the senior clerks who enjoyed a relatively high standard of living, whereas at the lower end of the scale were the grooms and porters making a much more modest living, albeit with a reasonable level of job security. The building craftsmen also differed in their economic positions. The more enterprising men expanded their interests in the town, possibly even abandoning their trade as their other activities increased. Some were able to undertake contract work as principals whereas others would have remained as employees of the castle administration or the master builders.

For the craftsmen a town like Conway would have presented a very wide range of opportunities. The tailor, shoemaker and goldsmith (61) would have probably

struggled in a town the size of Conway, whereas the fisherman and the farmer may well have had a better market to serve.

All of these trades and occupations can be recognised from the names listed on the surviving rentals and other documents such as the minister's accounts. As such they represent the upper part of a society that must have been supported by others without the means to rent property or trade with the castle. Few names survive for these people and their existence can generally only be inferred. There were undoubtedly sub-tenants who rented vacant burgages and whose economic position would have varied widely according to their skills. A small number of agents representing the large merchants may have been resident and there certainly would have been a servant class employed by the more affluent households. Occasional references occur to servants but few details survive of their lives. Eight servants accompanied William of Nottingham and his colleagues on their journey to London. Robert Fot's servant, John the Shepherd, was found to have left goods valued at 21d, when he abjured the realm in 1316; a marked contrast to the wealth of the first citizen of the town, Sir William de Cicon.

CONWAY. The town's economy. ii) Occupations and employment. References.

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(45) Cal. Pat. Rolls 14 Nov. 1295

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(47) P.R.O. E 101/9/27

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(55) Cal. Pat. Rolls 14 Ed II m 35

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(57) Pipe Roll (Contra Acc)

(58) H.K.W.

(59) BBCS 1. North Wales Chamberlains Accounts 1304-5 p. 256

(60) CONNOLLY R. Lecture to Norton Priory Society. 13 March 1984

(61) HKW p. 372. A goldsmith was employed at Conway castle to make fittings for the balista.

CONWAY

The town's economy. iii) Royal Service.

A substantial proportion of the early new town residents were in salaried employment. The remainder were self-employed in agriculture, trade or commerce. Those relying on small agricultural holdings would have found difficulty in subsisting and accumulating enough money to pay their burghal dues. Many of the artisans probably had equal difficulty in making ends meet although it is impossible to assess their level of income. The artisans without any agricultural land to supplement the income from their trade appear generally not to have been very prosperous and the majority of those that can be identified only held half or three-quarters of a burgage plot. The extent of the burgage holdings of the tailor, miller, tanner, and shoemaker remained unchanged in the ten years between the two Conway rentals and only the brewer increased his holding from threequarters to one and a quarter burgages. The more affluent self-employed would have varied widely in their incomes but there can be little doubt that, for some, the Welsh wars and the new town building programme offerred an opportunity to achieve considerable personal wealth. But it is the salaried officials who can best be studied with regard to their incomes as virtually all surviving documentation was prepared by such officials in relation to the affairs and finances of the crown.

A considerable number of different official jobs can be identified and comparisons drawn between individual levels of financial reward. The actual levels of pay mean little in themselves as knowledge of contemporary prices is relatively poor and to translate them into modern equivalents is dangerous due, not only to the difficulty of assessing the multiplication factor, but also to the totally changed economic structure of society. Nevertheless a great deal can be learned about the relative fortunes of those engaged in the settlement of the new towns. The range of rates of pay received by officials was very wide not only in respect of annual salary but in the 'perks' that ran with the job. The more senior staff were not only better paid but some received substantial clothing allowances, profitable offices of state, land, or even pensions on retirement that passed to their widows should they predecease them. Their pay was regular, albeit sometimes late, and they must have appeared as a very privileged group to the subsistence farmer struggling to scratch a living from the poor mountain land. Their assured income must have been of great economic benefit to the new towns particularly in the early years when the local economy was not developed. The money brought into the town to pay their salaries, whether extracted from national or local taxation, would have recirculated and helped provide employment for the artisans and merchants of the town.

The constable of Conway castle, Sir William de Cicon, received an annual fee of £190, from which he drew his own pay and also that of the regular garrison of thirtyfive men. (1). In addition regular sums were expended on castle building and repair and other officials and supernumary military men were locally in receipt of pay. The value of the receipt and re-distribution of the constable's fee can be gauged by comparing it with the total of £13-7s-0¼d paid annually as rent for all the burgages and land in Conway. (2).

The breakdown of the constable's fee into individual salaries is not recorded but can be assessed by reference to the 'going' rate for jobs in contemporary royal employment. On this basis of comparison the pay of the men who depended on the constable's fee was as follows. (3).

30 'fencible' men	:- 15 crossbowmen	- 3d per day
	:- 15 others	- 2d per day
1 chaplain		- 6d per day
1 master of arms		- 8d per day
1 carpenter		- 4d per day
1 mason		- 4d per day
1 smith		- 4d per day
1 constable		- 24d per day

The pay of the constable, appropriately for a knight drawn from the royal household to take command in Conway, was equivalent to that of a knight in the army. (4). From his own pay he would have paid his personal staff but he did have further income from his considerable agricultural land in Conway and his other profitable offices. He was bailiff of Arlechwedd Isaf and Uchaf, bailiff of the commote of Creuddyn and on occasions farmed the ferries at Deganwy and Tal-y-cafn.

The constable, although paid at twelve times the rate of the ordinary garrison soldier, was not the highest paid local official. James of St. George, the master of the king's works in Wales, and for a short period also constable of Harlech castle, was paid three shillings a day and allowed the equivalent of twopence a day for robes. (5). Furthermore, on completion of his royal duties, his retirement was well catered for as will be illustrated below. Paid at the same rate as James of St. George was Sir William of Perton who headed the wardrobe office at Chester. Perton's was the organising skill that enabled the massive programme of works in North Wales to be carried out and his contribution in this field complements that of James of St. George in the architectural field. His pay of three shillings a day was reduced to one shilling

a day for the fourteen months when he was on duty in North Wales with the king and drawing his living from the king's table. (6).

More highly paid again was the king's most senior official in Wales, John of Havering, who was appointed in 1284 to be Justice of Wales. His salary on one hundred marks a year was equivalent to forty-four pence a day. (7). The two other officials, who with the justice made up the trio of the most powerful king's men in Wales, were appointed at the same date. The chancellor and chamberlain at the administrative centre of North Wales in Carnarfon were each paid at the rate of thirteen pence a day, but undoubtedly had great opportunities to increase this by virtue of their positions.

For ranks below the level of these officials or the constable pay was very much lower even for the most senior craftsmen, soldiers or officials. Only a few master building craftsmen, army troopers or administrators received as much as half the rate of pay of a constable.

Richard the Engineer of Chester, second-in-command for all of the king's works to James of St. George, was paid twelve pence a day during the many years that he was in the king's service. In 1281 he was paid at this rate whilst working at Rhuddlan and continued to receive the same level of reward until he died in 1313. (8). He served throughout Edward's Welsh and Scottish campaigns and was also involved in building works in Cheshire; at the castles in Chester and Beeston (9) and also St. Werburgh's Abbey. (10). His pay rose to eighteen pence a day during the Scottish campaign, when he was drafted from Chester to London to supervise the construction of pontoon bridges for use in Scotland, but reverted to his normal rate of twelve pence on his return. (11). This level was maintained even when he was semi-retired. (12). Regular receipt of pay at this level, together with profit from building works that he contracted to carry out at a fixed contract price, enabled Richard to enjoy considerable status and a high standard of living. He held a considerable amount of land in and around Chester, where he was Mayor in 1305, and for many years he farmed the Dee mills and fishery at the great annual rent of £200. (13). This enterprise must in itself have been profitable and in addition he held the manors of Trafford and Dunham for a period and in later life the manor of Belgrave. (14 15). His descendants, inherited the wealth Richard had built up due largely to his involvement with the king's works in North Wales and assumed the surname Belgrave. (16). The Belgrave estate eventually passed, by

marriage, to the Grosvenors, who still own much of the land and gave the name to the estates they acquired in London, also by prudent marriage.

Richard was, by the standards of the day, a rich man, but others also enjoyed the same rate of royal pay. The troopers in the king's army were, unlike the more senior knights and bannerets, in regular employment. Some were stationed in North Wales as supernumeraries to the castle garrisons for long periods. In addition to their pay they received rations but were expected to maintain two servants and three horses. (18). Fucardo of Rochetheward was stationed in Carnarfon for a period of 265 days during 1286-7 for which he was paid £13-5s-0d. Peter of Virak was similarly employed for 1497 days between 1286 and 1290 and was paid £74-17s-0d at the trooper's rate of twelve pence a day. (19). These men were additional to the normal garrison strength and their pay would have added to the money normally circulating in the new towns. Less senior men were also employed as garrison supernumeraries although for shorter periods. The king's armourer and four lorimers were employed for a time sufficient for them to maintain the castles war machines and clean and repair quarrels and arrows. The armourer was paid at eightpence a day and the lorimers at a weekly rate of fifteen pence. (20).

As with the military ranks, the pay of building workers engaged on castle or new town work was graded according to skill, experience and level of responsibility. Much of the work was paid for on a piece work basis, 'ad taschem', and the gang leader or sub-contractor was able to make a personal profit. When building workers were employed directly the usual rates of pay were eightpence a day for master craftsmen, sixpence a day for craft-chargehands, fourpence a day for skilled craftsmen and twopence a day for a craftsman's mate or general labourer. Hodcarriers and female labourers, often wives or daughters of building workers, were only paid one penny a day. (21).

These rates of pay were similar to those paid to others working in the new towns on the king's business such as sea-men. The master of the ship Mary of Lyme, at Rhuddlan in 1282, was paid sixpence a day for making voyages between Chester, Rhuddlan and Anglesey. The sailors were paid threepence a day and boy-sailors twopence. (22). The master of the king's barge sailing out of Conway in 1287 was paid fourpence a day, a lower rate than the master of the Mary because he commanded a smaller craft. (23).

For considerable periods in the early years and again after the Madoc rebellion the king and his household would have been resident in one of the new town castles. The pay of officers of the household compared favourably with that of officials resident in North Wales. A royal ordinance of 1279 decreed the wages to be paid to household officials in terms of daily rates and an annual allowance for robes. (24). Skilled craftsmen such as tailors or cooks were paid sevenpence-halfpenny a day with an extra three and a half marks a year for robes. Lesser officials were paid fourpence-halfpenny a day with three marks for robes and serving men twopence a day with ten shillings a year for robes. Senior clerks were paid at the sevenpence-halfpenny rate and junior clerks at the fourpence-halfpenny rate but those clerks in receipt of a benefice received nothing from the household budget for their employment and were expected to live from the income derived from their benefice. These rates compared well with the wages of resident officials particularly as food was provided by the king, indeed a master cook to the household was employed in addition to the cook of the king's kitchen. The provision of food was clearly a sought after privilege for the ordinance instructs officials to not only ensure that "the hall is well served for everybody" but "also to take care that the hall is well cleared of strangers and ribalds that ought not to eat."

The granting of ecclesiastical benefices to senior clerks of the household also extended to clerks in the royal service in Wales. During their employment in Wales, two of the king's clerks, who were both burgesses of Conway, were granted rectorships. John of Candover was granted the rectorship of his home town of Candover in Hampshire and Hugh of Leominster was granted the rectorship of Carnarfon. (25). Such grants would appear to have had the effect of maintaining their services whilst removing them from the royal payroll and this principle was applied to other officers who, by nature of their office, were able to make a profit sufficient for their living. Mathew of Colombers, the king's butler, who was in Conway in 1294 supervising the victualling of the castle for a royal visit, is named on the ordinance as receiving 'nothing' for wages. His office was literally an 'office of profit' and it was clearly considered unnecessary for the king to add wages to his profits from victualling concessions. (26).

It has been noted above thet the provincial officials fared rather less than the officers of the household and it is possible to make a further

comparison of wage levels in the new towns compared with other parts of the kingdon. In 1280 an ordinance was published in London setting out the maximum wages to be paid to building workers and warning of fines being made on those employers paying more. (27). Building wages in England appear to have remained at this ordained level right up until the Black Death and those in North Wales also conformed. This is not, perhaps, surprising as the labour for the new town and castle programme was recruited by county sheriffs and drafted to North Wales. If a free market for labour had prevailed the scale and concentration of building might have been expected to increase wage levels but this appears not to have happened, although master craftsmen working as "ad taschem" sub-contractors were able to increase their own wage above the decreed level. A free market did exist in London and wages appear to have been higher there despite the ordinance. This caused a problem for a burgess of Carnarfon, the master mason Walter of Hereford. He settled in Carnarfon where he held a considerable amount of land but in 1306 was drafted to London with masons and carpenters to fulfill a contract for the Queen at the Newgate Church of the Grey Friars. On entering London they were threatened with violence by a local mason and his gang if they accepted wages lower than those prevailing in the capital. The work was delayed whilst the offending mason, John of Offington, was brought before a jury in the court of the mayor of London. (28). The suspicion clearly was that Master Walter and his provincial workmen were being brought to London to undercut local craftsmen's wages, but the reason for his involvement was almost certainly due to his stature as an architect/mason. His influence on the design of churches in the royal towns of Hull and Winchelsea in the period from 1295-1300 was the reason for his recruitment to London. His influence was also strong on the organisational side of building and whilst in Carnarfon he petitioned the king to be permitted to keep his 'free court' of workmen. This was granted and enabled him to exact fines for non-completion or breaking task work contracts. (29).

Walter's salary of more than eighteen pounds a year, his profits from task work contracts and fines from his 'free court' gave him an income comparable with the other wealthier residents of the new towns. Both his financial standing and his professional reputation would have enabled him to mix freely with the justice, constables, chamberlain, chancellor, king's clerks, and military knights, all of whom were relatively wealthy by comparison with even the more affluent local Welsh residents. (30). The richest man in Pwllheli, until the conquest one of the three most important market centres of

North Wales, was worth £4-7s-0d annually. (31). Even allowing for considerable under-estimation of annual worth probable in tax returns the difference between the incomes of the better paid royal officials and the local people was considerable and must have been a reason for some envy.

If the royal officials were well rewarded during their working lives, then many of them continued to fare well during retirement or their dependants did after their death. All of the residents of Conway and the other new towns were enabled by their charters to pass on land and burgage interests to their heirs and the rental rolls illustrate this occurring on a number of occasions. The royal officials resident in North Wales enjoyed this privilege but additionally some of them were allowed to pass on their official office to their heir, even if female. After the death of the Savoyard constable of Harlech, John de Bonvillars, his widow Agnes contined in his role as constable at his full wage of four shillings a day. (32). Bonvillars was personal deputy to the first Justice of North Wales, Otto de Grandson and both originated from the area around Lake Neuchatel. Agnes was probably the sister of Otto de Grandson and this may explain why holding such an office was permitted to her. But such illustrious family connections could not be claimed by Agnes, widow of Conway burgess Adinet Patyn, who contined to farm the Deganwy ferry after her husband's death. (33). About ten per cent of the Conway burgages were held by women, presumably by inheritance from their husbands.

Agnes of Bonvillars was succeeded as constable of Harlech by Master James of St. George, master of the king's works and burgess of Beaumaris, who very early in his career in North Wales was granted a salary for life of three shillings a day with the provision that if he died his widow, Ambrosia, would continue to receive a pension of half that amount. (34). The widow of Manasser of Vaucouleurs, master excavator of the earthworks at Carnarfon and burgess and bailiff of the town, was not so well treated. After the death of her husband all Mary received was a pardon by the king for the 26s-8d that her husband left owing from his period as bailiff of Carnarfon. (35).

Edward of Carnarfon's nurse, Mary Maunsell, was granted her burgage in Carnarfon as part of her pension for service to the royal family. (36). She was excused rent for her lifetime for both her burgage and sixty acres of land, and, in addition was granted one hundred shillings a year from the exchequer at Carnarfon. Mary was a burgess from earlier than 1298 and contined to draw her pension until at least 1316. (37).

Other royal employees were also granted land or official office as a pension benefit. James of St. George was granted the manor of Mostyn, valued later at £13-6s-8d a year when leased to another burgess of Beaumaris, William of Doncaster. (38 39). John of London, burgess of Conway, who served the king as an engineer in the Scottish wars, was granted the offices of thaglaw of Creuddyn and woodward of Arlechwedd in recognition of his loyal service. (40). Such grants for loyal service were not entirely the perquisite of English settlers. Dafydd Goch was granted sixty shillings a year for life from the exchequer at Carnarfon. (41). William ap Lethyn was granted a similar pension on account of being maimed whilst in the king's service. (42). Both these grants were probably earned by service in the Scottish wars but civilian employees were also granted retirement benefits even if sometimes very small. William the Plumber was made a single grant of 13s-4d on his retirement at Rhuddlan in 1282.

The pay, retirement and death benefits enjoyed by crown employees were not available to the two thirds of Conway's residents who were self-employed. For some of them the great sums of money being spent on building and administration enabled a fortune to be made, but for others the castle administration caused hardship. Geoffrey Cankor, burgess of Conway, supplied corn and victuals to the value of £103-18s-0d to James of St. George and Walter of Winchester during the construction of Beaumaris castle. Eight years later two thirds of the account had not been settled and Geoffrey and Henry his son petitioned the king for payment. (44). Following a further petition the balance was eventually paid to Henry nearly thirty years after the goods were supplied, Geoffrey Cankor having died in the meantime. (45). It is perhaps not surprising that the Cankor single burgage holding in Conway was reduced by half during this period.

The financial pressure caused by the Madog rebellion and the decision to build Beaumaris castle, together with the king's committments in Scotland and overseas, led to many problems for the tradesmen of Carnarfon. The burgesses and the garrison of Carnarfon found it necessary in 1296 to petition the king about their financial problems. (46). Amongst their grievances was non-payment of a loan to the king, non-payment for castle victuals, non-payment for sub-contracted building works and the inability to pay the wages of masons and carpenters. Lack of money threatened progress on Beaumaris castle. (47). It was not infrequently that the master builders had to petition the king for money

owing for sub-contract works, although the exchequer in Carnarfon normally accounted for and paid for such work. (48). Delay in payment was not the only problem for tradesmen and merchants dealing with the royal administration as non-payment or a reduced level of payment was also complained of. A petition from "the king's free tenants in North Wales" claimed that goods were being appropriated for use in the castles and not being paid fairly for at markets. (49). The king ordered such practices to cease but corruption in the exchequer culminated in the Chamberlain, Thomas of Esthalle being incarcerated in London's Fleet prison from 1312 to 1331 for failing to submit accounts and then, when he did submit, failing to make good deficits. (50). The exchequer's role as 'middleman' in buying-in and re-selling stock will be discussed below but clearly there was a situation where corruption and opportunity for personal profit were rife. The opportunity for profit may explain why the salaries paid to the chancellor and chamberlain were relatively low compared with the constables who, in theory, were of lower rank in the administration. In the case of Esthalle it is difficult to be certain whether he was primarily to blame or whether he was a victim of circumstances. Shortly before his imprisonment he had himself petitioned the king about malpractices and improper behaviour by the justices and sheriffs of the three counties. (51). He asked for loyal clerks to be appointed to the exchequer and for clerks of works to be appointed to check and oversee castle building works.

Notwithstanding inefficiency and corruption in the administration and the difficulty of extracting payments some merchants were able to make personal fortunes from the great sums of money expended on the Welsh wars, the building programme and the continuing financial imput essential to maintain the garrison.

Those best placed to do this were the established merchants of Chester, four of whom acquired property interests in the new towns. These four, together with the deputy master of the king's works, Richard the Engineer, and another merchant Benedict of Staundon, dominated the commercial life of Chester for a period of over thirty years. Between 1292 and 1318 they held the mayoralty of Chester between them in all but three years and during much of this period one or other was often sheriff of Chester. (52). Three of the merchants, William of Doncaster, Alexander Hurel and Hugh of Brickhill, were at various times appointed by the king to collect the wine custom in Chester, Conway, Carnarfon and Beaumaris. (53). William of Doncaster and Jordan of Bradford each had interests in several of the new towns and between them 'covered' all five of the king's new boroughs. These six entrepreneurs from Chester often acted in

partnership and although in the early years of the wars and settlement merchants from many places supplied the king's army, it was principally the Chester men who acquired property and continued their trading during the following years. Only Dafydd ap Einion from Llanfaes and then Beaumaris matched their enterprise and himself became a wealthy man.

Jordan of Bradford supplied steel for the construction of Harlech castle in 1286 and later that year a statue for the castle chapel. (54). He became a burgess of Carnarfon where he also had ten acres of land. By 1298, probably due to the sack of Carnarfon by the Welsh uprising, he had transferred his interests to Beaumaris where he held a larger estate of twentyeight acres. In 1301 he became mayor and constable of Flint and responsible to the Chamberlain of Chester, a post formerly held by Hugh of Brickhill and who in 1301 was mayor of Chester for the seventh time. (55). Jordan also had interests in lead mines near Flint and supplied lead for the north Wales and Cheshire castles during his period as constable. (56). Associated with him in his lead mining enterprise was Benedict of Staundon. He does not appear to have had property interests in the new towns although a Robert of Staundon acted as constable of Harlech and Sheriff of Merioneth duting the 1290's. Benedict supplied lead and other materials for the castle building programme and, like his fellow merchants, took his turn as sheriff of Chester when Richard the Engineer was mayor and himself became mayor on two occasions. (57). Hugh of Brickhill, like Jordan of Bradford and William of Doncaster held land in Beaumaris to the extent ot 114 acres. He had been involved since 1282 in the supply of victuals to the army (58) and in the following year his ship, 'La Nicholas of Chester' sailed for Gascony with hides and armour for the king's knights. (59). Alexander Hurel also held land in Beaumaris and like his colleagues filled the offices of sheriff, mayor and collector of customs in Chester. (60).

All of these men were enabled by the wars and settlement of North Wales to further their own financial interests to a degree that would not have been possible in Chester alone. The city was the main supply point through which goods and men passed to North Wales and the local men were able to use their experience, ships, men and financial resources to take advantage of the situation. The long established royal administration in Chester must have been markedly efficient compared with that to be established in Carnarfon and was able, with the cooperation of the Chester merchants, to undertake successfully the complex logistics demanded by the war and settlement. To a

greater degree than any of his fellow Chester merchants one man was able to expand his business interests and achieve national standing as one of "the king's merchants".

Throughout the entire period of the settlement William of Doncaster was engaged in supplying the king's needs. He traded in iron, tin, lead, wool, wine and food and acquired land interests in all of the king's new towns except Carnarfon. In addition he had interests in Abergele, the Earl of Lincoln's new town of Denbigh, and in the city and county of Chester. He owned his own ships, had an appointed agent in Dublin and traded with Gascony and Brabant. His investment in Conway extended to two and a quarter burgages which were still held by his son, also William, until at least 1332 when his property is mentioned in a conveyance of adjoining land. (61). He held no agricultural land in Conway but had seventy-two acres of the town lands in Beaumaris. In addition to his share of the town land in Beaumaris he rented further land from the king's groom,William of Poynz, who had been granted for a period of fifteen years after it fell into the king's hand by escheat. On expiry of Doncaster's lease the land was granted to a Welsh burgess of Beaumaris, Einion ap Ieuan, bailiff of the town and sheriff of Anglesey. (62).

William of Doncaster held 147 acres in Denbigh and steadily accumulated burgages and land in Rhuddlan. He farmed the lead mines at Holywell in Flint and, on the death of James of St. George, took the nearby manor of Mostyn at an annual rent of £10-10s-0d. An inquisition taken on the manor after the death of James showed the manor to comprise a toft, 60 acres of woodland, 6 carucates of demesne land, a watermill, turbary and pleas and perquisites of the manor court. (64). The rent was subsequently raised to £13-6s-8d which William was required to pay to the Chamberlain of Chester, Hugh of Leominster, burgess of Conway, rector of Carnarfon, former clerk of works at Harlech and Carnarfon, and lately chamberlain of North Wales. (65).

A powerful merchant like Doncaster probably had much less problem in securing payments than the smaller men noted above. The records detail many payments to him for a wide variety of goods and when he did have problems he did not hesitate to seek redress in courts of law. He disputed the ownership of land in Denbigh with no less than Roger Mortimer and used the courts of the mayor of London to pursue the Duke and merchants of Brabant over seizure of a cargo of wool. (66. 67). On a domestic level his name appears regularly in the

portmote court records in Chester where on two occasions he had to defend himself concerning an allegation that he had taken property in the city that was part of the dower of the widows of the late tenants. (68). His extensive interest in Rhuddlan was built up during the years of disastrous harvests in 1315 and 1316 possibly passing to him as part of debt payments. William's son Thomas became steward of Rhuddlan in 1386 and his son, Lawrence inherited the extensive Doncaster interest in the town. Lawrence pre-deceased his wife and, in 1404, the lands passed in dower to Katherine so terminating over one hundred and thirty years association between the Doncasters and the new towns of North Wales. (69).

William of Doncaster was a powerful figure in the development of the new towns and used the capital built up from his activities as a merchant to expand his financial interests. He lent money to the king through the exchequer at Dublin,(70), to the Abbot of Stones, (71), and acknowledged his own debts to Henry Percy (72), and the Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield. (73). His national status was confirmed not only by dealings such as this but when he was required to stand recognizance with the other chief merchants of the kingdom for aids required of religious houses by the king. The sums of money involved were very considerable and illustrate the personal wealth that William had achieved. The bishops were asked to find 10,080 marks of which the Archbishop of Canterbury's part was 675 marks, the bishop of London's 750 marks, Salisbury's and Bath and Well's 500 marks. (74). Once the king had received the aid the merchants were formally quit of responsibility by the issue of an appropriate patent letter. (75). The other six merchants who stood recognizance with William of Doncaster were two Italians, Antonio de Pessagno and John Vanne, and four London merchants, William of Combemartin, an immigrant woolmonger, John of Burford who was an associate of the Italians, William Trente from the Agenais and for many years the king's butler and William Serrat who originated from Cahors. (76).

In terms of modern values, many tens of millions of pounds were spent during a short period of years in building the castles, the town walls and quays, the towns themselves, and in supplying the garrisons and residents. William of Doncaster, whose earliest traceable ancestor in Chester was Prior of St. Werburgh's and one of his last descendants Prioress of St. Mary's, Chester, ensured that much of the profit from the royal investment found its way to his pocket. His assembly of property in the new towns, particularly in

Rhuddlan, foreshadowed by over a hundred years the estates built up by the Boldes and Bulkeleys of Cheshire during the fifteenth century in Conway and Beaumaris. (77). By then the Doncaster line had died out and the family did not survive to become one of the great landed families that dominated Cheshire and North Wales in the next four hundred years.

The affluence of Doncaster and the poverty of Robert Fot's servant in Conway, who abjured the realm when worth only twenty one pence, must be put in the context of contemporary prices and costs. There is not a great deal of evidence on which to draw except the accounts of the royal administration. From these it can be deduced that land costs and rents were not inconsistent with those prevailing in England and the burgage fee of one shilling was set at the prevailing level. House costs are illustrated by only three examples, the earliest of which is the £1-6s-8d that Roger Ruton paid in Carnarfon in 1284 for a house that had been in the king's hands as escheated property. (78). Two years later two houses in Carnarfon were demolished to make way for the town wall and £6-1s-4d was paid in compensation. (79). Also in Carnarfon two new houses were constructed for the constable of the castle comprising a bakery and a house to lay hay in at a total cost of £4-3s-4½d. (80). These would all have been simple structures, probably built of timber, and the cost of around two to three pounds per house would have represented the annual income of a worker employed as a building labourer. A contemporary contract survives that illustrates the building cost of what probably was a slightly larger and more complex house than a labourer would have occupied. The house to be built in Berkshire was to comprise a room 40 ft. by 24½ ft., with a wardrobe 2¼ ft. x 14 ft., five doors, a bay window in the vault (gable?) and two windows on the west side. The total cost was to be six marks, half a quarter of wheat and a robe, equivalent to about £4-5s-0d or a year's wages at a daily rate of 2.8 pence. (81). The early settlers included many building craftsmen and such houses were probably built by private contract by the carpenter's normally employed on the king's works.

The cost of food can only be ascertained from one source. The roll kept in London by exchequer officials confirmed the receipts and expenses submitted by the chamberlain in Carnarfon. The accounts include details of wine and victuals bought by the local exchequer and also that part of the castle stock that was subsequently sold off to local officials. The chamberlain himself was liable for any cash discrepancy in the account and this probably explains some of the costings contained in the roll. (82).

In only a few years for which accounts survive do separately itemised purchase appear. In some years no details were recorded and in others a whole 'shopping list' of items is set against one sum of expenditure. Some of these lists can, however, be broken down by knowledge of unit costs contained elsewhere in the account, and approximate individual commodity prices analysed.

The account of Hugh of Leominster, burgess of Conway and chamberlain at Carnarfon, lists for the years 1295 to 1301 the annual stock levels of wheat, beans, oats, malted barley, beef carcasses, salted pork, mutton, herrings, dried fish, salt, wine, honey and cheese. In 1300 the list also includes onions and a small whale found on the shore. The movement of stock is recorded in meticulous detail although not all items are individually priced. For example, in 1296, the accounting year started with 34 quarters and one bushel of wheat in store from the previous year. During the year 305 quarters of wheat were received from the Treasury in Ireland and a further 187 quarters bought in. Of this total amount, 307 quarters and six bushels were sold and a further 24 quarters and seven bushels lost by putrefaction due to overlong storage in the granary or by spillage from carts whilst in transit from quay to castle. The balance remaining at the end of the year was carried into the following year's account and was then added to by purchases from the Abbot of Holtcoltham, Richard Masey of Chester, and from the sheriff of Salop and Stafford.

Wheat purchased in 1295/6 came from three major transactions totalling nearly 400 quarters. The price level varied between the three deals but the average price paid was 84.5 pence per quarter. This compared with an average price in England at the same date of 77 pence per quarter. The slightly higher price paid in North Wales probably reflects the additional costs of shipping to a relatively isolated community. Similarly the price paid for wine was consistent with that accounted for by the royal butler for wines bought in England.

These purchasing prices compare dramatically with the prices at which surplus stock was sold to local officials by the chamberlain. The most frequently recorded sale is of wheat where analysis of seven transactions reveals a consistent price level between 170 and 180 pence a quarter, almost exactly doubling the price paid by the chamberlain originally. A similar, but less dramatic, differential is shown by the relative buying-in and selling

prices of oats. For beef carcasses the 'mark'up' is much greater although only two instances are recorded. Considerable volumes of beef were purchased with 118 carcasses being bought during 1296 and ninety five of these sold. They were bought in at a prive averaging 100 pence per carcass but sold out at a price of over six times this level, Such sales were not to an oppressed native population, suffering exploitation by a profiteering English administration, but to senior English officials and burgesses. The buyers of wheat included Richard the Engineer of Beaumaris and the constable of Harlech Castle.

It has been concluded above that the salaried officials were relatively affluent compared with the subsistence farmers. If the evidence of the prices being charged by the "company store" are truly typical of the prices pertaining in the new towns then the differential in income between the salaried officials and the largely self-sufficient agriculturalist dramatically reduces.

It must be expected that the rapid increase of population and circulation of money would have produced a local price inflation due to an excess of demand over supply. The chamberlain was able to exploit this situation by the manipulation of commodity prices to the maximum that a seller's market could stand, and ensure that his accounts did not show a deficit for which he would have personally been accountable. The market conditions were clearly such that an opportunist, whether royal official or private merchant, could exploit them to his own maximum advantage. Such economic pressure could also benefit the agriculturalist in respect of the value to himself of crops grown for his own consumption and even more by the sale value of surplus stock. The unfortunate artisan with neither official office or employment nor any land of his own would have been most subject to these pressures. It was, perhaps, inevitable that this class of burgess would have the smaller holdings and not provide many of those who rose to official positions in the town. Such positions were dominated by royal officials and the more successful building tradesmen, both groups being dependent on royal patronage. The great merchants were usually non-resident burgesses, carrying on their business through agents, and playing little direct part in the life of the new towns.

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CONWAY.

Trade and External Communications.

All urban centres are wholly or largely dependent on their external lines of communication to both their immediate commercial hinterland and to the national or regional centres to which they look for finance and government. This was as true in the thirteenth century as it is today and particularly so in the case of the North Wales new towns. The towns were intended to act as regional market centres, and were given monopoly trading rights, but were to a very large degree dependent on the regional centres at Chester and Dublin. A further requirement for these towns was a military one whereby they could be supplied and reinforced by sea. This latter policy showed its worth when Edward I himself was beseiged in Conway Castle in 1295 after Madoc's Welsh troops had seized the king's baggage train at Penmaenmawr. Although troubled by high tides and the river Conway in spate the king's party were secure until relief could be effected by water. (1).

All of the new towns founded by Edward I in North Wales were on or near the sea except Bere, south of Cader Idris. Bere was a former Welsh castle that was strengthened and granted borough status by the king, but its location, and not least its extremely bad communications, rendered it totally unfit for such status and it is, perhaps, better considered as a garrison rather than a town. All of the other towns were directly accessible by sea except Rhuddlan which was two and a half miles inland, but on the bank of the potentially navigable river Clwyd. That potential was exploited contemporaneously with the construction of Rhuddlan castle by the importation of experienced dykers, mainly from the eastern counties of England, whose task was to canalize the Clwyd to make it passable for sea-going ships. In June 1277 three of the king's clerks were sent from Chester to recruit labour for the construction programme. (2). Less than six weeks after their despatch no fewer than 1845 diggers had been recruited through the agency of the county sheriffs. Not all of these would have been employed on the river canalization but Dr. Taylor suggests that this must have been the reason for the recruitment of such a large labour force. The royal household accounts for Rhuddlan for 1281/2 provide the first named ship known to trade with the North Wales new towns. Wages are recorded as being paid to the sailors of the "Mary" of Lyme and to her captain who received sixpence a day. (3).

At Conway, Carnarfon and Beaumaris equally urgent attention was paid to the construction of docking facilities suitable for sea-going ships. These were necessary from the very early days of the building of the castles and towns, not only for military support, but for the delivery of bulky materials

for construction purposes. Whereas at Rhuddlan the deepening and straightening of the river could provide 'bankside' mooring for ships the situation on the coast demanded the construction of quays to allow deep water mooring and accommodate the tidal rise and fall. The construction accounts for Carnarfon illustrate how this was engineered. (4). The quay was constructed from earth and timber. The earth probably being used to deepen the angle of the shore line and make access to deep water easier. Timber would have been used to construct the actual quay or jetty alongside which ships could be moored. The accounts show that earth was excavated from the castle ditch and carted directly to form the quay; an admirably economic avoidance of "double handling" of bulky material. A senior carpenter, paid 8d a day, was in charge of a gang of carpenters constructing the quay and two sawyers were engaged in preparation of timber. Carts and hand carts were used to move the earth in addition to hods. A carpenter was employed at 3d a day solely to manufacture the hods.

Such a form of construction, although expedient and economical, was not very durable. A number of instances are recorded from the early years of the new towns where the burgesses petitioned the king to repair the quays as "the town is so poor that merchants do not come." On one occasion the burgesses requested £20 to repair the quay at Conway (5), and in 1315 requested a further £100 to complete the quay repair work on which £100 had already been spent. (6). In 1326 a further £93-15s-3½d was spent in putting the Conway quay in good repair. (7). These were very considerable sums and illustrate the damaging effect that tidal and river erosion had on the quays that provided such an important lifeline for the town.

What the design of the quays was is not known but an attempt can be made to define their functional requirements from the few surviving records of the ships that used them.

The following table sets out details as far as can be ascertained of ships calling at the North Wales towns in the years after their foundation. The list is drawn from a variety of sources, none of which give a very reliable account of shipping movements, but which do give sufficient information to enable an assessment to be made of the type and size of ships.

The surviving records tabulated refer to ships berthed mainly at Conway or Beaumaris but this may be no more than a quirk of record survival than

illustrative of the relative importance of the three ports. The larger ships were, however, all recorded at Beaumaris with a ship of 160 tuns being the largest. A number of 100 tuns were also recorded at the same date, 1327, but the largest recorded to call at Conway seems to have been a 60 tun ship owned by John Manekyn of Plymouth and which called in 1304. The ships listed as being berthed at Beaumaris and Conway in 1326/7 were recorded as part of an enquiry into losses accruing to the farmers of the wine custom due to stoppage of the Gascon wine trade. (8). All were said to be on their way to Gascony in quest of wine and yet the Customs accounts for the same year, as analysed by Professor Lewis, show no shipping movements for any of the North Wales Ports that would have occasioned the payment of duty. (9). Clearly the enquiry was undertaken with reason and the discrepancy between the records illustrates the unreliability of the customs accounts as a measure of shipping movement.

The thirteenth century was a period of considerable development in international trade and the technology of ship design advanced accordingly. The general purpose trading ship in most common use by the end of the century was the 'cog'. A number of cogs are recorded by name as calling at the new towns. The cog "Holirode' of Chester was owned by William of Doncaster, burgess of both Conway and Beaumaris, and merchant of Chester. The Saint-Marie Cogge called at Beaumaris in 1327 and cogs by the names of Holy Cross and Holy Ghost are also recorded. It is possible that other ships listed were cogs as by the end of the thirteenth century the word cog meant, if nothing else, that a ship was large. (10). Cogs were broad beamed ships with a low length to width ratio, a high freeboard and a single square rigged mast. Unger has calculated that in the mid thirteenth century 100 tun ships were rare. (11). By the first decade of the fourteenth century 81% of ships were still less than 150 tuns; 16% were between 150 and 200 tuns and 3% were over 200 tuns with the largest reaching 300 tuns.

The 'Katerine', 160 tuns, recorded at Beaumaris in 1327 was by these criteria a large ship, but the most frequently recorded size of ship trading with the new towns was from forty to sixty tuns. One cog of this period has been excavated and is being reconstructed in Bremen. (12). This was a ship of 130 tuns with an overall size of 23.5 metres by seven metres. On the basis of this reconstruction Unger has calculated that a forty tun cog would have measured 13.5 metres by 4.5 metres and have a draught of 2.5 metres. Such a draught is, therefore, the minimum that the quays in the new towns would have

been designed to accommodate and, if larger ships were to be berthed, then a depth of water of 3.5 metres would have been necessary. The high freeboard of the cogs and the need to be above the choppy surface of the sea would have required the quays to be one or two metres above mean high tide level. They would have needed to rise in all between 3.5 metres and 5.5 metres above sea-bed level and, for stability, to be founded at least a metre below sea-bed level. The carpenters and sawyers constructing the quay would have been dealing with timbers from 4.5 metres to 7.5 metres long; a formidable task in the difficult waters of the Menai Strait or the Conway Estuary and a possible explanation of the relatively short life of the quays. It would, of course, have been possible to unload ships by 'lightering' from a deep water mooring but this would have been extremely difficult for such bulky and heavy cargoes as wine and stone. Unger suggests that trading ships would tend to seek out and favour towns equipped with quays and that the deeper draught of the cogs compared with earlier ships gave an advantage to those ports closer to the sea, especially those at the mouths of rivers. (13). The three new towns built along the Menai Strait conformed to this requirement which may well have been a factor in the king's selection of sites. The importance of the quays to the towns is confirmed by the regular petitions for their repair.

If the sea proved difficult for the on-shore construction teams it must have been even more so for sailors. Knowledge of navigation was well enough developed for journeys out of sight of land to be commonplace and ships would have been equipped with a simple compass and possibly charts, but square rigged ships were limited in their ability to sail across the wind and were generally dependent on a following wind. To be stranded in port waiting for the wind was a frequent occurrence and it was not unknown for ships to arrive on the wrong coastline due to changes of wind direction. (14). Notwithstanding such problems the new towns traded with ports in Gascony and Ireland in addition to towns in England. There must have been many shipwrecks although only a few are documented. Ivor Wynne-Jones in "Shipwrecks of North Wales" catalogues many disasters of more recent times when ships were much larger and better equipped than their thirteenth century counterparts. (15). His description of the coastline of North Wales paints a horrifying picture of the problems facing those trading by sea with the new towns. The coastline from Harlech to Chester was that most frequently navigated and is variously described:-

"Five miles across, these notorious jaws (Hell's Mouth) at the southern tip of Carnarfonshire have swallowed up more ships and human lives than anyone can ever calculate."

"Carnarfonshire's western seaboard is an inhospitable stretch of 36 miles broken only by Porthdinllaen which offers shelter from the prevailing winds although open to north and east."

" Anglesey's northern shore presents the mariner with a baffling combination of havens and hazards ..... ranging from cruel cliffs to rocky outcrops like the Skerries."

"The Menai Strait has always been a treacherous barrier ..... with an unenviable record of disaster."

"Conway Bay ..... this unpredictableshore ..... the northern mouth of the bay is guarded by two treacherous headlands, the Great Orme and Puffin Island."

The risks were considerable and wrecks probably frequent - frequent enough for the right of recovery of wrecks to be written into the charter granted by Llewellyn to the Abbot of Aberconway. (16). Any wrecks or the goods from them washed up on the Abbey lands belonged to the monks, but the monks did not lose their own possessions if their ships were wrecked. This right was a notable concession from the prince who normally himself would have claimed the right to all goods washed up on his shores.

The first recorded shipwreck of the region took place in September 1245. Henry III and his troops were encamped at Deganwy and saw one of their ships which was bringing provisions from Ireland driven aground on the opposite bank on Conway Morfa. Despite rescue attempts by the English forces and a punitive raid by them on the Abbey of Aberconway the Welsh liberated the cargo of wine and fired the ship. (17).

Two burgesses of the new town of Conway, founded less than forty years after this incident and including Conway Morfa within the town lands, themselves experienced the problems of shipwreck. In neither case did the burgess ship-owners appear to be on board their vessels when the wreck occurred. Robert Fot's ship was sailing back to Conway from Ireland when it was "broken up and dashed to pieces by the violence of the sea." The crew survived but their goods were washed up and, in accordance with custom, appropriated by the local people of Dalkeye. The master of the ship, John, was forced to sue in the Irish court to regain possession of his goods. (18).

William of Doncaster's ship was voyaging from Bordeaux to Chester and had anchored at a place called "Le Stanhouse" in Anglesey. The record does not make it clear whether she was to discharge any cargo in Beaumaris but she had been chartered by Doncaster and some fellow merchants of Chester to import wine, some of which may well have been destined for the new towns. (19). The ship , 'La Nicholas' of Lymington, was laden with 105 tuns and seven pipes of wine and other goods to the value of £40. Whilst at anchor she was boarded by Walter of Coumbe and Geoffrey of Bonevill, clerks of Adam of Wetenhall, chamberlain of North Wales. Having inspected her charter of freight and taken a transcript they left the ship only to return with the chamberlain himself and a number of armed men, some of whom were burgesses of Beaumaris. They tried to re-enter the ship by force but the sailors, in fear, hoisted their anchors and turned to sea. They waited offshore for twentyfour hours but were driven back to 'Le Stanhouse' by storm. The chamberlain then raised "hue and cry of horn and mouth" and with his posse assaulted the ship. They attacked with small arms, cross bows and springalds despite the exhortations to cease by William of Shaldeford, Justice of Wales and Sheriff of Anglesey who had also arrived on the scene. The sailors cut their cables in panic and the ship drifted away into the storm. It was wrecked with the immediate death of two men and the "wounding to death' of five others. Most of the cargo was lost and the remainder spoiled. The merchants, not unnaturally, sought redress and the king instructed the Justice to call before him the various parties and cause justice to be done. He also ordered that no hindrance or injury be done to the citizens and merchants of Chester or others going to that city with victuals or other goods.

This was not the only recorded occasion when the merchants trading in North Wales had problems with the king's appointed administrators. (20). In the first decade of the fourteenth century the merchants of Chester and North Wales petitioned the king concerning their trading operations in Ireland. They complained that when they went to Ireland to sell various things and to buy victuals for the castles of their Lord, Prince Edward, they were arrested by the ministers of the King in Ireland. They claimed that not only were they arrested but their goods and victuals were confiscated and not returned without them paying outrageous fines. They asked that the King send letters to his justices and ministers in Ireland instructing that they should not be arrested and should be allowed to bring merchandise and victuals to North Wales and Chester without disturbance.

These incidents suggest that the royal administration was very much out of control of its own provincial servants and that a degree of personal enterprise was being exercised under the badge of officialdom. Such problems for the merchants were compounded when they were also involved in foreign trading and encountered piracy on the high seas. The merchants themselves were not averse to "bending the rules". William of Doncaster, who sufferred as a result of both the Beaumaris and Irish affairs and also from piracy near Antwerp, was himself twice fined for trading offences. William of Doncaster, in addition to being mayor of Chester several times, was on occasions the king's deputy butler responsible for collecting wine duty (21) and also warden and searcher of money (22) in the ports of Chester, Dingwall, Conway, Carnarfon and Beaumaris. Notwithstanding these impressive appointments he was fined for giving short measure on one occasion (23) and pardoned on another occasion after paying a fine in consideration of currency offences. (24).

The act of piracy referred to took place near Antwerp when agents of the Duke of Brabant seized wool from one of Doncaster's ships. He exported wool from Cheshire and North Wales through Ipswich and the seizure of his cargo lead to a long-running court battle in London against the Duke and his agents. (25). The problems of piracy in the North Sea were probably matched in the Irish Sea and to counter such problems and also any Welsh insurgency, Sir Henry of Latham, burgess of Conway, was in 1295 put in charge of the sea between "Snowdon and Anglesey". (26). He commanded five boats with 95 seamen and 20 cross-bowmen and his presence was considered important enough for the Earl of Lancaster to formally instruct the Sheriff of Lancashire to cease any demands he may have on Henry until further orders were received from the king. (27). How long he remained in control is not known but it may only have been long enough for the Madoc rebellion of the same year to be crushed. The only other record of his naval activities are an account of £4-9s-2d received from him in respect of goods captured on the sea in Wales which were "against the peace of the King." (28).

Notwithstanding piracy, shipwreck and, not least, interference by officialdom, the merchants of the new town successfully traded over a wide area. From the foundation of the towns the sea was an essential supply route, not only for building materials, but for wine and victuals for the king's castles and it is probable that even before the Edwardian conquest Gascon wine merchants were trading with both English and Welsh communities on the

North Wales coast. (29). Only five months after the death of Llewellyn, whilst the king himself was still at Aberconway negotiating the removal of the abbey to Maenan, a merchant of Bayonne, John of Bardus, berthed at Conway with a cargo of wine. (30). The king, clearly pleased that Bardus' first port of call was Aberconway and that he was there in person, granted both Bardus and his son William protection to trade for a further three years. The wine trade between North Wales and Gascony continued to flourish and two Bordeaux merchants became burgage holders in the new towns. Bernard Anker, burgess of Carnarfon, received protection to go beyond the seas to trade from 1285-1290 by three successive grants from the king. (31). Prior to this he is recorded as trading with London where a debt of 66s-8d for wine is recorded as being owed to him by Abraham the taverner. (32). John Frambaud, also from Bordeaux, had a burgage in Conway from before 1295 until at least 1305, and received protection to trade by himself or through attorneys on condition that he did not trade with France. Gascony was not considered part of France and he could therefore carry on his normal trade with Bordeaux. (33).

Not all wine delivered to the new towns came directly from Gascony. Some was shipped to the southern ports of Bristol and Portsmouth. Peter de la Mare, constable of Bristol castle, shipped 100 casks of wine to Conway in 1283 (34) and in 1294 John of Candover, himself a former burgess of Conway, shipped 123 casks. (35). The enormous demand for wine and victuals generated by the presence of both the army and the first construction gangs involved merchants from many parts of England going to North Wales. Mostly they went to Ireland for victuals and during 1283 merchants from Chester, Shrewsbury, Liverpool, Nottingham, Burton, Tattenhall and Lynn received safe conduct to go to Ireland. (36). Other merchants were sent to Gascony. Hugh of Brickhill, merchant of Chester and later a burgess of Beaumaris, sent his ship 'La Nicholas' to Gascony to buy wine and other victuals, and, on this occasion, had an export cargo. He took hides of his own to sell and also delivered armour for the king's knights in Gascony. (37). Trade generally at this period must have been one-way and such was the demand for victuals in North Wales, caused by the enormous temporary growth in population and the devastation of war, that even the Abbey of Aberconway, normally self-sufficient, had to seek safe-conduct to send men to Ireland for victuals. (3). The interests of most merchants in trading with the king's newly established towns did not continue after the initial surge in demand. Once this was passed only the merchants of Chester and, to a lesser extent, Bordeaux, continued to trade and invest in the towns by acquisition of burgages.

In addition to the transmarine trade, mainly with Dublin and Gascony, there was a considerable volume of coastal traffic generated by the construction and supply programme. Stone, sand and some timber for the castles and town walls was usually obtained locally but more timber, iron, lime, glass and coal had to be imported. The bulk of the stone for Carnarfon was brought from quarries on either side of the Menai Strait and for the 1296 building season, the masters of the works estimated that 30 boats would be required to take materials to the site. (39). Much timber was imported from Delamere forest via Chester and from Toxteth Park on the north side of the Mersey estuary. (40). Iron was obtained from Newcastle-under-Lyme by road as far as Chester and then by sea to the construction site. (41). Limestone was required for making lime mortar and needed to be burnt with coal to convert it. The limestone was obtained from sites east of the Conway river and coal from Flint. The Conway accounts show that 524 tons of sea-coal were shipped from Whelston to Conway in 1286 at a cost varying from 4d to 6d a ton and £42-6s-4d for shipping. In 1295 the total coal carried to Beaumaris weighed 2,428 tons and a level of coal export from Flintshire was reached that was not exceeded until the seventeenth century. (42).

The king also operated his own vessels out of Conway. Some of the earliest settlers in the new town of Conway were working the king's barge by 1284. John of Oxford and William Seys were appointed to go in one of the king's barges, and Roger of Lewes and William of Cardigan in another "to trade in his dominions". (43). These barges were used for local trading and also to redistribute bulk cargo such as wine from Conway to Criccieth and Harlech. (44). The recorded cargoes for these coastal voyages, of only eight and twelve casks of wine, with a crew of nine sailors suggests that the king's barges could have been oared vessels aided by small sails. Such vessels had been used to supply Rhuddlan in earlier years under the control of a king's clerk. In 1299 the king's barge was used to carry twenty casks of wine from Conway to Criccieth but £6-3s-4d had to be spent refurbishing the boat for the voyage. One cable and awning, two hawsers, one rope, two covers, one sail and boards were bought for what seems to have been an extensive overhaul. (46). It is possible that the king's barges were similar to that employed by Henry, Duke of Lancaster, in the Mersey estuary in the mid-sourteenth century. This was an eight oared boat that had free passage to travel to the Duke's lands on either side of the estuary. (47).

It is possible to calculate some journey times for coastal traffic from the accounts but, due to vagaries of wind and tide, these give no further clue as to the type of boat operated. An example is a journey made from Conway to Criccieth and back in the king's barge in 1295. This took from 17th July until the 6th of August, a period of twenty one days. Assuming that a course nearly parallel to the coast had been followed the journey length would have been about two hundred miles, giving a daily rate of only ten miles. (48).

The accounts of such voyages give only a fragmentary view of the volume of sea trade involving the new towns. Undoubtedly it was very uneven in its frequency with massive peaks occurring during the construction programmes of the 1280's and again in the mid 1290's when Carnarfon was rebuilt and Beaumaris constructed. It is important not to overemphasise the frequency of shipping during the intermediate years, and later when the towns were settling into near-normality, but it is equally important to stress the importance of the sea-routes. Whereas sea trade could be more risky than overland routes, certain cargoes could not be economically carried other than by sea. A parallel can be drawn between present day freight by sea and air. Air freight is only economical for low volume/high value goods and sea freight is still essential for high volume/low value goods such as coal, oil, fertilisers or mineral ores. The situation was no different in the thirteenth century and coal, limestone, sand and building stone could only be economically hauled by sea. For high value/low volume goods such as cash it was quicker and more economic to take them overland.

The decision to use either sea or land freightage was not always clear cut and affected by the urgency of the trip and the availability of ships. Much of the building material for Harlech castle was shipped onwards from Conway and Carnarfon. From both of these towns the overland route to Harlech is only two-fifths of the length of the optimum sea-route. Generally the slower and longer sea route was preferred for cargoes such as stone, but in April, 1286, a team of twentyseven horses were hired to take lime and iron overland from Conway to Harlech. Both materials had probably been delivered to Conway from the Dee estuary by sea, but on this occasion, either urgency or lack of ships determined that an overland route was chosen. This was the normal route for smaller loads such as tools, money or weapons such as cross-bows. (49).

Once established as chartered towns, Conway, Carnarfon and Beaumaris had to conform to the disciplines imposed by government on any town, and this was

as true for the management of maritime affairs as it was for other commercial, administrative or legal activities. Control of shipping and the taxing of certain cargoes was a means whereby the king could collect money.

The responsibility for accounting for the receipts from maritime trade rested between the locally appointed bailiffs and customs officers appointed by the king. No figures exist from before 1301 when the individual town returns start to include items related to port dues, but these do not provide a continuous, or reliable, set of accounts.

Operational control of the ports appears to have rested with the town bailiffs. They were the officials to whom the king's office wrote when national policy was involved. In January 1297 (50) the king wrote to the bailiffs of all ports, including Conway, Carnarfon and Beaumaris, instructing them that no person should be permitted to leave the realm without licence. Anyone suspected of this intention was to be arrested until examined by the king. Three months later another circular letter was sent to the bailiffs of maritime towns ordering them that all ships of 40 tuns and over must go before the king at Winchelsea. (51). This was presumably to enable the king to embark on his military expedition to Flanders, but whether such a ship was despatched from the North Wales towns is not recorded. Two years earlier 'La Mariote' of Conway was granted protection to go to Gascony to find victuals for the king's castles in North Wales. (52). In 1296 she was carrying wheat and oats from Ireland to North Wales under command of Gayblard Ducas. (53). La Mariote, owned by William of Doncaster, was almost certainly of 40 tuns and so could well have been drafted from Conway to serve in the king's fleet at Winchelsea.

As has been stated, surviving customs accounts are incomplete and provide, at best, a fragmentary view of the trade of the towns. From surviving records some details can be culled that help to confirm the size of ships and the nature of their cargoes. In 1303/4 five ships were recorded as having berthed in the three new towns carrying a total cargo of 197 tuns. No breakdown of this total is given, but in the following year a ship belonging to John Manekyn of Plymouth called at Conway with a cargo of 60 tuns of wine, from which a prise of two tuns was extracted. The value of the cargo was £4-13s-4d but another ship in the same year carried to Conway a smaller cargo of only 40 tuns but with a value of £5-6s-8d. This latter ship, owned by the ubiquitous William of

Doncaster, clearly carried better quality wine but only paid the same duty of two tuns. Further details of cargoes do not survive except from much later in the fourteenth century and early 15th century when wool, cloth and hides were exported from North Wales and iron, linen, canvas, ginger and figs were imported. (54).

The responsibility for collecting the prise or custom on wine lay with the king's deputy butlers. Lewis states that these appointments of the king date from the early fourteenth century and lists those recorded on the patent rolls for the first half of the century. (55). An earlier record exists, however, as the Pipe Rolls name Mathew of Colombers as the king's butler at Conway in Wales as early as 1292. (56). Mathew was a burgess of Conway where he was, presumably, a merchant like many of his later counterparts. Little is known of him, but he is recorded as receiving consignments of 123 and 130 tuns of wine on behalf of the king at Conway in 1294. (57). He was also the subject of a petition to the king by some of his fellow burgesses who had bought a great quantity of herrings from him for which they claimed they had paid. Mathew de Colombers claimed that they had not and sought redress. (50).

In 1303 the king commissioned Hugh of Brickhill and William of Doncaster to levy customs for every port in North Wales from Haverford to Chester. (59). The role of collector of customs appears not to have conflicted with their commercial interests and in 1304 the Exchequer at Dublin was ordered to pay Doncaster £147-6s-0d for wine bought for use by the king's household during 1303, when he was collector of customs. (60). On the basis of the value of the wine delivered to Beaumaris by Doncaster the following year, 1305, such a payment must have represented about thirty shiploads of wine. Such a volume contrasts strongly with that on which custom duty was paid and for which Doncaster and Brickhill were responsible. William of Doncaster served further terms as collector of customs in 1308 and 1313. (61).

The evidence for the marine trade of the new towns discussed above has mainly been in respect of importation of materials and supplies for the army and the construction programme. Little can be said concerning any export trade except that the merchants of the thirteenth century would have been fully aware of the economic desirability of return cargoes and actively sought out potential freight. It has been noted that Hugh of Brickhill took the opportunity to take hides from Chester to sell in Gascony when he was

sent there on the king's business. There can have been few exports from the new towns themselves except when they acted as ports of departure for the surplus products of the hinterland. Hides may have been cured and tanned in the towns and there is evidence of such exports from Carnarfon much later during the reign of Henry VIII. (62). Millstones and corn were taken to Chester from Anglesey and some fish may have been exported. Wool had been exported from the Abbey of Aberconway since before the conquest. Edward I had, in 1277, granted safe conduct to Orlandino de Poggio to carry twenty sack of wool bought from the Abbey to Chester although the method of transport is not known. (63). Between 1310 and 1340 the annual wool export of the Abbey still ran at 20 sacks each of between 336 and 364 pounds. The product of Aberconway was small compared with the greatest English producer, Fountains Abbey, which produced 75 sacks a year. Apart from the interruptions caused by war it can be assumed that the Abbey, now at Maenan, continued to produce wool and that some of it may have been exported through the new dock facility at Conway. The purchaser of the abbey's wool, di Poggio, was a banker from Tuscany who had been loosely attached to the king's wardrobe since his crusade. (64). He was the "King's beloved merchant" and he and his partners were given privileges as though members of the royal household. He was the receiver of revenues in the Duchy of Aquitaine and one of the major sources of royal finance. William of Doncaster exported wool to Antwerp and some of this may well have been from North Wales. He also exported hides and lambs fleeces through Chester and the chamberlains account of 1302/3 shows that he was jointed in this trade by Dafydd ap Einion, burgess and merchant of Beaumaris. (65). Seven years earlier the export of hides is again recorded from Anglesey. Walter Page, master of a ship called the'Baiard of Northflete" was granted safe conduct to ship hides and other goods to London. (66).

From the foregoing it is not possible to draw conclusions about the volume of maritime trade undertaken by the new towns. Whatever the volume the operation of the sea routes was of fundamental importance to the establishment and growth of the towns. They were also of critical importance in the original selection of town sites and in this respect the towns on the Menai Strait were favoured in relation to those such as Harlech and Criccieth. Their situation as convenient ports of call on the Chester to Dublin route favoured their location and strengthened their role as English outposts around the foot of Snowdonia.

Notwithstanding the importance of the sea routes the overland routes to Chester, London and other parts of England were equally vital to the new towns. The distances involved in overland travel were generally much less than by sea, and for conduct of small cargoes, such as money or documents, the overland routes were quicker.

The three towns planted along the Menai Strait lay close to a long-established east/west route along the north coast of Wales. The Romans had built, on what could have been an earlier trackway, a road from Chester to the Conway at Canovium and on across the shoulder of the Carneddau to Segontium. The Romans crossed the Conway at or near the Tal-y-Cafn ferry having crossed the Perfeddwlad from Chester through Rhuallt and Glascoed. (67). The medieval road ran north of this line, reaching Conway through Rhuddlan and Abergele and around the Penmaen headland to Deganwy. (68, 69). From Conway the road continued westward to Aber, Bangor and Carnarfon giving access en route to the various ferry crossings of the Menai Strait. Other routes ran southwards from Conway and Carnarfon but these would have been less important and less heavily trafficked than the main east/west road.

The precise line and physical nature of these roads and tracks cannot be ascertained with any certainty but written records do give some indications.

From the early days of the Welsh wars, King Edward regularly instructed that the roads and passes in Wales were to be enlarged and widened. (70). This instruction was given to ensure an easier passage for troops and supplies but also to minimise the possibility of ambush. No less than 1300 men were employed clearing one pass at Badfari between Ruthin and Rhuddlan in 1284 (71) and the scale of woodland clearance was such that between one and two thousand acres of woodland were cleared for this road alone. (72). Steps were also taken to facilitate military and commercial traffic by the repair and building of bridges. Roger Mortimer was granted pontage in July 1284 for a period of three years in order to construct a bridge at Llangollen for the security of travellers. (73). The Dee bridge at Chester, the springboard for routes into Wales, was repaired by order of the king in 1281 two years after it had been damaged by flooding of the river. (74). The bridge was a vital part of the road route from London to North Wales. The road ran from Chester to Newcastle under Lyme, Lichfield, Coleshill and Coventry and on to London. (75).

Edward I granted the City of Chester pavage of ½d on every cart of firewood or coals entering the city in order to ensure repair of the city's roads and bridges. Goods destined for the army in North Wales were exempt from this toll. (76).

From Chester the road westward to Conway must have been of equivalent standard to that from Chester to London. Journeys by horse and cart from Chester to London are recorded as are journeys from Conway or Carnarfon to London. The recorded journey times, reflected in the number of days paid for in the accounts, suggest a travel rate across North Wales to Chester similar to that from Chester to London,broadly similar to those put forward by Stenton as typical for the period.

Many of the surviving accounts that reveal details of journey time are concerned with the transport of money. Such carriage was a major undertaking at this period as the only coins in circulation were the silver penny, halfpenny and farthing. Several million of these must have been carried to North Wales to pay for the construction programme alone. Much of the money was carried by road within England and Wales, although much of the finance for the new towns came from the Irish Exchequer in Dublin.

The Cheshire chamberlain's account for 1301/2 records the expenditure involved in the transport of money from Chester to London. The money was not carted but carried by five hackneys hired for the journey. Two squires on horseback and sixteen grooms on foot accompanied the money and two further men were employed to travel ahead and secure quarters for the party. Baskets and rope were purchased to hold the money. The journey to London took eight days and the unladen return journey six days. (77).

A journey that took place ten years earlier from Carnarfon to London is also recorded in detail. Simon Cissor and John Sometar were sent to London accompanied by eight servants to fetch money. They hired a cart in London for the return journey and the entire trip took eighteen days. The distance travelled was 510 miles, and included crossing the Conway by ferry. The rate of travel works out at about thirty one miles a day unladen and twentyfive miles a day for the return journey. Comparison of this journey time with that from Chester, and also with what is known of journey times in England for the period, suggests that the road from Carnarfon to Chester was equivalent in standard to

the main Chester/London road. (78). Much slower journeys are also recorded but any delays caused by problems en route or at the turn-round point are not noted and only the quicker journeys can be usefully analysed to assess travelling rates.

Although the Carnarfon/Chester road appears to have been capable of allowing reasonably quick travel by horse and cart much of the material passing through Chester for onward transit for the new town construction programme was put on board ship once it reached Chester. The main source of supply for iron, steel and nails was Newcastle-under-Lyme and such materials were carried by road to Chester but invariably put on board ship for the second half of their journey. (79). This may, of course, be explained by a programme of road improvement taking place as part of the king's settlement policy. It has been noted that positive evidence exists for widening the highway verges and for bridge repair and building and it would be consistent for the actual road surfaces also to be improved. Such a policy would explain why, during the building programme, materials were sent by sea but by road once the towns were established and road improvements completed.

If such a policy was implemented it would probably have concentrated on the principal east/west route between Carnarfon and Chester. This would be logical in that it would not only connect these administrative and financial centres but also give access to Conway and the ferry to Beaumaris. The need for southern routes between the new towns of Carnarfon and Criccieth, or Conway and Harlech would have been less and the physical constraints on constructing them much greater. Such routes were probably no more than pack-horse trails and the building accounts for Harlech castle tend to confirm this. Most of the material required in Harlech was sent by the very much longer and slower sea route. Smaller goods were sent by packhorse and although the accounts detail the hiring of carts for local use either at Harlech or Carnarfon, no records survive to show that carts were used for the journey between the towns. Indeed, when large loads needed to be carried overland, a great number of horses were employed to carry packs rather than pull carts.

What the nature or quality of the roads and tracks was cannot be ascertained. If they were no better or worse than most roads of the period then their condition would not occasion comment, but if some of them were sufficiently good to take regular cart traffic then repair and maintenance

would have been necessary. There is one reference to such work being carried out and this occurs in the king's household account for when he was at Rhuddlan in 1281/2. Six carts, each with three horses, were hired to carry hay from the meadows to the hay-house in the castle. Two men were employed to mend the road by which the hay had to be carted to the castle at a total cost of 4s-0d. What the repair work was can only be conjectured but the minimum required for the passage of carts would be for pot-holes and soft spots to be filled with broken stone. Four shillings would have been sufficient to pay two labourers for between eight and twelve days each. (80). The same accounts refer to payment for the carriage of five cartloads of flour from Chester to Rhuddlan and also the carriage of the Queen's baggage by cart from Rhuddlan to Conway and it is, perhaps, reasonable to assume that the main east/west highway from Chester to Carnarfon would have been maintained to at least the standard required for local hay-cart traffic.

At Rhuddlan the expense of repairing the local roads was borne by the king and the notion of a royal responsibility for highways in the newly acquired territory of North Wales is echoed in a deed drawn up at Carnarfon in 1318. This refers to land lying between the land of Henry the Tailor and "the royal road running towards the bridge at Rug." (81).

From this and other deeds it is possible to outline the network of roads that served medieval Carnarfon. The bridge at Rug is about two miles east of Carnarfon on the road to Llanberis. A mortgage drawn up between Thomas Hope and Richard of Bulkeley in 1399 concerns one parcel of land lying between Twthill and the road to Bangor and another lying between Twthill and the road leading towards Pengelle (Pen-y-gelli). Pen-y-gelli lies on the road that now links Carnarfon and Bethesda. (82). Land lying near the church of St. Peblig is also referred to in contemporary deeds and as this remained the parish church of Carnarfon after the establishment of the new town it is certain that the road from the town to St. Peblig's would also have existed. (83). This latter road would probably have forked just outside the town and one road would have continued southwards and the other would have been the ancient pilgrim route to Clynnog Fawr and Bardsey. The existence along these five routes of the ancient parish churches and townships of Llanfair-is-Gair, Llanddeiniolen, Llanrug, Llanbeblig and Llanwnda tends to confirm that the medieval pattern of roads radiated from Carnarfon in the thirteenth century as it does today. Such a radial pattern is absolutely in conformity with the role of Carnarfon as a

regional commercial and administrative centre. A sixth radial route went northwards from Carnarfon by way of the ferry across the Menai Strait leading to the road to Rhosyr, soon to become the new town of Newborough, and the ancient centre at Aberffraw. Before the Edwardian conquest Carnarfon had a degree of local prominence but its establishment by the king as the 'capital' of North Wales elevated its status and made access to the town important from all directions.

The 'royal' status of Carnarfon was honoured on occasions by the presence of King Edward I himself. His itinerary for the years up to 1286, when he left for France, and during 1294/5 show him to have been in residence at Carnarfon and Conway for considerable periods. From these major centres he also travelled to other parts and is recorded as staying overnight in Dolwyddelan, Llanrwst, Bangor, Aber, Criccieth, Clynnog Fawr, Llanfaes, Aberffraw, Harlech, Holyhead and Trefriw. It is doubtful whether he took his entire entourage with him on his forays into the mountainous hinterland but they certainly accompanied him to his major castles. The rate of royal progress along the rudimentary roads and tracks of the region was considerably slower than he or his ministers would have expected of their emissaries to London or Chester. The normal royal day's progress appears to have been only between ten and fifteen miles. (84). This rate of travel was probably determined by the size and complexity of his entourage rather than the state of the royal roads. Margaret Labarge, describing the travelling royal household, states that "the size of the large establishment which followed the King is almost beyond our comprehension." (85). She writes that "in 1286 Edward I had with him in France twelve carters, each with his own groom, and twentyfive sumpters, three of whom carried the King's bed and one his breakfast, apart from such normal loads as the King's treasure, the robes and armour and the kitchen bags." A royal household ordinance issued in November 1279 proclaimed that three long carts should be provided for the king's wardrobe; one long cart for the pantry, one short cart to carry the household flour and the mills of the saucery, one long and one short cart for the buttery and one long cart and two short ones for the kitchen. The queen's household included among her permanent staff eight carters, fourteen outriders and twentyfour sumptermen.

The household accounts for Rhuddlan account for the carts and horses required to carry separately the baggage of the Queen and her daughter from Rhuddlan to Conway in addition to the carts required for fruit, cheese, figs,

raisins, wax, almonds, parchment and a great variety of herbs and spices. (86). In addition to the horses and carriages of the king and his family the noble lords accompanying him would also have had their entourages, so making a formidable cavalcade strung out along the roads and tracks.

Even in times of war or uprising such cavalcades would accompany the king on his progress between the royal castles. In January 1295 the king was in North Wales to crush the Madoc rebellion and whilst on the road from Bangor to Conway at Penmaenmawr his commissariat train was captured and the king and his followers were forced to seek refuge and were then beseiged in the castle at Conway. The loss of the baggage train meant that food and drink ran perilously short before the eventual relief of the castle. (87).

The logistics of travel for the royal household were extremely complex and is was probably this policy of 'taking one's house on one's back' that determined the rate of royal travel much more than the condition of the roads.

It is perhaps appropriate here to turn from large groups of horses to the long distance travel of large herds of cattle. Cattle droving from Wales probably dates back to early medieval times and the alignment of some cross-country routes may well have been determined by the passage of large herds of cattle. In later times, when wheeled traffic became more frequent, the droving routes and the highways often differred in their alignment but the physical requirements of a pack-horse trail, direction and gradient, were the same as required for cattle droving. The relatively poor nature of the pastures in North Wales has always been capable of breeding more cattle than could be raised and stocked. The surplus 'store cattle' were driven overland to the larger centres of population in England, often as far as London. The economy of the new towns was largely dependent on agriculture and surplus stock was driven to England for sale. In 1326/7 Thomas Chedworth, chamberlain of North Wales, accounted for £6 spent on the purchase of 20 cattle for the king. (88). A further 120 cattle were sent to the king as a present and John of Lunge was appointed to supervise an overland drive to Windsor via the counties of Anglesey, Carnarfon and Merioneth. The journey took from the 8th December 1315 to the following 11th January; a period of thirty four days for the 250 mile journey. The total cost of the cattle and driving them amounted to £21-0s-11d which William of Northwell, clerk of the king's kitchen at Windsor, duly confirmed in writing. An even earlier reference to the receipt of cattle in

London from North Wales is dated 1292 when Jack of Salop acknowledged in the Court of the City of London that he had received 93 beasts from Sir William of Cicon, constable of Conway Castle. (89).

Overland travel could not have taken place without the operation of a number of ferries, particularly over the Menai Strait and the river Conway. Whereas cattle could be driven through the water, carts, pack-horses and people required transit. Mr. H. C. Davies (90) has documented virtually all of the surviving records about the five Menai and two Conway ferries. It is not the intention here to duplicate this data but to concentrate, and speculate, on the major east/west route across the Conway.

Giraldus records his crossing of the Conway "or rather an arm of the sea under Deganwy, leaving the Cistercian monastery of Aberconway on the western bank of the river to our right hand." (91). Gerald probably crossed where the Conway is at its narrowest and where the ferry became established. Henry III drew revenue from the ferry when he was at Deganwy in 1247 so it was well established by the date of the Edwardian foundation of Conway. At this point, one mile north of Conway, the river is 220 yards wide. Opposite Conway the river is four times as wide and the ferry appears to have remained in the northern narrow position until modern times. Mr. H. C. Davies suggests that Edward I moved the ferry a mile higher up the river to establish it beneath the walls of his new borough but this view is contradicted by the Conway rental of 1305. (92). The rental accounts for 7s-6d rent being received from fifteen sites built outside the walls and by the ferry. This appears to confirm that the ferry remained at the narrow crossing of the river berthing on the town lands of Conway Morfa on the western bank and the vill of Deganwy on the eastern side.

The ferry, as a vital element in the road structure, remained in royal hands but was farmed by individual burgesses of Conway. The responsibility for provision and maintenance of the ferryboat remained with the king and was accounted for by the constable of the castle. In 1289 a new boat was provided at a cost of 34s-0d which was repaired at a cost of 2s-8d in 1301. In 1307 twelve oars and two spocheurs (punt poles?) were bought and the boat renewed again in 1324. This new boat was one of two purchased at the time at a total cost of £15-13s-4d and, from their costs, these new boats would appear to have been bigger than the earlier one.

No details of the size or nature of the ferryboats survive but they must have been capable of carrying horses and probably carts in addition to foot passengers. The individual burgesses of Conway who farmed the ferry were generally the more substantial landholders or castle or town officials. Their official duties, status or other work would have precluded them physically operating the ferry themselves and ferrymen must have been employed to operate it. The minimum operating cost of the ferry would therefore have been the cost of employing two men and the annual rent, varying from £5-6s-8d to £6-4s-8d. Sailors were paid threepence a day at that date and if ferrymen received a similar wage then the minimum operating cost would have been £14-19s-2d annually. (93). A small profit to the farmer would bring these costs to around £16.

The rates charged for the ferry in the thirteenth century are not recorded but one hundred years later the fares were "taking of each man crossing alone one farthing, of a man with a horse one halfpenny, of a man and a horse with a load or any burden whatsoever one penny as accustomed of old to be taken." At this date the annual rent was still as it was one hundred years earlier and it seems probable that the fare tariff was also. In 1282 an almost identical fare structure existed for crossing London bridge. (94).

An annual operating cost of £16 would require 15,360 single journeys to be made or an average of forty-two trips per day. The pattern of travel would not have been even and on fair and market days the daily rate would be considerably greater. The calculation does not include the monks of Aberconway who had right of free passage or those senior officials of the king or castle who may have had a similar privilege, albeit unofficially. These figures are speculations based on assumptions but do serve to give some idea of the measure of traffic using the ferry. Conway and Deganwy were interdependant settlements and the ferry must have served both for the regular interchange of people and goods within the boroughs in addition to its role as part of the main east/west highway of North Wales.

The other Conway ferry, at Tal-y-Cafn, some 3½ miles south of the town, was less important. It was farmed in 1301 by Sir William de Cicon at an annual rent of £2-13s-4d. When a new boat was purchased for this ferry in 1326 it cost only 50s, a third of the cost of the Conway ferryboat.

The ferries were not the only small boats using the river Conway as it was also used for inland traffic. Larger ships, such as the cogs, could not have navigated the river but local traffic in small boats could have travelled several miles inland. In 1382 William of Swynmoor was appointed to arrest and keep in safe custody until proof of ownership was produced any timber of brushwood being taken away by the river Conway from the King's forests and woods. (95). The small boats engaged in such traffic may also have been used in the fisheries of the river.

The effect of lines of communication on the landscape, economy and administration of a region is as long lasting as the construction of new towns and cannot be considered in isolation. The long term effect of the Edwardian town and road building programme must be considered together and will be the subject of a separate and conclusive section of this work.

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THE ESTABLISHED TOWNS.

It has been shown how the new towns of Edward I became physically established very rapidly. The concentration of men, money and materials and the active recruitment of settlers generated boroughs that within twenty years were expanding outside their walls. The question that must now be addressed is when does a new town cease to be new and become a 'normal' town. The process of establishment does not merely relate to the physical fabric of a town. The colleges of Oxford and Cambridge contain structures still referred to as new buildings even though they are several hundred years old. That they are new in relation to their neighbouring buildings remains perpetually true but this criterion cannot apply to new towns. Conway is no longer a new town and at some period in its history became normal or established. A more appropriate definition of the end of newness would seem to be the point at which a town's position in the social, economic and political geography of a region no longer gave them cause for "special pleading". As long as Conway, Carnarfon and Beaumaris remained English islands in a Welsh sea and used this fact to petition government for assistance then they could still be considered as new towns. This position remained for about two hundred and fifty years until the Act of Union finally equalised the status of the English and Welsh in law.

During this protracted period the privilege of the English slowly reduced and for the native Welshmen increased to a point where most of the other Edwardian new towns were Welsh occupied settlements. In the middle of the fourteenth century the Black Death swept through Europe but the relative isolation of North Wales did not spare it. What the death toll in the boroughs was cannot be ascertained but it was certainly high in the surrounding rural districts. The more densely populated towns must have been at least as badly affected as the countryside. In Creuddyn in 1351 there were only two advowry tenants remaining "and no more because the remainder are dead by pestilence". In neighbouring Arlechwedd Isaf the advowry receipts were only three shillings and "no more because many are dead by pestilence". (1). The poet Robin Ddu lamented the deaths by plague of all seven children of grufydd ap Rhys of Gloddaeth. The shortage of labour caused by the Black Death hastened the breakdown of villeinage and Welshmen were able to look to the vacancies in the towns for self-advancement. This threat of invasion of the English boroughs prompted the Black Prince to renew the old Edwardian ordinances in favour of the English settlers. He charged the burgesses of Conway to keep (the town) at their own peril and likewise be charged to keep it victualled and guarded." (2).

The threat of the Welsh usurping English privileges did not start with the Black Death. Some Welshmen had lived in the new boroughs since their foundation and were accepted providing they accorded with English customs. This was particularly so in Beaumaris where it was stated in 1345 that most of the burgesses were Welsh. (3). Notwithstanding this the burgesses of Beaumaris, not many years earlier, had petitioned the king to complain that the Welsh were holding their own markets to the detriment of Beaumaris. (4). It was in 1345 that the royal attorney in North Wales, Henry of Shalford, was assassinated and a serious affray between the Welsh and English of St. Asaph and Rhuddlan occurred. This caused the burgesses of Rhuddlan, Conway, Carnarfon and Denbigh to write to the prince complaining that unless something was done to restore English privilege then "all the English will be destroyed out of the land and no bailiff or minister will venture to go to do his office.....". (5). The chorus of complaint was not joined by the strongly Welsh 'English' borough of Beaumaris. The liberties of Beaumaris were suspended for a time and the Welshmen made to depart, although probably not all of them left. This constant pressure caused partly by reaction to a corrupt and inefficient administration and partly by arguments over market rights continued throughout the fourteenth century, but despite the regular renewal of Edward's ordinances, the relative economic power of the English boroughs slowly declined. The extension of market rights to Aber and the growth of native trade at Trefriw and Llanwrst diminished the importance of Conway as a market centre. Both Pwllheli and Nefyn were fully enfranchised in 1355 with their charters incorporating the liberties of Rhuddlan, and their fee farms payable directly to the crown. It was probably these Welsh towns' acknowledgement of the English king as their landlord and their acceptance of English burghal customs that made them prime targets for the ravages of Owen Glyndwr at the turn of the century. Both towns were laid waste and Conway castle was occupied. The insurgents were beseiged in the castle before surrendering but it was not until 1408 that the insurrection was over and the town started to recover. Carnarfon and Beaumaris also suffered damage in the revolt and claimed substantial financial losses. Conway and Carnarfon had been walled towns from their foundation but Beaumaris, possibly due to lack of money, was not. The Glyndwr revolt exposed this weakness and the burgesses were granted aid to build a wall and ditch around the town; a classis case of shutting the door after the horse has bolted. Settlement of the rebellion did nothing to secure the future of the English boroughs and their 'special pleading' contined during the fifteenth century. In 1447 the English

boroughs again complained about encroachment into their market monopoly and, once again, the king confirmed the statutes made in the reign of Edward I.(6). By this date all of the original Conway families appear to have died out. The longest surviving Goodenoughs, first recorded in Conway in the rental of 1305 and having survived the Black Death, pass from the records in 1421. Alice, daughter and heiress of Thomas Goodenough married Thomas Walton and took into his family twenty messuages, one dovecote and other lands in Conway. From the Waltons it passed to the Bulkeleys, originally from Cheshire, but during the fifteenth century building up property interests and family connections that were the foundation of the vast family estate centred on Beaumaris.

By the early part of the sixteenth century English dominance in the boroughs of Conway, Carnarfon and Beaumaris was further reduced when Henry VII issued a charter that gave Welshmen the right of acquiring land in the English boroughs. Despite protestations from the three boroughs and requests for the charter to be withdrawn the period of English dominance was at an end. A final appeal to Cardinal Wolsey in 1529 was rejected and in 1536 the Act of Union gave English and Welsh equal status in law. The protracted period of special pleading was over and the three boroughs were no longer "new towns". Their special economic position whereby the English settlers enjoyed marker monopolies and the crown poured money into a castle garrison and administration was finished. In any event the functional, defensive design of the castles and the towns were no longer appropriate for contemporary military technology. Gunpowder had rendered massive stone castles obsolete and the castles had been in decline for a long period before the passing of the Act of Union. The thirty-six strong garrison originally stationed in Conway castle reduced during the fourteenth century to eight of ten men. Even during the Glyndwr revolt the garrison was only fourteen men and this had declined to six by 1418. (7). From 1512 the constable's fee was not supplemented by any extra fee for a permanent garrison and this steady decline in the castle's garrison also meant a steady decline in the money being brought into the town to pay professional soldiers. As their military role was reduced so the castle fabric, by then two hundred years old, also crumbled and by 1590 was in an abandoned and ruinous state. (8).

The English had fought to protect their privileges, granted to their burgess predecessors by Edward I at the foundation of the new town, right up to the Act of Union. It is, perhaps, surprising that in spite of the open

hostility of the 'puri nativi' that any English remained at this date. Conway was not totally occupied by Englishmen at its foundation and a proportion of Welshmen, albeit loyal to the crown, had lived as burgesses with the new settlers. Intermarriage inevitably took place in all three towns and continued despite a law of 1402 which explicitly forbade the granting of any office in Wales to any Englishman who had a Welsh wife. (9). The earliest parish registers in Conway survive from 1541, shortly after proclamation of the Act of Union and illustrate the extent of intermarriage. In that year four men with English names married four English girls but six couples of apparently mixed ethnic backgrounds were also married in Conway. Nineteen children with English names were baptized together with eight Welsh children. A similar proportion of mixed marriages is recorded in the register for 1584, three hundred years after the town's foundation. By 1784 all of the names in the parish register of the five hundred year old town are apparently Welsh.

To conclude that the English new towns had become Welsh by this time would be wrong. The Welsh had adopted the English urban way of living. The Act of Union was a grant of equality under English law and the old arguments concerning governance by English or Welsh law that had been current in the early years of the new towns were long forgotten. The structure of town and county government and the administration of justice were those imposed by Edward under the Statute of Rhuddlan. The physical structures of the towns, the castles and the walls, remained to remind the later burgesses of the original foundation. The new towns were incorporated into the 'normality' of the region's urban structure but still kept their importance as commercial and administrative centres. Carnarfon and Beaumaris were the only North Wales ports to be regularly noted in the Chester Custom's accounts. (10). The network of roads and trackways to the new towns and the quays within the towns became permanent and were an influence on the next revolution to affect Wales in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Both Carnarfon and Conway acted as export docks for the slate industry although other specialist docks were also built at this time. Even today the pre-eminence of Carnarfon, built by Edward as the capital of Gwynedd, remains. Indeed in 1972 the local government reorganisation in Wales restored to Carnarfon its role as the centre of the region's administration.

In the same year that the Act of Union effectively terminated the special position of the English boroughs in North Wales Parliament passed an act that

ended the existence of another of Edward I's foundations. Aberconway Abbey, re-founded at Maenan, was dissolved and its revenues appropriated to the crown. The buildings originally designed by the architects of Conway and Carnarfon were dismantled; the lead was sold and sone carted away to Gwydir and Carnarfon. At Carnarfon it was used to repair the castle to act as a defence against foreign, rather than local, aggression.

The influence of the foundation of the new towns on the economy, administration and legal structure of North Wales has been noted above as a permanent legacy of the Edwardian conquest. This was achieved by a concentration of the most experienced lawyers and administrators in England on the problems of settlement and who ensured that a thoroughly workable and detailed strategy was implemented. A similar collection of experience and ability was organised to undertake the new town construction programme and their influence also had wider effect. James of St. George learnt his architectural skills in Savoy; Walter of Hereford was the architect in charge of work at Winchcombe Abbey and Vale Royal; Richard the Engineer was experienced not only in building but in the engineering and operation of mills and bridges; Henry of Oxford was recruited from a city where Merton College was under construction and other men came from major construction sites in England, France and Ireland. Skills were brought to bear on the Welsh building programme that had been educated by not only some of the most important buildings in England and France but even Constantinople. (11). Most of these men, having done their work in Wales, left to serve the king elsewhere but inevitably influenced the design of future work in Wales. Unfortunately very little architectural work from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries survives in North Wales, but Peter Smith has expressed the view that "The presence of workmen, some from the richest carpentry regions of England, in the towns of North Wales when Denbigh, Conway, Carnarfon and Beaumaris were in scaffold cannot but have had a profound influence on local crofts." (12). Dr. Gresham expresses the view that in stone carving the importation of English masons firstly led to the adoption of English techniques which were then developed by local carvers in a manner of their own. (13). Churches at Llanbeblig and Llanfaglan in close proximity to the new boroughs incorporated details that may well have been worked to the designs of English craftsmen. (14).

Edward's new towns were planted in relatively unfertile soil but they flourished as long as they had the care and attention that any new plantation requires. Their period of flowering lasted a very long time despite the vicissitudes of the political climate and they scattered their seeds of influence widely. Once special attention was no longer given to them they did not die but survived to take advantage of the revolutions in industry, travel and leisure that have occurred within the last two hundred years and grow on a scale and in a manner that their founder could not have comprehended.

THE ESTABLISHED TOWNS. References.

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RUNCORN.

Planning.

The genesis of the modern British new town planning movement was the publication in 1898 of Ebenezer Howard's book "Tomorrow; a peaceful path to Reform." The second edition, published shortly afterwards carried a new title and the one that it still carries in the publishers lists of "Garden cities of tomorrow."

Howard put the ideas he enunciated in his book into practice by founding a private company to build the first of the garden cities at Letchworth in 1902. A second town at Welwyn, also in Hertfordshire, was established in 1920. He exhorted government to follow his example and build one hundred new towns to solve the massive housing problem that faced the nation at the end of the first world war. The provision of "homes for heroes" was uppermost in the country's conciousness and, in 1921, a committee was set up under the chairmanship of Neville Chamberlain to report on Howard's ideas. (1), As a result the next Housing Act passed by government gave local authorities the power to purchase land for this purpose. The power was never used.

In the following decade the rapid expansion and congestion of London gave rise to another committee under Lord Marley. They discussed the problems for four years and eventually recommended in favour of the construction of new towns but, again, no action was taken.

In 1938 yet another committee, this time in the powerful form of a royal commission, was instituted under Sir Montagu Barlow and asked to investigate the problems of the "Distribution of the Industrial Population." The Barlow report was published as war broke out and its principal recommendation that a central planning authority be set up could not be acted upon immediately. In a minority report the committee recommended that a national programme of garden cities should be pursued.

During the war Winston Churchill appointed Lord Reith to advise on the problems of post-war reconstruction and he put in hand a number of relevant studies. The Uthwatt committee were briefed to report on the problems of planning and land values. (2). A group led by Mr Justice Scott were to report on 'Land Utilisation in Rural Areas' and Professor Abercrombie was commissioned to prepare plans for both London and the greater London area. (3 4).

Lord Reith also persuaded the government to follow the recommendation of the Barlow report and, in 1943, the Ministry of Town and Country Planning was

formed. After the end of the war the Labour government under Clement Attlee determined that new towns were to be a national priority. Lewis Silkin was appointed Minister of Town and Country Planning and recalled Lord Reith to chair a committee to consider how new towns could be built. It was probably Lord Reith's experience as Director-General of the B.B.C. that caused him to think that the way to achieve quick action was by means of semi-independent public corporations with strong minded chairmen able to act without too much local or national political interference.

Mr. Silkin moved the second reading of the New Towns Act on the 8th May 1946. He said "the House will observe that it is not called a "Satellite Towns Bill" or a "Garden City Bill" .....I hope we may regard the term satellite or garden city as having been interred decently ..... my researches on new towns go back to Sir Thomas More. He was the first person I have discovered to deplore urban sprawl ..... incidentally Sir Thomas More was beheaded but that must not be regarded as a precedent for the treatment of town planners." (5).

The minister explained to the House the background to the Act in terms of the work of Ebenezer Howard at Letchworth and Welwyn and of Sir Patrick Abercrombie's plan for London. This plan recommended the creation of ten self-contained new towns within about thirty miles of London and each having a population of thirty to sixty thousand. He explained that the towns would be developed by public corporations who would become freeholders of the land and not be permitted to dispose of it other than by leases not exceeding ninety-nine years. Mr Silkin concluded with the wish to see in the new towns the directors, managers and technical staffs finding their houses and playing a full part in the life of the town.

The second reading of the New Towns Act was introduced into the House of Lords on 11th July 1946 where it received much detailed and constructive debate but no opposition from the Conservatives. The bill received the royal assent on the 1st August 1946 and Stevenage was designated as the first new town by order of the minister dated 11th November 1946.

The New Towns Act was used by many successive governments with regular up-dating to bring it into line with other parallel legislation. (6). The act is a relatively simple piece of legislation setting out clearly and in broad terms the powers and duties of the new town development corporations. It is to a development corporation what a royal charter was to a medieval new town in

that it is the single document which controls the corporation itself and how it is to go about its business in legal, administrative and financial terms.

Stevenage was followed by other new towns in the London plan in the late nineteen forties and also by new towns in Scotland and South Wales. (7). The success of the early new towns convinced government that similar programmes of population distribution could be as readily applied to the other English conurbations as they were to London. The early 1960's saw a number of new towns being designated to assist the overcrowded areas of the north-east, north-west and the midlands.

Skelmersdale and Runcorn were designated in 1963 and 1964 to help to alleviate the desperate problems of Merseyside. Their sites were not chosen in the context of a plan for Merseyside but after informal planning studies by officers of the government in consultation with regional and local officials.

The Mersey valley region was one of the few areas of Great Britain to suffer from persistently high unemployment in the years following the second world war. Despite the attraction of new industries and an actual increase in the number of jobs on Merseyside, together with outward migration, high unemployment persisted due to the rapid growth of the region's manpower. (8). The population of Liverpool had increased from only 78,000 in 1801 to 1.4 million in 1921. Most of this increase was due to massive inward migration during the nineteenth century but after 1921 increases were mainly due to natural increase at a rate constantly above the national level. (9). The population increased continuously up to 1964, the date of the designation of Runcorn new town, by when it had reached 1.66 million. Parallel to the rapid increase in population was a decline in the employment situation in the sub-region. Unemployment in 1932 reached 30% and remained as high as 20% in 1939 when the national figure had dropped to 10%. (10). The dependence of Merseyside on port based industry had made it particularly vulnerable to the depression of the inter war years and, in 1936, Liverpool Corporation was empowered by Act of Parliament to build factories, make loans to industrialists and develop industrial estates. With Jarrow in the north-east it was the only town with such powers and used them to develop large industrial estates at Kirkley, Speke and Aintree on the edge of the city. In 1949 the Merseyside Development Area was established and grants made available to industrialists setting up in the region. These subsidies helped Merseyside to attract new industries and between 1953 and 1963

over 31,000 new industrial jobs were created mostly in food and vehicle manufacture. Despite these successes and the attraction of companies like Ford and Vauxhall unemployment remained high. The motor industries creamed-off skilled engineering labour from established companies as Merseyside was not well provided with skilled engineering labour. In 1939 only 39% of the total workforce was engaged in manufacturing compared with 53% nationally. Most of the older established manufacturing industry was related to the port and with the decline of international passenger and freight shipping, together with a post-war re-orientation of British ports towards Europe and away from the Atlantic, a further industrial problem arose. Insufficient land was available for industrial development required to replace the declining and intensely concentrated dockside industry. A study carried out in 1964 revealed a deficiency of over 700 acres of industrial land on Merseyside even allowing for the industrial land that was to become available in Skelmersdale and Runcorn new towns. (11).

Another inevitable problem of a region that had expanded rapidly during the nineteenth century and continued to grow in the depressed inter-war years was a large stock of outworn and substandard housing. In the north Merseyside area in 1965 about 30% of the total housing stock required replacing. To this a requirement had to be added for new housing to alleviate overcrowding so that between 790,000 and 940,000 new dwellings were required in the north-west by 1981. (12). Of these a large proportion were required to solve the problems or Merseyside.

It was against this background of residential overcrowing, industrial decline, unemployment and a lack of industrial land that Skelmersdale and Runcorn new towns were planned. It was a Conservative government minister who designated Runcorn new town in 1964 in recognition of the region's problems and this policy was supported in the following year by a document published by the succeeding Labour government. The National Plan set out the industrial, social and economic state of each region of the country and proposed policies to deal with the problems revealed. (13). It placed great emphasis on economic growth and in the stimulus of such growth in the areas of declining traditional industries. The Plan was a precursor of the Act, which in 1966 designated large parts of Britain as 'development areas'.(14). These areas were much larger than the old development districts and Runcorn was placed in the Merseyside Development Area. New Town industry therefore qualified for development grants.

Runcorn, although part of the Merseyside Development Area, was not within what was to become, in 1974, the area of Merseyside County Council. It was in Cheshire but the county council in Cheshire had long expected to be required to help with the problems of Liverpool and Merseyside. A plan for Cheshire published in 1946 had noted the possibility of the recently passed New Towns Act being operative in Cheshire. The plan proposed that extra land be made available around Runcorn to house 10,000 people from other towns. A further 9,000 could be housed in the adjoining rural area and land could be made available for industrial expansion. New jobs would be needed, not only for the immigrant population, but to diversify Runcorn's own employment structure. According to the plan 10% of Runcorn's workforce were employed in the chemical industry, 17.9% in transport (mainly waterways), and 10.7% in tanning compared with national figures of 1.2%, 7.9%, and 0.4% respectively. (15).

By 1952, when Cheshire County Council's development plan was published, the total population rise to be accommodated in both Runcorn urban and rural districts was a little over 10,000 in the period up to 1970. It was accepted that in total the county would be required to absorb nearly a quarter of a million people in overspill schemes and the main concentration of these were to be in a new town centred on Congleton in the east of the county. (16). The population of Congleton was to increase from 15,600 to 61,300 but the new town never materialised. Neither did two other Cheshire new towns proposed by Manchester to assist their over-population problems; schemes for Mobberley and, later, for Lymm to expand to populations of 60,000. (17).

The county planners proposals for Runcorn had become even more limited with new population of only six thousand to be accommodated. It was also proposed that extra land should be made available for new industries to help diversify Runcorn's employment pattern. A further 202 acres were to be made available but only fourteen of these were to be for new industry and the remainder for expansion by existing industries.

A proposal by a private company to develop an industrial site of 200 acres adjacent to the ship canal was made at this time. This would appear to have been absolutely in conformity with the county planners requirements but the planning application was refused on the basis of prematurity as overspill plans were still under consideration. (18). The application was re-submitted the following year and referred to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government

for decision but was again refused on the basis of prematurity. (19). Representations by the Runcorn member of Parliament during 1961 and a public enquiry into the application again failed to convince the minister who rejected the proposals again in 1962. (20). Whilst indecision on this application continued the industrial structure of old Runcorn was changing. The tanning industry was in serious decline and had steadily been losing its markets for most of the post-war period. In 1948 the managing director of the Camden tannery had warned that other countries were developing their own industries and exports had not reached pre-war levels. (21). In 1955 leather production was cut by 10% and the following year redundances were widely expected in the town. In 1958 two of Runcorn's three tanneries merged, concentrated work at Highfield Tannery, and 240 workers were made redundant. Later in the same year the tanneries went on to short time working as an alternative to reducing the workforce by another 10% Puritan tannery cut its production and declared redundancies in 1960 and the following year halved its small remaining workforce of 60 people. (22). The tanning industry in Runcorn was virtually finished by the date of designation of the new town in 1964, and the inland waterways were in serious decline but Runcorn's other industry, chemicals, was expanding. But even this expansion was causing local alarm. In 1960 a major new plant opened within the long established Castner Kellner complex of ICI that cost £1M but only employed twenty workers. Such capital intensive industries did little to further local employment prospects. In 1957 ICI had purchased an extra 1,500 acres of land within the area that was to become Runcorn new town "for a long term scheme of industrial development." This long term proposal never materialised, as will be explained below. and ICI's ownership of such a large area of land seriously complicated the task of the development corporation in providing adequate employment for the immigrant population. It was against this background of employment decline and change that concern was expressed in Runcorn in 1962 that unemployment was rising and had reached the unpalatable level of 2.4%. (23).

In the same context and in an atmosphere of indecision concerning overspill and industrial expansion the Minister of Housing and Local Government published a draft order designating a new town at Runcorn. (24). The order outlined the social, economic and demographic background of the area and proposed a population increase from 28,500 to 70,000 by planned growth with provision for natural increase to 90,000, An area of 7,750 acres was included within the draft order which comprised the whole of the urban district of Runcorn and a

large part of Runcorn rural district. In December 1963 Mr. A. F. Skinner presided over a public enquiry into and heard statements of support for the proposals from Runcorn Urban District Council, Runcorn's MP Mr. Dennis Vosper, Liverpool City Council, Warrington Borough Council, I.C.I. Ltd., the Manchester Ship Canal Company and Greenall Whitley Ltd. Some of the statements of support were qualified in minor respects but outright opposition came from Runcorn Rural District Council, Halton, Sutton, Norton, Daresbury, Aston and Preston Brook Parish Councils, the Cheshire Women's Institutes, the Sutton Weaver Residents Association and one private individual. Other bodies made statements generally supporting the proposals but with strong reservations about certain aspects. These included Cheshire County Council, Shell Petroleum Ltd., the National Farmers' Union, the County Landowners Association, the Council for the Preservation of Rural England, and the Frodsham Civic Society. Many other organisations and private individuals submitted written comments but in January 1964 Mr. Skinner recommended the minister to make the designation order as drafted except for an area of 500 acres around Sutton Weaver which should be excluded. He expressed the view that the relationships of Runcorn and Liverpool should be considered in traffic terms, that the line of the proposed motorway, M56, across the designated area should be reconsidered, and that realignment of a proposed 400 Kv overhead electricity line across the new town should also be rethought.

In April 1964, only seven months after the draft order had been made, the Minister of Housing and Local Government, Sir Keith Joseph, issued the order designating the area to be developed and establishing a development corporation.

Under the New Towns' Act a development corporation consisted of a chairman, a deputy chairman and not more than seven other members. These appointments were made by nomination by the Minister after consultation with "such local authorities as appear to him to be concerned" and also with "regard to the desirability of securing one or more residents in or having special knowledge of the locality." (26). Democratic control of a corporation was exercised at Westminster by Parliament through the Minister rather than at local level. The Minister's ultimate sanction, should he with to exercise it, was to dismiss or not re-appoint the chairman or board members who hold office through his patronage. Members were appointed for a set term, usually two years, after which they were either re-appointed or not as the Minister thought fit. Generally continuity was ensured by members being regularly re-appointed and some served for the entire life of the corporation. On appointment they were

made subject to certain conditions which are laid down in the Act. These are in connection with political,professional and trade union activities which were not to be involved in their work for the corporation. Generally appointments were made on a part time basis and permanent staff employed to carry out the day-to-day work of the corporation.

The consultations required of the Minister had already taken place when the designation order was made for Runcorn and the appointment of the Development Corporation's first chairman took place simultaneously with the order. Mr. Vere Arnold, M.C., T.D., J.P., chairman of a Liverpool grain dealers and former high sheriff of Cheshire was appointed as the new town's first chairman. His very first job was to obtain an office in the town and stock it with the appropriate materials. He purchased, on behalf of the development corporation, a three storey terraced house in the old town at 10 Alcock St, and this provided office space for the corporation's first year. The process of consultations necessary to appoint the remainder of the board then proceeded with both the county and rural and urban district councils submitting names to the Minister for consideration. Only five names proved to be acceptable initially and on 1st May 1964 five board members were appointed. Mr. J. K. Batty, J.P., was chairman of the Alkali division of I.C.I. and became deputy chairman of the corporation. Alderman W. H. Sefton, Labour leader and leader of Liverpool City Council, Miss J. Preece, B.A., of Runcorn U.D.C., Councillor H. C. Rigby, D.F.C., of Cheshire County Council and Mr. E. J. Battersby. F.R.I.C.S., a chartered surveyor from Liverpool were the other four members. Of these six initial members only Miss Preece was a resident of Runcorn. No member was appointed from Runcorn Rural District although it was the local authority responsible for most of the open land that was to be developed for the new town. This anomoly was very soon put right by the extension of the boundaries of the urban district council to coincide with the boundaries of the new town designated atea. (27).

The New Towns Act did not dictate to corporations how to organise their work but informal guidance was given by the Ministry in respect of the professional structure of the organisation. Runcorn followed the accepted pattern and departments responsible for architecture and planning, engineering, finance, law and estates were set up in 1964 each under a chief officer responsible to the most senior full time officer, the general manager. The general manager, Mr. Derek Banwell, was deputy town clerk of Swansea prior to his appointment to Runcorn; the chief architect came from Coventry as did the

chief finance officer; the engineer came from Shell Petroleum, the lawyer from Cheshire County Council and the estates officer from Lancashire. (28). In 1965 a sixth department was created responsible for Social Development and headed by the former Child Welfare Officer from Swansea. Mr. Silkin had said in his introduction of the New Towns bill to the House of Commons that he hoped that the technical staffs of the corporations would make their homes in the new towns and play a part in the life of the town. In Runcorn only the general manager and the architect amongst the chief officers did so and this position was generally repeated by the remainder of the staff once appointed.

Runcorn also followed the pattern set by earlier new towns in appointing a consultant to prepare the master plan for the development of the town. Professor Arthur Ling, formerly Chief Architect and Planner of Coventry city and currently Professor of Architecture at Nottingham University was appointed to prepare the plan in consultation with officers of the Corporation. Before the draft designation order was made officers of the ministry had prepared a detailed technical appraisal of Runcorn as a site for a new town and this was made available to the consultants as a basis for their work. A new town Master Plan was not a statutory instrument but required formal approval of the Minister after examination by public enquiry. It delineated the overall planning strategy to be followed but did not set out the detail design of the town. Nevertheless a great deal of detailed survey, analysis and general design work was required to support the principles of the plan. Additionally it was incumbent on the development corporation and its consultants to discuss their proposals in great detail with the other public and private bodies that needed to be involved in the implementation of the plan. Although the development corporation was responsible for production of the plan and building most of it, the responsibility for much of the physical content of the new town remained with the local authorities. The county council were to build the schools, colleges, fire-stations, elderly person homes and major highways required in the town; the district council many of the community buildings; the health authorities the health centres and hospitals, and the public utility boards install the many miles of gas, water, electricity and telephone lines required. Additionally the church authorities had views on the distribution of churches, the public transport operators had views to express and bodies such as the National Playing Fields Association and the Sports Council were consulted on the provision of recreational facilities. All of these bodies had requirements and views that must be accommodated if the eventual master plan was to win

general approval and become a practical plan to implement. Professor Ling's consultancy was for a period of two years at the end of which the Master Plan was to be produced for ministerial approval. Although such a period was essential if the Master Plan was to be thoroughly worked out it was much too long for the corporation to wait to start development. Sites were identified that could be developed for housing and industry without compromising the overall plan. For both this reason and also the need to be able to gain road access and serve the development with public utilities the sites were on the periphery of the old town. An early decision was also made on the site for the new town's sewage works so that this could be ready by the time development work reached full pace. Prior to the construction of these works the effluent from the old town was discharged untreated directly into the river Mersey.

The site designated for the new town was more appropriate than the original site proposed in the draft order. The exclusion of the 500 acres of land at Sutton Weaver meant that all of the town's principal boundaries were delineated by physical barriers in the form of major lines of communication. The northern and western boundaries were formed by the Manchester Ship Canal and the Weaver navigation. The other boundaries were defined by the railway lines from Crewe to Glasgow, Crewe to Liverpool and Manchester to Chester. This containment by canals and railways was a major influence on the form of the Master Plan which could not be open-ended and it was accepted from the beginning that the uptimate size of the town was absolute and no logical expansion would be possible. The total area designated amounted to 7,250 acres and measured 4.5 miles from east to west and 3 miles from north to south. About 25,000 people lived in the old town of Runcorn in the north west of the designated area around the Runcorn/Widnes bridgehead on the site of the original Saxon town. The topography of the site was undulating with relatively little flat land. The physical centre of the area was dominated by a sandstone outcrop that rose 337 feet above sea level and carried the remains of Halton Castle. Two lower ridges, each about 250' high flanked Halton Hill on the east and west respectively. Small settlements at Halton, Moore and Norton contained the balance of the original population. The Bridgewater canal traversed the area on a level contour. Underground aqueducts from Llyn Vrynwy and the river Dee, underground pipelines carrying ethylene, brine, and oil together with overhead electricity power lines also crossed the site for the new town.

At the time of designation the M56 motorway was not built and early negotiations took place with the Ministry of Transport to move its route southwards as, in its originally planned position, it would have seriously complicated the planning of the town. The other obstruction recommended for removal by Mr. Skinner in his report on the designation public enquiry was the 400 Kv line that was to be constructed to Fiddler's Ferry power station, then under construction on the north bank of the river Mersey. Negotiations with the Central Electricity Generating Board failed to reach agreement to a realignment unless the extra cost of realignment was borne by the development corporation. This never proved to be possible and the line with its 300 feet high towers was built across the new town from north to south.

These constraints, together with the topography and existing pattern of settlement, were major influences in the determination of the new town plan. Only relatively flat land is economically suitable for industrial development and all such land is on the periphery of the town. Half of the suitable industrial land was owned by I.C.I. for a major expansion of their chemical interests. Their existing plants in Runcorn were on the extreme western edge of the town alongside the ship canal. Their new site occupied the north east sector of the town to the west of the village of Moore. In 1965 they anticipated developing it completely within fifteen years with the provision of five thousand new jobs. The location of the site and the projected level of employment were capable of integration into the Master Plan with two other sites for general industry each having the potential to provide work for about 6,000 people. The higher undulating land in the centre of the undeveloped part of the area was planned with a ring of new residential communities encircling a large park. A new town centre was to be located in the geographical centre of the new town immediately to the south of Halton Village. The Master Plan proposed that a balance should be achieved between the uses of private cars and public transport within the town. A linear arrangement of the new residential communities on either side of a spinal public transport route was evolved so that the majority of people would be within 500 yards, or five minutes walk, of a route reserved especially for buses. (29). The linear form was seen as having the advantages of a minimum length of public transport route serving a constant density of population on each side. The maximum walking distance to a bus stop was also calculated as the maximum distance that people would be prepared to walk to local shops, schools and other community facilities. Local centres were, therefore, planned along the busway route at approximately

half mile intervals and each central to a community of around 8,000 people. Complementary to the'buses only' road through the centre of each community an 'expressway' all purpose road was planned outside the residential communities but giving access to them by local distributor roads. This pattern had the advantage of no through traffic, other than on the fenced and reserved busway, passing through residential areas. The industrial areas would be outside the line of the expressway and served by separate access roads. The application of this pattern of development lead naturally to a 'figure of eight' plan for both the expressway and the busway with the older and newer parts of the town within each part of the configuration. The new town centre would be sited at the centre of the designated area and also at the centre of the busway and expressway systems. The projected M56 motorway ran through the town in the corridor created by the expressway between housing and industrial areas and interchanges between the two scales of road were simply achieved. These interchanges allowed the adopted pattern of expressways to also serve a regional need in giving access to the Runcorn/Widnes bridge from the M56 without penetration of the residential areas of the town. The length of expressway that effected this link was threaded along the interface between existing housing and industry on the western edge of the town. (30).

The plan was ingenious but simple and not apparently contentious but raised vehement objections from Runcorn urban district council. Their objection was based on the proposal to build a completely new town centre and relegate the role of the old town centre to that of a district centre serving the old town only. This objection was so fundamental that the development corporation could not envisage publishing the plan and facing a public enquiry with with such opposition. A great deal of urgent discussion took place to attempt to resolve the dispute. The new town development corporation had engaged consultants to advise them and their planning consultant on the commercial and shopping content of the new town centre. The district council also engaged consultants to advise them on the possibility of enlarging the old town centre to serve the needs of the expanded town. All things are possible to consultants engaged to confirm preconvictions and the district council, supported by the Runcorn Chamber of Commerce, were not to be moved. The development corporation's point of view was that they were obliged to consider the requirements of the whole town and that the site of the old town centre was too much at the edge of the new town to serve it adequately. (31). Furthermore the old town centre was constricted by the Manchester Ship Canal, the Bridgewater Canal, the access

roads to the Runcorn/Widnes bridge and by the pattern of existing development. It was this latter point that caused the council to withdraw its objections as it was shown that to redevelop on the scale necessary it would first be necessary to demolish most of the old centre. Such action was clearly untenable and it was agreed that Professor Ling should be engaged by the development corporation to advise on the urban renewal of the old town and its regeneration as a district centre. His recommendation to the urban district council was for a carefully programmed renewal scheme that retained older property worth preserving and introduced new housing and commercial uses to enhance its future viability as a district centre. No aspect of the scheme was implemented by the urban district council. (32).

Once the major objection of the district council had been withdrawn it was possible to finalise the outline Master Plan and subject it to public meetings and exhibitions to show the public of Runcorn what was proposed. The interest was so great that it was necessary to hold two public meetings and 7,500 people visited the exhibition. Explanatory leaflets were posted through every letterbox in the area and in the light of comments received detail studies of various asp ects of the plan were made. Any necessary modifications made so that the final master plan could be printed and submitted to the Minister on 10th March 1967. This was just two months after the first houses and factories built in the new town had been formally opened by Lord Leverhulme, the Lord Lieutenant of the County. A public enquiry was held into the Master Plan in July 1967 but there were relatively few objections of consequence. The urban district council raised twelve minor issues that were all to do with detailed proposals rather than principles. These were dealt with by agreement and the minister endorsed the plan as a basis for the development of the town in August 1968. The original master plan has remained the basis for the development of the town and the form of the new town at the end of the planned growth period in 1984 accorded very closely to the plan. Two formal amendments have been made to the plan; one concerning land uses in the old town and the configuration of access roads to the Runcorn/Widnes bridge and the other a re-allocation of land use in the north east part of the town. The first master plan amendment resulted from the urban renewal study carried out by Professor Ling and was subject to public enquiry in 1971. (33). Apart from the expressway and busway alignments through the old town it did not modify the original plan to any degree. The second amendment, in 1975, was more fundemental in that one half of the land reserved by I.C.I. in the north east

sector of the town was released to the development corporation for use as residential land. (34). This had been necessitated by the housing programme constructed by that date achieving a lesser overall density than originally proposed in the master plan. This was due partly to a decision by the corporation to lower housing densities, build fewer flats and to concentrate on two storey houses with gardens. The other reason was that the amount of land sterilised by easements for underground pipelines had been underestimated at master plan stage and the gross amount of land available for housing was consequently reduced. The re-allocation of land uses on the I.C.I. land permitted a more economical alignment of the eastern part of the expressway to be adopted. This second amendment, which appeared wholly beneficial to the town, raised a storm of protest and was strongly contested at the public enquiry. A Moore village action group argued that the original master plan proposals should be retained. This was not because they preferred an I.C.I. chemical complex to housing as a neighbour but because they believed, although did not express, that if I.C.I. retained the land it would never be developed. The company had owned the land since 1958 and were regarded by the villagers as agricultural landlords rather than potential builders of chemical plants. The Secretary of State endorsed the amendment to the plan and the final amended length of the town expressway was completed in 1983.

The endorsement by the Minister or Secretary of State of a Master Plan or amendment to a plan following a detailed public enquiry does not constitute planning permission. Each sector of the work is subject to a detailed technical and financial appraisal by government before it is permitted to proceed. Proposals for development have to be formally submitted to the Minister, who, after consultation with the local authority within whose area the land is situated and any other local authority who appears to him to be concerned, may approve the proposals either with or without modification. (35). This permission to the development corporation may then be passed on, if necessary subject to conditions, to any body developing land leased or bought from the corporation. This power, in effect, makes the corporation the 'de facto' planning authority for all of the land it has acquired for the development of the town. With each submission to the Minister the corporation are obliged to submit a financial statement. The approval of the Treasury has to be sought for each application who must confirm the project is "likely to secure for the corporation a return which is reasonable, having regard to all the circumstances, when compared with the cost of carrying out the proposals." (36). The Treasury

assessment of reasonableness is not necessarily a commercial one but depends on the nature of the proposal and the social and economic climate of government.

It is not appropriate here to discuss in detail the very many projects that have been subject to the above approvals process as these are not particularly relevant to this comparitive sudy and have been covered well elsewhere. (37). What is appropriate is to set out the overall rate of progress which is relevant to any new town whether modern or medieval.

The planned immigration period for Runcorn was to be programmed over fifteen years and take the total population of the town to around 70,000 people. Construction started in early 1966 with the first houses and factories. The technical staff required had been built up rapidly during 1965 and at the end of the 1965/6 financial year the architect's staff numbered 54 and the engineer's 35. (38). The development corporation had rapidly outgrown the premises originally purchased by the chairman and had constructed temporary offices on a vacant site in the old town. The board membership had not changed since the original appointments were made except that in October 1966 Miss Preece was retired and replaced by Mrs. R. M. Toosey and three new members were appointed from the local authorities. County Councillor Mr. G. J. Ford and Runcorn Urban District Councillors, Mr. C. J. Helsby and Mr. F. R. Sherliker, A.R.I.C., M.R.S.H. were appointed to bring the board up to its full complement of nine. (39).

The first five years of construction up to March 1971 saw an immense change in the form of Runcorn. The housing programme of the development corporation completed over 2,300 dwellings for rent and a further 2,381 were under construction. The earliest housing at Halton Brook had been "off the shelf" house types developed by a consortium of Midlands local authorities to reduce on-site manpower and ensure rapid construction. The chief architect, his deputy, the chief quantity surveyor and the principal structural engineer at Runcorn had formed the design team of the Midlands Housing Consortium and naturally turned to the product they had developed to ensure a rapid start to Runcorn's housing programme. From the outset it was known that the old town of Runcorn had virtually no building labour resources and all construction labour would need to be imported. Discussions with the Ministry of Labour and major contractors confirmed that, despite high unemployment levels, there was not a large pool of skilled labour on Merseyside either. A decision was

therefore taken to adopt industrialised building methods to ensure, as far as possible, that the urgently required houses were constructed on time. By 1971 progress was well under way in the largest contract of industrialised housing to be built in the town. This was a contract for 2,200 dwellings at Castlefields using a pre-cast concrete construction system developed by Selleck, Nicholl Williams Ltd. The local shopping centres in the first three housing communities had been completed together with local primary schools.

Private housing proved very difficult to get started in a town that had no great tradition in such housing and it was not until 1970 that the corporation were able to dispose of land to enable four housing developers to start work.

On the industrial side work had started on the second of the corporation's industrial estates at Whitehouse. This site was to be largely devoted to the larger purpose built factories and by 1971 the first of these, Guiness, were in production. Bass Charrington were in the middle of constructing a new brewery on a 100 acre site adjoining Guiness and a Japanese company had opened their first factory for the manufacture of zip fasteners. Over forty firms were in production on the earlier estate at Astmoor mainly in advance factory units built by the corporation. One larger purpose built factory had been built on this site to the requirements of Mackamax Aluminium Ltd., as an aluminium extrusion plant. Within the advance units the products manufactured ranged from ladies' underwear to crane and heavy plant repair.

Construction of the main shopping content of the town centre was nearing completion in 1971 on the site south of Halton village. The scheme comprised over half a million square feet of shopping floor space located on an elevated deck over access roads and storage areas. Four multi storey car parks formed part of the totally enclosed shopping centre which had been built to the design of the Corporation's architects but funded by a private company, Grosvenor Estates Commercial Developments Ltd., in partnership with the corporation. Also in the town centre an office block was under construction over the central busway to regional bus station interchange. This project was another partnership scheme between public and private funding with an insurance company financing the office building project and leasing the completed building back to the Corporation for sub-letting. Another office block to house the 700 staff of the Department of Employment was also under construction in the town centre. Many of the workers here were transferred to the new town

from Watford as part of the government's office de-centralisation policy. The central town police station was under construction and design work had started on the law courts. Engineering works were keeping apace with building work and by 1971 nearly eleven miles of trunk sewers, 4.2 miles of expressway, 4.3 miles of busway and nearly 18 miles of estate roads had been completed. Nine new primary schools had been constructed and five were under construction including the town's first large comprehensive school. Four churches, three public houses and a number of community and meeting rooms had also been opened. In the first five years the corporation had spent over £33M and were committed to a further £9M under current contracts. In addition private industrial and housing developers, the local authorities, church and commercial interests had spent many millions of pounds on construction in the town. (40).

The next five years up to 1976 saw further changes in the composition of the development board. The first chairman had retired in 1974 and had been replaced by his deputy, Alderman Sefton, who had himself replaced Mr. Batty as deputy in 1969. Mr. Rigby became deputy chairman and four new members were appointed as others retired.

Nearly five thousand additional houses for rent had been completed in the preceding five years bringing the total up to 7,124. Nearly one thousand private houses had been occupied and the total of completed industrial floor-space was over two million square feet. New jobs in industry and the town centre exceeded eight thousand but unemployment was also increasing and had reached 8.2%. This was significantly lower than Merseyside but higher than the national figure of 5.5%. Another nine schools had been completed, together with a one hundred and fifty bed hotel, two health centres, seven public houses and many other community projects. Progress on engineering works had kept pace with other developments and the corporation's total capital expenditure had risen to £70M.

The development corporation's annual report at the end of the next five years in 1981 was its last as an independent corporation. The planned growth programme had been achieved generally in accordance with the originally set targets and the Secretary of State considered it expedient to transfer the functions of Runcorn development corporation to the adjoining new town development corporation at Warrington. This was effected as from the first of April 1981 and during the next year most of the staff who had been responsible

for the work of the new town retired, volunteered for redundancy or were absorbed into the Warrington organisation. Sir Keith Joseph's original intention, stated in 1963, that Runcorn should make a substantial contribution to the housing problems of Liverpool had been fulfilled. The total programme of 10,500 rented houses had been completed in a fifteen year period and 69% of them were occupied by former residents of North Merseyside. During the same period 2,712 dwellings had been completed by private developers and nearly four million square feet of new industrial floorspace occupied. Eight hundred thousand square feet of shopping space and one hundred and forty thousand square feet of offices had been built and occupied. The final length of the town expressway was under construction and the entire 13 miles of the busway completed and operational. One major problem remained that was not solved by the Funcorn development corporation. Despite the provision of over 10,600 new jobs unemployment had risen to 14.2%. Job provision during the world economic recession in the late nineteen seventies had held steady but not increased. As new industries opened established industries shed labour which was not to be replaced even when production started to increase again. The nett result was that by 1981 the corporation had virtually built over all of its allocated industrial land but the density of employment on that land was much lower than forecast by both the master plan and incoming industrialists. The world economic recession and the increasing price of energy had another very serious effect on the town's employment prospects. The petro-chemical industry was also in decline and I.C.I.'s plans for development of their major new site had been continually pushed back. The consequence was that the five thousand jobs expected over a fifteen year employment programme had not materialised and there was little that the development corporation could do except try to persuade I.C.I. to release land so that other industries might develop. They were understandably reluctant to do this as a one thousand acre site with an existing ethylene feedstock main running through it is not easily replaced. Eventually pressure from Runcorn's officers convinced I.C.I. of the necessity of releasing land and agreement was reached in principle for a third of the land to be made available. Subsequent discussions have resulted in agreement in principle for release of all of the land in a long term phased development programme and infrastructure work has started on the site.

At the completion of the fifteen year programme the new town's population was around 65.000 of which 40,000 were new town residents.

Many of these 40,000 'new-towners' had originated in Merseyside and had migrated to the town for a wide variety of reasons. The motivation for moving house and changing a job is complex and not easily analysed. There are factors both pushing and pulling people to move. Bad considions at home or at work might be replaced by better ones. A difficult marital relationship might be improved with a new start. A move may give the children better opportunities or get them away from undesirable influences. The first five hundred families were interviewed to, amongst other things, find out why they had moved. Half of the households said they had moved to obtain the new house and one fifth for a job in one of the new industries. The remaining 30% were divided between two major reasons; either because other members of the family were living in Runcorn or because they thought the new town would be "healthier" or "better for the children." (41). The reasons for people moving to Runcorn who did not originate from Merseyside are also many and complex. Mostly they came because of their work but some because they were literally homeless. The longer term fate of the first five hundred pioneers and the origins of other immigrants will be discussed more fully in the following chapter.

RUNCORN Planning. References.

(1) "To make Britain a fit country for heroes to live in."
LLOYD GEORGE. Speech at Wolverhampton. 24 Nov 1918.

(2) Expert Committee on Compensation and Betterment.
Chairman Mr. Justice Uthwatt 1942

(3) Committee of Land Utilisation in Rural Areas.
Chairman Mr. Justice Scott 1942

(4) The county of London Plan 1943. The greater London plan 1944.

(5) HANSARD Vol 422 p. 1072

(6) New Towns Act 1946, 1959, 1965, 1966, 1975, 1977, 1980 and 1981.
(References to the Act are to the 1981 Act unless otherwise noted.)

(7) Aycliffe 1947; Basildon 1949; Bracknell 1949; Crawley 1947;
Harlow 1947; Hatfield 1948; Hemel Hempstead 1947; Welwyn Garden City
(under N.T. Act) 1948; Cwmbran 1948; East Kilbride 1947; Glenrothes 1948.

(8) "The Problems of Merseyside" Dept of Economic Affairs. HMSO 1965

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(10) SMITH D. M. The North West. 1969

(11) "Industrial land needs and provision on Merseyside" Lancs C.C. 1964

(12) "The North West Study" 1965 HMSO

(13) "The National Plan" HMSO 1965

(14) Industrial Development Act 1966

(15) DOBSON CHAPMAN W. "A plan for Cheshire" (commissioned by Cheshire C.C.)

(16) Cheshire County Development Plan 1952

(17) The abandonment of this proposal was reported in the Runcorn Guardian
July 1951.

(18) Runcorn Guardian Nov 1959

(19) " " Nov 1960

(20) " " Feb 1961, Oct 1961, Jan 1962

(21) " " Aug 1948

(22) " " (various dates)

(23) " " March 1962

(24) Draft Order (MHLG) September 1963

(25) The 1946 Act limited board membership to a total of nine including
the chairman and deputy chairman. Subsequently this was increased to
thirteen to cater for larger, so called Mark 3. new towns which were
to work as partnerships with local authorities. (Warrington, Northampton,
Peterborough). Section 3(2) 1981 Act.

(26) Schedule 3.1.(i) 1981 N.T.Act.

(27) This boundary change was as anticipated by Mr. Lewis Silkins speech introducing the New Towns Bill in 1946 when he stated that the intention would be to go to the Boundary Commission as soon as possible after designation to ensure that a new town was within the jurisdiction of only one local authority. (HANSARD Vol 422 8 May 1946).

(28) Information on the early stages of the formation of the corporation and the personalities concerned is drawn from the local newspaper, the Runcorn Guardian, the files of the corporation and the writer's own records and diaries.

(29) See Appendix to Runcorn Master Plan for experimental data on walking speeds and distances and location of bus stops.

(30) See Appendix to Master Plan for traffic planning data.

(31) This conclusion had been reached by the planners at the Ministry in their pre-designation study and was confirmed by Professor Ling's survey and plan.

(32) After the demise of the urban district council in the 1974 reorganisation of local government the new council drew up new plans for the old town in consultation with the corporation.

(33) Runcorn New Town. Urban Renewal. 1971. (publ. Runcorn Dev. Corp.)

(34) Master Plan Amendment No 2 1975 (publ. Runcorn Dev. Corp.)

(35) New Towns Act Section 7(1)

(36) New Towns Act Section 58(3)

(37) OPHER P., BIRD C., British New Towns. Architecture and Urban Design. Runcorn and Warrington.

(38) Runcorn Development Corporation. Annual Report 1965/6

(39) Runcorn Development Corporation. Annual Report 1966/7

(40) Runcorn D.C. annual reports and personal diaries of author.

(41) Runcorn D.C. Social Survey 1969. The first 500 families.

RUNCORN.

The land.

The draft designation order for Runcorn new town covered an area of about 7,750 acres. Included within the area were the established town of Runcorn, the entire parishes of Halton, Norton and Sutton and parts of the parishes of Moore and Daresbury, Preston Brook, Dutton and Aston. The village centres of the parishes were very small settlements but old Runcorn had a population of over 26,000. The remainder of the area proposed for designation was in agricultural use and included an area of 1,795 acres owned by I.C.I. Ltd. and bought by them in 1956 as a site for long term development as a chemical plant. The majority of the agricultural land was farmed by tenant farmers mostly with holdings of around 100 acres. Milk, barley and potatoes were the principal interests of the 27 farms wholly within and ten farms partly within the proposed designated area. Only six farms were run by owner occupiers; one of these, at Halton Gate, was farmed by Dr. Wardle, a local dentist, and was in excess of three hundred acres; Hallwood Farm was owned and farmed by Mr. Rose and embraced 227 acres and the others were each of about 100 acres. Very few of the farm houses or outbuildings were of any great architectural quality and most were in a poor state of repair. Only the farms at Halton Gate and Hallwood were in good order and both of these were subsequently converted to other uses as part of the new town's fabric.

At the public enquiry into the draft designation order strong representations were made concerning the effect of the new town on farming interests. The MP for Runcorn, the Rt. Hon. Dennis Vosper, emphasised the plight of tenant farmers who would be relatively poorly compensated in comparison with the landowners. The better grades of agricultural land were in the southern part of the draft designated area and Mr. Vosper suggested that the southern boundary should be amended to exclude this land from the new town. (1). Views supportive of agricultural interests were also expressed by representatives from the parishes who were all opposed to the idea of the establishment of the new town. The National Farmers' Union, representing 37 farmers in the area, did not oppose the concept of building a new town to help to solve Liverpool's housing problems but wanted use to be made of derelict land rather than agricultural land. The Union was not specific about alternative land but in reference to the Runcorn proposal supported Mr. Vosper's suggestion of an amendment to the southern boundary of the proposed new town. This idea was also supported by spokesmen from the Country Landowners' Association and the Council for the Preservation of Rural England.

The Inspector, in his report to Sir Keith Joseph, accepted the force of the objections to the use of the land in the southern part of the area. He did not consider, however, that if all of the 1400 acres south of the proposed north Ches hire motorway were excluded, that there would be sufficient land for the construction of a town of 90,000 people. Furthermore he agreed that a population of 90,000 as proposed in the Ministry's Explanatory Memorandum submitted to the enquiry was the minimum necessary to support an adequate standard of amenities. Mr. Skinner proposed the deletion of 500 acres from the area included in the draft designation order. He also made the recommendation that farmers should receive sympathetic treatment and, if requested, that the development corporation should be prepared to purchase land in advance of their building requirements. The Inspector's views on the size of the new town area were accepted by Sir Keith Joseph and the substantive order made accordingly in April 1964. As a result of this reduction the area proposed for the new town contained 7,250 acres. Nearly two thousand acres were occupied by the existing settlements, 1795 acres were in I.C.I. ownership and the remaining 3,500 acres of agricultural land were in a variety of ownerships. At the public enquiry I.C.I. had welcomed the proposal for the creation of a new town at Runcorn and expressed their willingness to release some 500 acres of their land for use in the development of the town.

The newly constituted development corporation had, therefore, to acquire about 4,000 acres and adopted a policy of early acquisition of the freeholds of as much land as possible. This policy was not only in accord with the views expressed by the enquiry inspector but also those of Mr. Lewis Silkin when, as Minister of Town and Country Planning, he introduced the New Towns Bill to the House of Commons in May 1946. He said "It is the clear intention, when an area is designated, to acquire all the land; the only doubt is when the land will be bought." (2).

The procedures by which new town development corporations purchased land were set out in Lewis Silkin's 1947 Town and Country Planning Act. (3). This contained the fundamental principle that land was to be purchased at "existing use" value. Any "betterment" that accrued when land was re-sold or let on lease was available to the new town for its general development expenditure. Such a policy has worked very well in new towns for nearly forty years although various attempts to apply the concept to the general purchase of land by local authorities, or as a tax on development value, have regularly

failed. (4). The New Towns Act gave to development corporations powers of compulsory purchase but these powers were only rarely used in Runcorn where virtually all of the land required was purchased by negotiation. This was not entirely due to the negotiating skills of the corporation's officers but a realisation by vendors, whether willing or unwilling, that the financial level of compensation would be the same whether the land was bought by agreement or compulsion. The preliminary negotiations were carried out by the corporation but the financial agreement was the responsibility of another public office; that of the District Valuer. For much of the land purchased in Runcorn these negotiations had to be undertaken twice; firstly the freehold interest was acquired and subsequently the interests of the agricultural tenants. On occasions a number of years separated the acquisition of freehold and tenant interests and even after the second transaction some tenant farmers remained in occupation on an annual licence from the corporation. Of considerable advantage to the corporation in terms of programming was the power given under the 1964 New Town Act to take possession of land within 14 days of serving notice to treat and without waiting for the completion of legal formalities.

More than half of the agricultural land within the Runcorn designated area was owned by five landowners and generally sub-let to tenant farmers. The largest landholder was I.C.I. with 1795 acres purchased from Sir Richard Brooke in 1956. Sir Richard sold virtually the whole of the Norton Priory estate and retained only seven acres around the ruins of the ancient family seat. Norton Priory had been bought by an earlier Sir Richard Brooke in 1545 following the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII. He paid £1,512-1s-9d for the Priory lands that had originally been granted to the Augustinian canons of Norton by William Fitzwilliam, third baron of Halton, in 1135. (5). The old priory buildings were not totally demolished at the dissolution and a part was incorporated into the Tudor style house built by Sir Richard. This was itself demolished and replaced by a 'Georgian' house in the eighteenth century but the medieval vaulted undercroft to the abbot's lodging was retained within the later building. The Georgian house was demolished in 1929 and the stone sold as hardcore to form foundations to a new chemical plant being built at Wigg Island, immediately to the north of the Ship Canal and the Priory. The medieval undercroft remained even after this demolition. It now forms the centrepiece of the Norton Priory Museum which has been established on the seven acre site retained by Sir Richard and

subsequently given to the development corporation. The use of the Georgian house stone was an ironic end for the building as the Brooke family had initiated lengthy litigation against the Runcorn and Widnes chemical companies in the latter part of the nineteenth centry when trees in the Priory parkland were killed by noxious effluents from the alkali factories. (16). A final irony was the purchase of the entire Brooke Estate at Norton by I.C.I., the successor to the older chemical companies.

Two other of the great landowning Cheshire families were also among the five major holders of land in Runcorn. The manor of Runcorn was a dependancy of the manor of Halton and was leased from the Duchy of Lancaster in 1728 by George, Earl of Cholmondeley. The last lease to the Cholmondely family expired in 1880 but, in 1965, the estate still owned 368 acres in Runcorn. These were purchased by the corporation in 1965 as were the larger holdings of another landed family, the Talbots. Their estates stretched southwards from Runcorn along the valley of the River Weaver but the 575 acres within the new town were bought by the corporation. The other two major landowners were Dr. Wardle, noted above, and the Warrington brewery company Messrs. Greenall Whitley. Both of these interests exceeded 300 acres and were bought by the corporation in 1967 and 1968.

Although I.C.I. had expressed their willingness to release 500 of their 1795 acres it did not appear to Professor Ling, Runcorn's consultant planner, that this was sufficient to permit the planning of a town of 90,000 people. Furthermore the potential environmental hazards associated with such large scale chemical operations were a problem to integrate into an urban community. Professor Ling's first proposals were that I.C.I. should restrict their development to no more than 650 acres on the flat land adjacent to the ship canal in the north-east corner of the designated area. The reaction of I.C.I. was that they could not operate on an area less than 1200 acres and that the only land they were willing to release was to the south and west of the Bridgewater Canal. This land was more undulating than the remainder of their site and not suitable for industrial development although well suited to residential use. Alternatives were discussed with both the company and the county planning officers that involved sites outside the new town but these proved either unsuitable or unacceptable. A proposal to split the I.C.I. site so that half was within the new town area and half to the north of the ship canal was also discussed but rejected for both operational and access reasons.

A further complication involved in this proposal is that it would have involved another county planning authority as the northern part of the site was in Lancashire. After months of difficult discussions a resolution of the problem appeared impossible to achieve. Both parties had genuine requirements and these were in conflict. Despite the quasi-governmental status of the development corporation and the fact that I.C.I. had no planning permission for industrial use of their land it was not possible to deny the chemical company the opportunity to develop more or less as they wished. Their status as the nation's largest company and, it was inferred, an informal undertaking given by government about the development of the Norton site, made it impossible for the development corporation to make a compulsory purchase order. It was not until January 1966, nearly two years after the designation of the new town, that a compromise plan was drafted that was to the satisfaction of both parties. This date was only two months before contracts were signed for the first housing and industrial projects in the new town and the failure to agree was threatening to compromise both the planning and building programmes. Professor Ling's new proposal was that the new town expressway should follow a route immediately to the north of the Bridgewater canal and that it should act as a separator between the new town and the I.C.I. complex. To the north and east of the expressway a 'cordon sanitaire' should be established in which existing woodland would be retained and the non-noxious industrial elements such as car-parking and offices would be sited. These proposals were accepted by the company and, together with phasing and employment forecasts, were incorporated into the draft master plan. A fifteen year development period was anticipated and the eventual employment of 5,000 workers on the Norton site. These assumptions were confounded when the world fuel crisis of the nineteen seventies made the construction of a high-energy chemical complex on the scale originally envisaged totally uneconomic. The loss of this element of the master plan was a serious problem for the new town which was not resolved until 1974 when I.C.I. agreed to release a further 500 acres of the Norton site. The master plan was amended to incorporate this newly acquired area into the land zoned for housing as, by this date, the early worry about inadequate land being available to house 90,000 people had been proved correct. As the industrial site had not been developed and, as a consequencen no new employment created, the development corporation negotiated an agreement in 1981 to acquire the rest of the I.C.I. site for development for general industrial purposes.

The land originally released by I.C.I. and the land of all the other major landowners was purchased by the corporation in the first three years of their operations. By 1968 a total of 3237 acres had been purchased towards the target of 4,000 acres required to implement the original master plan. Nearly all of this was purchased by agreement and mostly well in advance of development. Compulsory powers were used only when failure to acquire land by agreement threatened the town's building programme. Such a situation arose over the land required for the new town's first industrial estate at Astmoor. This estate was planned on an area of flat land adjacent to the ship canal and was not only to include industrial development but the new town sewage works. The topography of the town dictated the location of the sewage works and the proposed site was also convenient for loading trated non-active sludge into boats on the ship canal for passage out to sea. About half of the site of the proposed Astmoor industrial estate was owned by Astmoor Industrial Holdings Ltd. This company had been seeking permission to develop the site for industry since 1957 but had been refused permission by the Minister on the grounds that the application was premature whilst consideration was still being given to the role that Runcorn might play in receiving Liverpool overspill. Once the new town had been designated the company argued that their applications could no longer be considered premature but agreed to sell the land to the corporation for their own industrial development. Detail discussions concerning the purchase of the land became complex, the company withdrew their agreement to sell and the corporation decided in May 1965 that it was necessary to acquire by compulsory purchase order. The order was objected to by Astmoor Holdings and became the subject of a public local enquiry held in December 1965. By this date there had been a change of government at Westminster and the Minister of Housing and Local Government was Richard Crossman. The enquiry was held on his behalf by Mr. S. R. Clarke.

The case put at the enquiry by the corporation's solicitor was that it was essential for land already in their possession, together with the land owned by Astmoor Holdings, to be planned and developed in a comprehensive manner. (7). They required to control the overall layout and appearance of the whole industrial estate together with its access roads and the sewage works. It was essential to ensure a proper balance between population and housing and to do this it was necessary for the corporation to control development. But the strongest argument for acquisition was that it was economically essential for the new town that the development was carried out by the development corporation.

A Ministry document was quoted from in support of this latter argument. This stated that "as the highest returns are obtained from commercial and industrial properties the profits on these transactions help to recoup losses incurred in the early years of development. " (10). Unless such profits could be made then the finance of such unprofitable elements of the town such as roads, parks and drainage would be placed in jeopardy. Ownership of the land was necessary to secure this objective.

The company argued that it would be a saving to the public purse if they were to develop the site for industry as they had long sought to do. They considered that the New Towns Act gave the development corporation the responsibility for 'securing' the development of and laying out the new town but did not require that they do the work themselves. Reference was also made to the land owned by I.C.I. as potential industrial land that the corporation were not seeking to acquire by compulsion and the question posed as to why Astmoor Holdings land should be treated differently.

In his report and recommendations to the Minister Mr. Clarke concluded that he considered it to be in the public interest for the development corporation to acquire the land and have full control of its development. The inspector's recommendations were endorsed by the Minister and the compulsory purchase order confirmed in January 1966. Astmoor Holdings decided to appeal against the Minister's decision on legal grounds but subsequently withdrew their appeal and the land was conveyed to the corporation in April 1966.

Almost surrounded by the site owned by Astmoor Holdings was another site that caused programming problems for the new town's first industrial estate. Marsh Lane was an unmade private road serving six acres of housing built for tannery workers but subsequently purchased by I.C.I. Sale to the corporation had been agreed but it was necessary to offer the sitting tenants alternative accommodation. Some accepted tenancies of older houses owned by the corporation in Runcorn old town but others preferred to wait for the completion of new houses under construction on the new town's first housing development at Halton Brook. The earliest houses on this site were not completed until a year after work started on the Astmoor industrial site. Construction of roads and drainage had to take place around the residents of Marsh Lane until all of the residents had been re-housed and their very substandard nineteenth century houses demolished. The tenants paid commensurately low rents for the poor Marsh Lane houses and were re-housed in new houses at their existing rent levels.

A similar exercise took place when the new town's second industrial estate was built at Whitehouse. Aston Lane transected the site and was developed on one side by a ribbon of pre-war dwellings and a Victorian non-conformist chapel. Some houses were tenanted and the other owner occupied and those residents that required to be re-housed were invited to rent or purchase houses on a small purposely built scheme in Sutton Weaver village only a few hundred yards away.

The houses at Marsh Lane and Aston Lane were all acquired so that they could be demolished and their sites redeveloped. Not all of the older houses owned by the corporation were bought for this reason. The site of the former Highfield Tannery was bought for industrial development but, in addition to the cleared tannery site, the corporation were obliged to buy sixty three houses and Runcorn United's football ground. In addition to these many older houses fell into corporation ownership as a consequence of the public enquiry into the designation of the new town. The New Towns Act made provision that any landowners whose interests had not been purchased within a period of seven years after designation of a new town could serve notice requiring his interests to be purchased by the development corporation. (9). At the public enquiry into the draft designation order for Runcorn this commitment to purchase had been greatly extended. Mr. Beddoe, representing the Minister of Housing and Local Government at the enquiry, was asked the following questions:

1. Will you say that any owner's legal interest will be purchased by the New Town Corporation on request?
2. Will you say that if the New Town Corporation were asked to purchase all owners' interests in the first year after designation they would and could do so?
3. Would you say that the purchase of an interest by the New Town Corporation on a request from an owner would be on the basis that a Notice to Treat had been served on the date of the Corporation's agreement to buy? (10).

Mr. Beddoe's answer to all three questions was 'yes'. As a consequence the corporation were obliged to purchase many old sub-standard properties that would not easily have sold on the open market even though they were remote from and not affected by the new town activities. Over a thousand "Beddoe's promise" houses were added to the corporation stock. Most of these were re-sold as they were although some were improved with aid of local authority grants before re-sale. Unfortunately the scattered nature of their locations precluded a comprehensive refurbishment programme that would have contributed to the environmental quality of the old town.

The rate of financial compensation paid to agricultural landowners and tenants and householders varied in accordance with the value of their interests. For freeholders of land and property the valuation was based on the assumption that the new town did not exist and a 'willing seller' and 'willing buyer' situation prevailed. For agricultural tenants compensation was related to five years rental payments and tenants of houses were offered alternative accommodation at special levels of rent. In addition the corporation were empowered to pay reasonable removal expenses and disturbance losses to persons displaced by the development of the new town. (12). Where landowners had un-implemented current planning permission for alternative uses or reasonable expectation of gaining such permission then land valuations were related to the hoped-for enhanced value. Two private house-builders owned land on which planning permission had already been granted in 1964 and they received compensation related to the lands value for housing rather than existing use value.

There were landowners whose interests could not be compensated for by monetary payments. In these case the principle of 'equivalent reinstatement' applied as financial compensation would not have been adequate to replace or rebuild the property. This applied particularly to 'social' buildings such as clubs or churches. Such a case was the United Reformed Church in Runcorn which was sited across the only route possible for the busway through the old town centre. The United Reformed Church had been in Runcorn since 1859 and occupied a chapel and a schoolroom which together would have had little value in an 'open market' situation. They agred to accept equivalent reinstatement and a new chapel was designed and built for them by architects and builders paid for by the corporation. They selected a site away from the old town and made the new chapel an ecumenical centre in the middle of one of the new town communities. A similar approach was adopted by the trustees of the chapel in Aston Lane at Whitehouse and a new building was provided for them in the centre of another new town community at Murdishaw. Two social clubs that were located on the line of the expressway were also subject to equivalent reinstatement arrangements and had new club premises built for them.

Thus by a process of purchase by agreement or compulsion, rehousing and equivalent reinstatement the corporation assembled the land necessary for the construction of the new town. Much of the land was not required for the development corporation's own building programme but for the many other agencies

involved in the new town. Initial acquisition was necessary both to ensure that the physical infrastructure of the town could be constructed in a co-ordinated manner and also that the subsequent subdivision of the land would be comprehensively planned. In addition it was necessary for the corporation to benefit from the enhanced value of land once the physical infrastructure had been installed and a demand for land created by the growth of the town. Before any capital could be spent on land the corporation required specific approval to its general use from the Minister. When this land was then sold to another agency or developer the corporation, under the terms of their Ministerial approval, could impose detail planning controls and so became the 'de facto' planning authority. The actual planning authorities in the county and district councils had been consulted by the Minister at the time of his issue of general approval to the development of an area and further reference to them was not necessary in terms of detail planning control. Therefore through the dual control of land ownership and planning the corporation were able to exercise considerable control of both the phasing and planning of the town's development. In Runcorn the responsibility for granting planning approvals was formally delegated by the corporation board to the general manager and exercised on his behalf by senior officers. Decisions could, as a consequence, be made almost instantly and this proved to be a great advantage when dealing with industrialists to whom a quick decision could mean fiancial and commercial advantage.

Under the 1964 New Town Act the corporation were not empowered to dispose of the freehold of land or grant a lease in excess of 99 years without consent of the Minister. (13). The retention of freehold was an important principle emphasised by Mr. Silkin in his introduction of the original New Towns Bill into Parliament. It was intended to both safeguard the control of future development and also ensure that the community benefitted from the long term financial appreciation of sites in which public capital had been invested. Freeholds could be transferred to other public bodies, such as education authorities, or to individual householders but not to commercial interests. In Runcorn one major industrial concern insisted on a 125 year lease for their twenty acre site and, in 1974, this was only granted with great reluctance by the Minister. Disposal of land on leasehold terms to private housebuilders did not prove to be satisfactory in Runcorn and only one major housing site was sold on this basis. An alternative system was adopted whereby private developers did not purchase any interest in the land but a licence to develop it. This was

done on payment of half the value of the land for the licence with the balance being paid when the development was completed. The freehold would be conveyed directly to the individual house purchasers on the completion of each house and the payment of the second moiety of the licence fee. This procedure had the advantage to the developer of reducing his initial capital outlay and to the corporation of preventing the acquisition by the developers of land 'banks'. The terms of the development licence set out a programme of building and, if this was not achieved, the corporation could revoke the licence and reclaim the land. In Runcorn most land was disposed of by the corporation by parallel negotiations on both planning and valuation. On infrequent occasions auctions were held to establish the level of the local land market but these tended to produce results that were unrealistic and not applicable to general negotiations. In 1970 the corporation had the experience of an auction pushing the price paid for housing land up to around twice the currently prevailing level. The purchaser was a developer who had expanded in the north of England at a very great rate and he needed to acquire land at almost any cost to keep his momentum going. He started the Runcorn development but the company was put into liquidation by its creditors before the scheme was completed so leaving the receiver and the corporation to untangle the problems of the unfinished site. This, and other experiences, made the corporation adopt a policy of negotiation with reputable house-developers so that both performance and continuity could, as far as possible, be ensured.

The principle of the retention of freeholds was maintained by governments of both political persuasions from its inception in 1946 to the advent of the Conservative government of 1979.

The policy was then adopted of the realisation of public assets and a reduction of public-sector involvement. Each new town was instructed to sell its commercial and industrial assets and given a target capital figure to raise. Runcorn were instructed to dispose of their interest in the freehold of the town centre shopping complex that had been developed in partnership with a development company and also to offer for sale industrial sites to their occupants or to property companies. How this fundamental change in financial arrangements will benefit either the national exchequer or the new town economy cannot yet be assessed.

RUNCORN. The Land. References.

(1) Report of the Public Enquiry into the draft designation order for Runcorn New Town held on 10th, 11th, 12th, December, 1963 in Runcorn Town Hall by Mr. A. F. Skinner.

(2) HANSARD Vol 422 p. 1072

(3) For detailed history of compensation for compulsory acquisition of land see SCHAFFER M. "The New Town Story."

(4) for example The Land Commission Act 1967

(5) NICKSON C. History of Runcorn 1887

(6) The Brooke Family Papers. Cheshire County Record Office.

(7) Inspector's Report. Public Enquiry held at the offices of the Development Corporation 2nd, 3rd December, 1965

(8) MHLG. Financial Policy for New Towns 1960

(9) New Town Act 1965. Section 11.

(10) Report to Runcorn Chief Officers Conference January 1967

(11) See SCHAFFER (op. cit.) p. 65

(12) New Towns Act 1946. General Memorandum from the Minister to Development Corporations re the objects and powers of the Development Corporation. (Appendix 6(1)).

(13) 1964 New Towns Act. Sched. 6. 5(1).

RUNCORN. External Communications.

Runcorn, like Conway, lies at a point on a river where it can be crossed by ferry. The Mersey offers few such opportunities between Liverpool and Warrington. It widens out from its relatively narrow channel at Liverpool to be over three miles wide between Ellesmere Port and Speke before narrowing to only 400 yards at Runcorn Gap. East of Runcorn it widens again before becoming a meandering sluggish river at Warrington. The river crossing at Warrington was the site of a military station built by the Romans in the first century. This crossing remained the most westerly over the Mersey until the nineteenth century. The river was navigable up as far as Warrington and its tributary, the Weaver, was passable for small boats to the salt wiches of southern Cheshire. These natural waterways became the avenues of trade and, with the growth of industrialisation in the eighteenth century, were supplemented with man-made canals. In 1721 an act was passed in Parliament permitting improvements to be made for navigation on the river Weaver. (1). By 1736 the Mersey and Irwell navigation was completed to allow better movement east of Warrington. In 1757 the Sankey canal was opened and a short time later extended to completely link St. Helens to the Mersey on the northern bank of the Runcorn Gap. Less than twenty years after this the Bridgewater canal was completed from Worsley, north of Manchester, to the Mersey at Runcorn. Coal from Worsley was shipped to Liverpool from Runcorn and within a few years cargo from the Potteries also travelled this way when the Trent and Mersey canal joined the Bridgewater in Runcorn. (2). By the end of the eighteenth century the waterways were carrying great volumes of cargo between Liverpool and its hinterland. In 1799 the Mersey and Irwell navigation carried nearly 45,000 tons, the Weaver navigation over 160,000 tons and the Bridgewater canal over 100,000 tons. Runcorn was at the hub of this network of waterways and developed as a river port. Between 1801 and 1841 its population increased fourfold from 1,500 to 6,000 people. (3). The principal commodities passing through the port were coal and salt and a developing return trade in Welsh slate made Runcorn into a major slate distribution centre. The slate trade was increased when war with the French caused sea-freight insurance rates to rise so steeply that it became more economic to distribute through Runcorn and the inland waterway system. (4). Some of the profit accumulated by this trade was reinvested in North Wales when the Runcorn ship owner, Dennis Brundrit, bought the mineral rights at Penmaenmawr. Welsh granite setts to pave the streets of rapidly urbanizing Merseyside were added to slate traffic and, in 1865, half of the 4,418 boats visiting Runcorn were from the ports of North Wales. A Welsh community developed in Runcorn and in 1829 established a Welsh chapel which is still standing.

In the hundred years or so prior to 1868 the development of Runcorn's external communications had been entirely by water but in that year, the Runcorn to Widnes railway bridge was opened over the Runcorn Gap. Runcorn docks gained a vital surface link to Liverpool and the people of Runcorn and Widnes a footway crossing the Mersey. For the many people crossing the river each day to work in the expanding alkali works in Widnes the footway on the rail bridge superceded the ferry. This had operated across the Runcorn Gap since the twelfth century and was leased to the Marquess of Cholmondoley. In his petition in opposition to the construction of the bridge he claimed that the ferry was used by two hundred thousand foot passengers each year in addition to three thousand horses and cattle. The ferry continued to operate for light freight and animals before finally closing in 1905. (5). With the growth of road traffic in the latter part of the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth Runcorn's lack of a northern road link became critical, and it was probably this more than any other factor, that caused a serious decline in Runcorn's economy in the early part of this century. A bridge at Runcorn Gap had first been proposed by James Brindley, the Duke of Bridgewater's engineer, in 1768, and in the following fifty years many other proposals were made. In 1818 Parliament approved a Bill that would have enabled a bridge designed by Thomas Telford to be built, but costs proved too high and the scheme was abandoned. The design was very similar to that eventually built by Telford over the Menai Strait. (6). By the time a bridge was built the design constraints it had to satisfy were more onerous. In 1897 the Manchester Ship Canal was opened from Manchester to the Mersey at Eastham. It followed the line of the south bank of the Mersey all around Runcorn and necessitated any later bridge to have a clearance of 76' to allow ocean going ships to pass under. Such a clearance already existed under the railway bridge to allow sailing ships up to Warrington and to the Old Quay docks in Runcorn. By 1897 river traffic to Warrington had virtually ceased, and it would not have been too difficult to relocate all of Runcorn's docks to the west of the railway bridge so allowing an economic river road bridge to be built. When a vehicle crossing was built over Runcorn Gap it was not a conventional bridge, due to the height problems, but a transporter bridge. In this respect the Ship Canal proved a doubtful asset to Runcorn although it did enable larger ships to offload in Runcorn whilst en route to Manchester. In another way it positively harmed Runcorn's position as a riverine port. Construction of the canal worsened the problem of shifting sands in the Mersey estuary and exacerbated the problem of keeping a river channel open to Runcorn.

Navigation to the town was further complicated by the need to "lock-in" to the ship canal at Runcorn before berthing at the docks and it was only a matter of time before the ship canal became virtually the only access to Runcorn from the sea. (7).

The Runcorn-Widnes transporter bridge was opened in 1905 by Sir John Brunner but its limited capacity did little to benefit the road links of Runcorn's developing chemical industry which remained dependent on railway freightage. Even when working to full capacity it catered for only a fraction of the potential traffic demand. At Easter 1954 the local press reported that the bridge had carried a record 1030 vehicles during the entire day on Easter Monday. (8).

At the end of the second world war Runcorn was left with a confusion of transport links that had mostly come to the end of their useful lives. The narrow canals, by then approaching two hundred years old, were hardly used for freight traffic although the Bridgewater canal continued to supply coal to Runcorn Gas Works until 1962. (9). Already by this date the operators of the Bridgewater, the Manchester Ship Canal Company, had obtained an Act of Parliament permitting them to fill in the two flights of locks that had connected the Bridgewater to the Mersey and thence to Liverpool. In 1950 the 122 year old Bridgewater China Warehouse was demolished so signalling the end of the export of china from the Potteries through Liverpool. (10).

The Transporter bridge was also literally grinding to a halt and in the postwar years there were regular press reports of breakdowns. Passengers were stranded aloft for hours at a stretch and the bridge was on occasions out of use for periods of several weeks whilst repairs were undertaken.

The road system serving the town was also obsolete and made worse by the only two lines of communication still operating busily. Both the ship canal and Weaver navigation were heavily used but, as the principal crossing points over them were swing-bridges, their success caused enormous problems on the roads. Three swing-bridges over the ship canal at Warrington and two over the Weaver at Frodsham and Acton Bridge meant that access to the business and industrial areas north of the Mersey, on the Wirral and around Chester was extremely difficult with swing-bridge hold-ups of an hour's duration not being uncommon.

The only other external link was by railway and although fully operational it depended on steam locomotion and a major bridge approaching one hundred years of age. Runcorn was served by a goods siding to the docks and by local services although the main line expresses only infrequently stopped on their way through between London and Liverpool.

The economic development of the mid-Mersey region clearly required action to be taken about its poor road pattern. In July 1945, only months after the end of the war in Europe, a high level bridge over Runcorn Gap was proposed by Cheshire County Council. A joint committee was formed with representative from Lancashire and a Parliamentary Bill floated which would enable the bridge to be built. The Bill received royal assent in 1949 but in the following year the government refused to sanction finance for the projected bridge. (11). The bridge committee had engaged Mott, Hay, and Anderson to design the new bridge and in January 1953 approved a proposal by them for a suspension bridge with a span over one thousand feet. This was almost exactly what Telford had proposed 137 years earlier but when he drew his designs the Runcorn Gap railway bridge had not been constructed. When the new design was model tested in a wind tunnel it was found that a severe buffetting effect caused by the proximity of the rail bridge would make a suspension bridge unsafe and in July 1954 the proposal was abandoned. (12). A new design was drawn up of a single span steel arch bridge and in April 1956 this was given formal approval by Harold Watkinson, Minister of Transport. Demolition of unfit housing around the bridge landings on both sides of the river commenced immediately and a tender for the bridge construction accepted in September 1957. The start of construction generated great speculation by the two communities in Runcorn and Widnes about the effect the construction of the bridge would have. Councillor Swayle, Mayor of Widnes, predicted that one town would result and the Runcorn MP,Dennis Vosper, forecast that the bridge would not be wide enough to satisfy the demand it would create.(13). The Town Clerk of Runcorn, Mr. T. J. Lewis, echoed the latter view and, in fact, time proved all three predictions to be correct. Under the 1974 Local Government reorganisation act Runcorn and Widnes were united into the Cheshire borough of Halton and, by that date, plans were ready for widening the road bridge from two to four traffic lanes.

The road bridge was opened in 1961 and during the same year work began on another road project that would have great significance for the external communications of Runcorn new town. The length of the national motorway M6

from Holmes Chapel to Warrington was started and this road, together with the North Cheshire motorway M56, would provide the new town with a direct link to the national motorway network. Both of these roads were included in the proposals made in the plan for Cheshire prepared for the County Council in 1946.(14). The plan also included the proposal by the recently formed Runcorn/Widnes bridge committee for a Mersey bridge together with a suggestion that amphibious buses might be developed to utilise the great length of narrow and ship canals in the county. This latter proposal was never developed further.

The opening of the Runcorn/Widnes road bridge in 1961 had an almost immediate effect on the fortunes of Runcorn Docks. For so long without a road access directly to the north and the heavily urbanised part of the Mersey Valley the opening of the link resulted in an increased throughput from 160,000 tons in 1961 to 545,000 tons in 1965. (15). By this latter date, only four years after its opening, the bridge was carrying in excess of its practical hourly capacity of 2,200 p.c.u.'s. (16). Any accident or breakdown on the bridge caused lengthy tailbacks and chaos in the two towns. A new length of road, called the Runcorn Spur, had been built contemporaneously with the bridge to carry traffic through Runcorn, but this became overloaded and resulted in 'rat runs' being created through the old town of Runcorn. The reconciliation of the conflicting traffic demands of the old town, the new town, and the regional and national traffic flows created by the new bridge and the motorways was a major problem that had to be faced by the planners when the new town of Runcorn was designated in 1964. The new road facilities had created some benefit for the old town but even more problems for a local road system that, until 1961, had catered for virtually no through traffic.

Whilst old Runcorn was going through the agonies of a road revolution that turned it from an urban backwater into an important point on the national road system, similar changes were being proposed on the railways. In 1960 work began on the electrification of the Liverpool to Crewe line and a new station was built in Runcorn. (17). With the extension of the electrification to Birmingham by 1967 and to London a little later Runcorn station assumed a new significance. Easy access, adequate parking and a journey time of only 2¼ house to London with trains every hour made Runcorn a very popular station from which to make the London journey. By 1972 nearly three quarters of those leaving cars at Runcorn station came from north of the Mersey and were travelling to London. (18). A problem anticipated by British Rail's engineers

when planning electrification was that the hundred year old iron lattice box-girder Mersey bridge would not be adequate to take the greater loads imposed by electric locomotives. Tests proved that the structure was amply adequate and no additional structural reinforcement was required.

Whereas improvements were taking place on long distance routes a problem that had to be dealt with by the newly formed Runcorn New Town Development Corporation in 1964 were proposals to severely curtail local passenger services. The Beeching report (19) recommended the closure of many 'uneconomic' local services and branch lines and the proposal to close the Liverpool to Chester service via Runcorn did not appear to the corporation a good start for the development of a new town. They joined with the councils of Runcorn and Liverpool in drafting objections to the closure and succeeded in convincing the Minister of Transport that it was essential to keep the service operating. (20). A few months after the proposal to close this passenger service British Rail proposed the closure of Runcorn Goods station for all general freight except I.C.I. traffic and coal deliveries. Again the corporation objected but this time unsuccessfully. The closure of the Runcorn to Chester length of the Liverpool to Chester passenger service was again proposed by British Rail in 1972 and this time they obtained ministerial approval subject to adequate consultation taking place with the appropriate bus companies and the closure not taking place before May 1975. The last Runcorn to Chester passenger train made its last trip in May 1975 almost exactly eleven years after its withdrawal was proposed by British Rail. Contemporaneously with years of argument with B.R. over the withdrawal of passenger services discussions were taking place with the Development Corporation over proposals to improve public transport links to and from the town. Matters discussed included the possible relocation of the old Runcorn station and the provision of a bus/train interchange at the station. The first proposal proved impossible on technical grounds generally related to track gradients but the latter proposal was implemented as part of the town's internal transport arrangements.

In addition to the Liverpool to Crewe and Chester lines the area designated for the new town is traversed by a line running from Manchester to Chester and North Wales via Warrington. Passenger services had been withdrawn from this line before the designation of the new town and Norton, Sutton Weaver and Daresbury village stations closed and demolished. With the growing spread of new town development towards its eastern boundary and the rising proportion of

house-building being for private ownership the re-opening of Norton station to provide a commuter and shopping link to Warrington and Manchester was examined. The proposition to re-open the old station proved impractical but it was agreed to construct a new small station nearby the old site. By cooperative funding arrangements between British Rail, Cheshire County Council and the New Town Development Corporation, aided by European Community grant, a new station was opened in 1983, and initial growth of passenger traffic exceeded forecasts of the County Council. (21).

External communications by bus to the old town of Runcorn were typical of any small town. Main destinations included Liverpool, Widnes, Warrington, Northwich and Chester and terminated at an open-air bus station constructed as part of an urban renewal programme in 1961. This station also served the local services operated within Runcorn by the Crosville Motor Services, a subsidiary of the British Bus Company. The problem for the new town planners was the integration of these external services with the proposals for public transport within the town. Crosville, as operators of both external and internal services to the old town, were recruited to join the planning team for this aspect of the new town. A covered interchange at the new town centre between external bus and local busway services was planned and implemented as part of the new town's programme.

An important element in the external communications network of any modern industrial town is access to air services. This is especially the case for new towns who tend to seek industries that are internationally 'footloose' and will require good air communications to their countries of origin. Runcorn has two airports close by at Liverpool and Manchester. Liverpool Speke was opened in 1933 and operated flights to London, Dublin and Blackpool in the early years, but expanded rapidly during the second world war. Speke became a major base for both fighter and bomber plans and a centre for the importation and assembly of aircraft flown in, in knocked down form, from the U.S.A.. By the conclusion of the war it was regarded as one of the most modern airports in Britain and anticipated a major role as the region's principal airport. (22). The promise never materialised as Liverpool stagnated economically in the post war years. Since 1974 when the airport was taken over by the new Merseyside County Council active promotion of the airport has increased its freight and charter traffic. Although Speke became easily accessible from Runcorn when the road bridge opened in 1961 the failure to develop scheduled international services made it

of little value to the new town. Indeed the Development Corporation viewed with concern proposals to expand the runways at Speke as any substantial increase in air traffic would have serious noise implications for Runcorn that would have outweighed any potential advantage due to improved air services.

Manchester airport at Ringway, although further from Runcorn, became very easily accessible by the construction of the M56 North Cheshire motorway. Whereas Speke failed to expand after the war Ringway did so and became the principal regional airport. Fifteen airlines operated scheduled services to British, continental and North Americal destinations and seventeen companies operated tour and charter flights from Ringway. (23). The airport was only twenty minutes travelling time from Runcorn and this proximity was of great value in industrial promotion.

By the time the development of Runcorn new town was at full flow the legacy of obsolescent eighteenth and nineteenth century communications was being updated or replaced. The construction of the national and regional motorway system and the electrification of the London to Liverpool railway had both started, although nearly twenty years after they had been included in the first post war plan for Cheshire. (24). The opening of the Runcorn/Widnes bridge in 1961, also envisaged in the 1946 Cheshire plan, revolutionised regional road transport. Runcorn became in easy reach of an airport operating scheduled international flights. Only water borne transport declined with the narrow canals becoming inappropriate for modern needs and the ship canal suffering from a decline caused by the advent of containerisation of freight. A fleet of container carriers was built to trade between Manchester and the St. Lawrence Seaway but time proved these to be too small in scale to operate economically. Much larger ships than the 14,000 tons maximum on the Ship Canal berthed at the new Seaforth container terminal in Liverpool and, once unloaded, the containers were distributed by road. Very few ocean-going ships now travel inland as far as Manchester although the canal is still busy at its western end where the oil terminals are sited. Only one of the new industrialists attracted to the town uses the ship canal to bring in materials. The Arthur Guiness company bring in beer from their Irish brewery to a new dock on the ship canal and, at their new Runcorn plant, condition, keg, and bottle it. Trade in the old established Runcorn docks is restricted to coastal trade and some European traffic in timber and liquid sulphur for Runcorn's chemical plants. The canal between Runcorn and Manchester is now

threatened with closure to shipping although its role in draining surface water and sewage from the older towns along its length will continue until modern provision for treatment of such effluents is made.

The programme timing of the construction of the Runcorn/Widnes bridge, the electrification of the railway and the construction of motorways provides Runcorn New Town with excellent communications both regionally and nationally. The timing creates an impression of co-ordinated planning that has not, in fact, been apparent in any post-war regional strategy. Decisions concerning the various modes of transportation were taken separately from each other and also from the new town's programme. They were fortunate pre-conditions that created potential for development and Runcorn new town site was designated in consequence of such decisions and not as part of a strategic policy. Within the Ministry of Housing and Local Government in 1963 a team was briefed to consider the potential of Runcorn as a new town site and in their report noted the suitability of the projected and existing external communications of the site. (25). All of these external links had been proposed as part of a regional pattern of communications in Cheshire's 1946 plan which also recognised that the county would need to receive overspill population from both Liverpool and Manchester. This latter need was a constant topic of discussion in Runcorn local authority circles in the 1950's and early 1960's but only in the context of limited 'overspill' of 10,000 people from Liverpool.

The end result of these individual decisions was a good network of external communications for Runcorn and if the location of many of Britain's post-war new towns is studied a similar relationship is apparent. This is rather the result of making decisions on siting of new towns after, and separately from, decisions on rail and motorway systems and the co-ordination of timing in many cases has not been so fortunate as Runcorn's. The other north western new town, Skelmersdale, was planned to have a motorway link to the projected M6 from the date of the town's designation in 1961. It was 1978 before the motorway link was built. (26). The new town of Telford in Shropshire, designated in 1963 to relieve population and industrial overcrowding in the West Midlands, waited until November 1983 for the opening of the M54 to link it to its parent conurbation. This motorway replaced an entirely inadequate road system that was basically the same as when Coalbrookdale in Telford was the centre of the industrial revolution over two hundred years earlier. (27).

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RUNCORN.

The early settlers.

The proposal to build a new town at Runcorn "stemmed from the urgent need to increase the rate of housebuilding for people living in Liverpool and other areas of North Merseyside". (1). The proposition was to build a self-contained town and not a dormitory overspill housing estate such as the earlier Liverpool "new towns" at Speke and Kirkby. The intention was to attract both people and companies and this chapter examines the origins of both the families and industrialists who moved to the town and how long they stayed.

The first group of people to move to the new town were the staff employed by the development corporation to design and manage construction. The professional staff of planners, architects, lawyers, surveyors, engineers and accountants was recruited from many parts of the country but very few settled in the new town. In the first years of the new town this was partly due to the unavailability of property within the designated area and partly because staff could commute for considerable distances within the region. People already living in the Liverpool or Manchester regions could fairly simply travel each day to work without moving house and many chose to do this. The corporation did consider making it mandatory for staff to live within the new town and consequently contribute towards the life of the town but this appeared to be impracticable and was not pursued. Additionally the nature of the corporation itself meant that employment was seen as temporary, albeit for up to fifteen years and staff expected to move on to other work once their engagement in the new town had run its course. Therefore the professional staff of the development corporation played little part in the settlement of the town although junior and clerical staff were generally recruited locally from both the new and the old populations. Similarly the workers necessary for the construction of the town had to be recruited from outside by the building contractors engaged by the corporation. During the peak period of construction these numbered approaching 2,000 but, due to the proximity of Liverpool, Manchester and even Stoke-on-Trent, the majority of workers travelled in to Runcorn daily.

From its inception the development corporation were briefed by government to design their housing eligibility scheme to favour migrants from Liverpool and north Merseyside. The top priority in the allocation of houses-for-rent was to be given to workers of any company that moved out of Merseyside to the new town. Also favoured were workers nominated by a new town employer who were either tenants of a Merseyside housing authority or on their waiting list. (2).

If an employer was unable to recruit suitable staff from these categories then he could recruit 'key' workers from elsewhere and they would also receive priority allocation of housing. Other groups who qualified for development corporation rented housing were those requiring re-housing due to displacement by the development of the new town, sons and daughters of first generation immigrants to the new town, people returning to civil life after regular service in the armed forces and old people who were related to immigrants or were themselves resident in Merseyside. (3). Apart from the people displaced by the activities of the new town no existing residents of the new town area qualified for corporation housing. It was for the local district council to satisfy the housing needs of its own residents.

In the latter years of the fifteen year planned immigration period when more dwellings were available in the new town and the pressure on the exporting authorities had eased relaxations were made to the eligibility rules. The job qualification came to mean not only employment within the new town itself but within reasonable commuting distance; the old person's category was widened to include those over 50 years of age and, for the last small housing scheme built by the development corporation, the rule debarring local residents was lifted and the scheme occupied entirely by tenants or nominees from the waiting list of the district council. In addition certain other categories of tenant were accepted on occasions at the specific request of government. (4).

Notwithstanding any relaxations of the housing eligibility rules it remained central to the corporation's rented housing policy that houses and employment were primarily to assist in the problems of Merseyside. With regard to housing built within the new town by private developers then no such qualifications in respect of eligibility could exist and houses were sold on a free market basis. Within the first few years of the new town's development, however, virtually all new housing was constructed by the corporations for rent and immigration into the town was, as a consequence, controlled by the rules governing allocation of tenancies.

During the fifteen years of the planned immigration period the development corporation constructed 10,500 dwellings and these were occupied by nearly 20,000 households. Many of those who moved to the town settled permanently but many others moved on for a wide variety of reasons. For some the move proved not to be the answer to personal problems or for others the job they moved to

do may not have lasted for more than a short while. Rented accommodation was frequently used by people moving to the new town as a temporary provision whilst they were waiting for a private house to purchase. The crude 'turnover' rate of corporation houses can give no indication of how long people stayed in the new town as it was heavily weighted by short stay tenants. To examine in greater depth the permanence of settlement of the early tenants the records of a group have been analysed for this study. In 1969 the development corporation carried out a survey of the first 500 families to settle in the town. (5). These were very much the pioneer families who moved into Runcorn between February 1967 and March 1969. During this period there were no new central facilities although primary schools and local corner shops had been built contemporaneously with the first occupations within each community. Roads and sewers were under construction across the town, bus services could not adequately serve the new housing areas, the shops and services of the old town were a considerable distance away and health and welfare services were not expanding as rapidly as the population.

The first 500 families averaged between three and four persons per household and, in total, numbered 1735 people. (6). This total included the first real 'newtowners' as fifty four babies had been born up to the date of the survey. The great majority of these first families had originated from Liverpool (68%) and north Merseyside (7%). The remainder came from Lancashire and Cheshire (2%), the Midlands (1%), London (2%) and various other parts of the United Kingdom. The age structure of this group was much younger than that of the remaining population of inner Liverpool although marginally older than a comparable group in Skelmersdale new town. Runcorn development corporation had been conscious of the desirability of achieving a normal age structure as early as possible in the life of the town in order to minimise the over-provision of such facilities as primary schools. A wider age structure would also produce a more stable society and to encourage this a wide range of dwelling types and sizes had been built. The original qualification for rented accommodation of being 50 years of age was reduced to forty so long as the applicant was employed within commuting distance of the town. This latter category was very small as the majority of the new settlers found work within the new town. Some of those who had obtained jobs within the town had changed employers by the date of the survey although more than half of these had changed to another employer within the town. More than half of the men were employed in skilled manual work and a further quarter were semi-skilled. Only six per cent were classified as

unskilled manual workers and 3.5% as professionals. These levels of skill contrasted strongly with those of inner city Liverpool which housed a lower proportion of skilled and professional workers and a much higher number of unskilled people. The difference reflected the job opportunities that were being created by new industry in Runcorn and also the greater social mobility of skilled younger people wishing to 'better' themselves. The main reasons given by these first settlers in the new town for moving were to provide a better house and environment for themselves and their children and to get away from the depressed older urban areas of Liverpool.

By 1983, over sixteen years after the first new houses were occupied, fortyfive per cent of the first 500 families were still living in the new town. (7). The majority were still living in the house to which they had originally moved and over a quarter of these had purchased their houses from the corporation. Thirteen per cent had left the houses that they had originally rented in order to buy property; about half within the new town and half elsewhere.

Typical of the many families who moved to Runcorn from Liverpool were the Wards. (8). They moved into the first block of corporation houses to be finished in 1967. In Liverpool they shared a house with in-laws and moved to the new town when Mr. Ward got a job at Sloan Engineering on the Astmoor Industrial Estate. Their main motivation for moving was the chance of a new house and they qualified for this by virtue of Mr. Ward's job. Mr. Ward, a time-served cabinet maker, was employed making wooden cabinets for vending machines but worked for Sloan for only a few months. Mr. Ward then obtained employment at the Ford Motor Co's factory at Speke, within easy commuting distance of Runcorn, where he eventually became a supervisor. Mrs. Ward worked at a new old-persons' home within Runcorn. Two of their three daughters married boys from Merseyside but both young families live in Runcorn with the Ward's first two grandchildren. Both Mr. and Mrs. Ward were from large catholic families and a number of their many relatives also moved to the new town. Brothers, sisters, cousins, lots of friends and Mr. Ward's uncle all moved to Runcorn and, in this respect, they are also typical of many such extended families in the new town. The arrival of the uncle meant that four generations of Wards were living in the new town within its first ten years. Runcorn became regarded as 'home' and both Mr. and Mrs. Ward became involved in the social life of the town. He became secretary of the Halton Hospital

league of friends and several thousand pounds were raised towards new minor accident facilities at the hospital. On retirement they intend to stay in Runcorn close to their grandchildren and, in this respect, they are like their close neighbours, the McMillans.

Mr. and Mrs. McMillan were not from Merseyside but were recruited as key workers from their home fown of Dundee. (9). Both Mr. and Mrs. McMillan were skilled carpet weavers working at the Tribute carpet company in Dundee when it went bankrupt in 1966. Two of the directors of the company started up a new carpet factory during the following year and chose Runcorn as their location. The position of the new town on and central to the national motorway network attracted them but they needed to bring in key workers from Scotland to start up the plant and to train local labour. Five families were recruited from the old company in Dundee and, in 1983, three were still resident in the town. One returned to Scotland and the other family emigrated to South Africa after living in Runcorn for seven years.

Both McMillans worked for Mercia Weavers, until 1980 when the very successful company was taken over by Parker Knoll Ltd. Neither liked the new arrangements and considered that Mr. McMillan's take home pay of £85 per week was inadequate reward for his skill and experience. Mrs. McMillan was near to normal retiring age so both took the opportunity they were offered of early retirement. When they moved from Dundee they had left behind a married son but, when his marriage failed, he moved to Runcorn with his daughter who was then victually brought up by Mr. and Mrs. McMillan senior. The younger Mr. McMillan remarried and, with his wife from Merseyside, bought a house in Runcorn. His parents visit Scotland for an annual holiday but are not intending to move from the new town.

Both the Wards and McMillans are representative of families that have been motivated to move to the new town and have made their new life a success. Others failed to settle and the 'new start' did not materialize. For some, marital, family, work or financial pressures caused them to return or move on. (10). In the early days of the new town the rents asked for corporation houses were considered to be high by comparison with local authority rents. Fifteen per cent of the first 500 families left corporation housing in debt over rents and the average stay in the new town of these families was four years. The remainder of the first 500 families that left the town stayed for 5.3 years on average.

A high proportion of these left in the early 1970's when "the Corporation's industrial estate at Astmoor reflected the national situation, and, unfortunately, a number of companies felt obliged to cease production in units which they rented from the development corporation." (11).

National and even international events were a factor in migration to the new town. On two occasions overseas problems caused government in London to ask the help of both local authorities and new towns in giving housing to refugees. In the autumn of 1972 Idi Amin expelled British citizens from Uganda. They left without compensation for their businesses and were forbidden to export money from Uganda. As a consequence six Asian Ugandan families were housed in Runcorn but had great difficulty in re-establishing themselves. (12). Two families moved on to Canada but the others needed considerable support from the corporation's social workers before they found jobs or moved into Asian communities in other parts of Britain. Refugees from even further round the world were housed when the British government in 1979 accepted refugees from the communist takeover of South Vietnam. (13). Seven families who had been rescued from grossly overcrowded boats in the South China Sea were accommodated by the corporation in houses fully furnished with voluntary contributions from various church groups within the town. Unlike the Ugandans, the Vietnamese spoke no English and needed basic language training before being able to obtain further tuition in occupational skills. Only two of the Vietnamese were able to find work in a very difficult economic climate.

Other Asian migrants to Runcorn from a very different economic background were the Japanese managers sent over to England to run the YKK zip fastener factory. They mostly were not accompanied by their families and only stayed for between one and two years. The managing director of YKK, Mr. Fujisaki was permanently resident in England with his family and, after renting a corporation house in Runcorn for a period, bought a house in one of the villages close to the new town. But such residents made up a very small part of the new town population and, in 1978, when new houses had been being completed in the new town for twelve years, the origins of the immigrant families approximately reflected the pattern of the first 500. Three quarters of the new settlers had originated in Merseyside and the remainder were equally derived from the rest of north-west England, other parts of the United Kingdom and from the new town itself. Owners of private houses were drawn from the new town (47%), Merseyside (19%) with the remainder coming from all parts of the country. (14).

The reasons for migration have been briefly noted above in terms of the attraction of a new house and job and the escape from the poor environment of Liverpool. This latter factor was not only related to the broader aspects of the condition of Liverpool's urban fabric but to the quality of the houses themselves and the overcrowding within them. Liverpool, like many other cities that had expanded rapidly in the nineteenth century, had a great number of privately owned rented houses. Various measures to control rents and the condition and ages of the houses together with escalating building costs and interest rates caused much of this housing to decline to a very poor state. (15). During the first two years of Runcorn's housing programme a third of all immigrants had lived in such housing. A further third originated from council houses on Merseyside which, although newer, were often in a poor state and many were remote from the facilities of the city centre. Only four per cent of these early immigrants were owner occupiers. Throughout the remainder of the housing programme the proportion of newcomers to the town who had previously lived in council housing stayed at roughly one third. The number from privately owned rented accommodation steadily declined as much inner city housing was cleared for redevelopment. For similar reasons the volume of immigrants from owner-occupied housing rose from 4% to a peak of 12% as clearance programmes and inner city conditions made even owner-occupation unacceptable within the city. (16). With the decrease of privately rented property, the length of council house waiting lists and the condition of much of Merseyside's council housing many young married couples were forced to share housing with their 'in-laws'. The desire to move from shared accommodation on Merseyside together with the increase in second-generation new town households sharing with parents increased this category of new tenants to nearly 40% by the end of the planned immigration period. The second generation Runcorn households together with the acceptance of local authority tenants and applicants for council housing within Halton borough increased the newcomers to corporation housing originating from within the new town designated area to 44%. This became the largest category to be housed and, in 1981, only 39% of incoming households were from Merseyside. (17).

By 1981 the total population of Runcorn had increased to about 64,200. To accommodate the increased population the development corporation had built 10,500 dwellings for rent and the private sector together with housing associations had built a further 2,956 dwellings. (18). The age structure of the new population, despite the corporation's efforts to attract older people,

was young in comparison with the rest of Cheshire. In all of the age groups up to 30 years the new town contained a higher percentage than the rest of the county and for all of the older age groups there were lower ratios.

The increase of nearly 40,000 people in the new town over a period of fifteen years took place entirely by voluntary migration. Even those people who settled in the town as a result of an industry relocating itself or were actively recruited as key workers could have chosen not to move. But these two groups only formed a small part of the incoming population and the majority of the newcomers generated their own migration. (19). In order to make their decision to move they had to be informed what was available in Runcorn and how they could qualify to move. In the first four years of recruitment the 'exporting authorities' of Liverpool and north Merseyside actively co-operated in the promotion of the new towns. Information was supplied to prospective tenants on the local authority waiting lists and from 1967 to 1970 the new towns of Skelmersdale and Runcorn exhibited jointly with Liverpool Corporation at the annual three day Liverpool agricultural show. Special features were arranged in local newspapers and new "show" houses were widely advertised. The assistance of the Merseyside local authorities was, however, discontinued as they began to become alarmed at the rate at which their population was declining. (20). By the autumn of 1972 the development corporation itself ceased to advertise for immigrants as its housing waiting list had increased to 1700 families and it considered that it would not be proper to extend it further. (21). Thereafter the only manifestation of the new town in Liverpool was a small permanent office on the concourse of Lime St. Station. The office displayed a small amount of publicity material but its main function was to answer queries and receive applications for housing in Runcorn. Once the momentum of movement to Runcorn had built up and a strong Merseyside pressure was established in the new town then the application list for housing became self-generating. Each year from 1972 to 1981 more than half of the immigrants to Runcorn said that their initial source of information about the new town was somebody already living there. (22). Around a quarter of immigrants gave the source of their first knowledge of Runcorn as the new town office in Liverpool. During the same period the number of new applications for housing annually ranged from 1,673 to 2,503. A study carried out in 1972 confirmed that "as Runcorn has become known and has increased in size and amenity provision, it has "pulled" more and more of the "disaffected" Liverpudlians into its new homes." (23).

Once a family contemplating a move to the new town had made its intentions known to the development corporation it was visited in its home by a Runcorn social worker. The purpose of the visit was not to 'vet' the applicant but to discuss the family's expectations and the advantages and disadvantages of the prospective move. An application form was made out with first, second, and third choice houses stated and once a name had risen to the top of the list an offer of an appropriate house was made. Time was given for the family to visit the town and examine the house on offer before a final acceptance was required. After moving to Runcorn another social worker from the corporation visited to offer any help, support or guidance that appeared necessary. (24).

Whereas the government's intention that Runcorn should assist in the relief of residential overcrowding on Merseyside was fulfilled the other part of the new town's original brief was not. A similar role in relation to the relocation of cramped and outdated industrial premises in Liverpool did not materialise. Very little of Runcorn's new employment was provided by the migration of companies from Merseyside although during the planned immigration period the Liverpool area lost a great deal of employment. In 1976 there were only 88% of the manufacturing jobs that had existed in 1961. During the same period unemployment in the city had trebled. The loss of 85,000 jobs was not caused by migration but by closure of manufacturing plants. (25). At the end of Runcorn's planned growth period over eleven thousand new jobs had been provided in the new town. Only one company of any size had moved from Liverpool to Runcorn during that period. A long established company of ship's chandlers reorganised their business into general wholesale grocery as Liverpool's docks declined. Their location in central Liverpool became inappropriate for overland distribution and they moved to a site better related to the national motorway network. (26).

The origin of industrial companies is not always to easy to identify. A new plant might be generated by a London based subsidiary of a multinational company. The closure of a number of factories spread all over the country and the "rationalisation" of production in a new location might occur. One such plant in Runcorn was the result of the closure of eighteen scattered uneconomic factories and in this context it is not wholly accurate to speak of new jobs. (27). Notwithstanding the difficulty of locating the geographical origins of a "new" factory and accepting these distortions it is possible to analyse the sources of new industry in Runcorn.

Forty-three of the 128 new industries that settled in Runcorn up to 1981 originated within the north west of England. Fifty-nine came from elsewhere in Britain, twelve from Europe, eleven from the U.S.A., one from Africa, one from Australia and one from Japan. (28). This pattern of local, national and overseas sources of new industry was almost precisely repeated in Washington new town in the north-east of England. Not dissimilarly, the new industries in Milton Keynes, albeit more numerous, reflect a similar pattern. (29). Japanese and American companies appear to favour British new towns for their European operations. More than one quarter of all Japanese manufacturing companies in Britain are located in new towns although they contain only 4% of the population. (30).

Industrial companies are usually even more reticent about their motivation for moving than people and it is not possible to analyse and categorize their reasoning. Negotiations often take place through professional agents and the name of the company is not revealed until a deal is virtually completed. It is clearly apparent why some companies wish to leave existing sites and relocate but not why they choose their eventual destination. The ship's chandlers left Liverpool because the nature of its trade and the location of its customers had changed. A spice milling company left the East end of London because of congestion on site and very difficult vehicular access. (31). The rationalisation of old plants and their replacement by a new larger one in a new location was the reason for Bass moving. The agent in the United Kingdom for one of Runcorn's overseas companies happened to live in Altrincham fairly close to Runcorn and naturally looked to the new town when seeking a site for development. Another major company had plants in Manchester and North Wales that would work in tandem with their new plant and Runcorn was appropriately sited to fulfill this requirement. But the reasons for selecting Runcorn as an industrial location are probably a combination of the factors that the new town used in its promotional literature. Runcorn is very well sited in relation both to the national motorway system and the markets provided by the urban belt from Liverpool through Manchester to West Yorkshire. The new town is in a special development area and government grants towards the costs of buildings and plant were available. Labour was available and good quality housing could be provided locally for renting or purchase. All of these were tangible advantages and were backed up by an experienced professional team within the corporation who could fully inform a potential industrialist with regard to all factors concerning the new town and, most importantly, were empowered to make virtually instantaneous decisions on planning and finance.

The development corporation produced industrial promotional literature stressing the advantages of the new town and used the national and specialist press to advertise itself. Professional agents were kept aware of the availability of sites and of the progress of the town's development but very little expensive television or radio advertising was employed. Many new industries were introduced to the new town by the civil servants of the regional branch of the Department of Trade and Industry. Their office was in Manchester and their role was to know which industries were looking for space and where this might be found. As the agency responsible for grant aid they would often be the first organisation to be contacted by an industrialist wishing to develop a new factory. The D.T.I., together with personal recommendation, proved to be the most effective recruitment agencies for new industry in the new town. (32).

Once a new company had been established it was usually intent firstly on survival in its formative years and then on expansion. The facility for such expansion was catered for in Runcorn by the provision of 'option' sites adjoining both leasehold sites or advance factory units. Alternatively larger advance units in close proximity to the original factory could usually be rapidly made available. About sixty per cent of companies that set up in the new town in its first ten years of operation expanded but the same proportion also went into liquidation or left the town. (33). These crude, and apparently contradictory figures, give a misleading impression of industrial performance. Virtually all of the companies that failed in this period were in small rented factories and stayed in the town for an average period of only five years. In this respect the pattern of settlement of industry closely paralleled personal migration. If the first two or three years in a new environment could be negotiated then a permanent stay could be established. A high proportion of those that did succeed in settling expanded into larger advance units or commissioned purpose built premises on a nearby leasehold site. Those companies that established themselves in purpose built premises, either from the beginning or after an initial period in an advance factory, proved to be much more durable. Only one site leaseholder who had established in Runcorn in the first ten years eventually left the town and that was after a stay of eleven years. Those companies that took leasehold sites were usually larger concerns, or new companies set up by substantial parent companies, and which had adequate financial backing. The failure rate referred to above is,

therefore, misleading in terms of employment. The larger new companies such as Bass with a one hundred acre plant and Guiness with twentyfive acres more than compensated for the loss of jobs in small and sometimes very risky enterprises undertaken in advance factories. Conversely several occupants of advance units expanded subsequently to provide some of the new town's larger industrial concerns. The Japanese company Y.K.K. rented an advance factory in Runcorn in 1972. From their initial 3,000 square feet they expanded within ten years into a leasehold site on which they built ten successive phases of purpose built factory. Schreiber Wood Industries expanded from a small advance unit to a specially designed factory of nearly half a million square feet. The spice milling company noted above built three factory extensions since their move to Runcorn and increased their workforce to more than 200. (34).

Failure or success of new companies to establish themselves did not relate to reputation or 'parentage'. Two companies with very strong backing were recruited to Runcorn and both had undergone substantial expansion within their first five years. One was a subsidiary of the giant machine tool group, Alfred Herbert, and the other of Rolls Royce. Both were lost to the town due to the collapse of the parent organisations and subsequent reconstruction of their holdings. A similar problem but on a much more substantial scale occurred at Skelmersdale. Two companies closed that had been considered to be the industrial cornerstones of the new town. Thorn Colour Tubes and Courtaulds both withdrew in 1976 when world competition affected the demand for their products. (35). The closure of "branch" factories at times of national and international recession has provided problems for both new towns and other provincial areas distant from the parent company in the south of England or even overseas. A small engineering company was set up in Runcorn in 1967 as a subsidiary of a 'family' company in Gloucestershire. A considerable volume of the production of both factories was exported and the Runcorn plant operated efficiently and profitably until 1982 when it was closed. The world recession caused a severe loss of orders and the Runcorn factory was closed to protect the parent company. (36). Until a new town has been established sufficiently long for it to develop its own population and economic life it is more than normally susceptible to outside economic decisions by both private companies and by government.

A description of the early settlers in the new town would not be complete without reference to the modern equivalent of the medieval merchants and clerks.

Shops and offices form a very important part of the employment structure of the new town and in 1981 employed over half of the workforce. (37). Due to the compact nature of the town and the ease of access provided by the busway virtually all of Runcorn's new shopping is concentrated in the town centre. Only one or two small corner shops are situated within each residential community. The shopping and most of the offices in the town centre were developed as a joint enterprice by the corporation and Grosvenor Estates. The great majority of the shops are the usual national 'multiples' with only two units taken by Runcorn traders. The multiples were dealt with by Grosvenor through their London office and professional letting agents. In this context it becomes inappropriate to attempt to analyse companies' origins as all are operating nationwide from their centre of control, usually London. The offices built speculatively by Grosvenor and the corporation were let to the essential administrative components of the town. The county council local offices for education, welfare and registrar were located there together with offices for the Department of Health and Social Security and the development corporation itself. Branches of solicitors' practices centred in Runcorn and Warrington were the only private organisations to take space alongside the public bodies.

Two purpose built office blocks were also constructed in the town centre each for occupation by a single organisation. The government decided to relocate part of the Department of Employment from Watford to Runcorn as part of its policy in the late 1960's of moving offices to the provinces and away from London. Key workers were asked to move to Runcorn but the majority of female and clerical staff was recruited locally. The other office was built by a subsidiary of Glaxo Ltd as a successor to the temporary office they built in Runcorn in 1966. Vestric were the new town corporation's first commercial immigrant and as no other sites had been serviced, set up their temporary office alongside the development corporation's in Runcorn old town. They moved to their new office in the town centre in 1980.

At the end of the planned immigration programme in 1981 the new town entered a new phase of its development. All new housing was to be provided by the private sector and the infrastructure for this provision was to be undertaken by the development corporation. The ultimate capacity of the town will be about 85,000 but the date by which this will be reached depends entirely on 'natural' expansion rather than a planned programme of construction.

RUNCORN. The early settlers. References.

(1) MHLG. 1963. Runcorn Draft Designation Order. Inspector's Report 21.1.64.

(2) For simplicity Merseyside refers to the local authorities of Liverpool and North Merseyside who were the official 'sending' authorities for the new town.

(3) MHLG letter dated 16 May 1966

(4) Information from RDC files 1964-65

(5) RDC Social Survey 1969. The first 500 families.

(6) Average household size 3.57 people.

(7) Data from RDC tenancy records 1984.

(8) As part of the research for this study a number of the early settlers were interviewed at home by the writer.

(9) Personal interview 1984.

(10) Information from RDC social workers.

(11) RDC Annual Report 1970-71. Although there was a healthy increase in the number of jobs in the new town during this year a number of companies did cease to trade. Redundant workers did not necessarily have the skills to be re-employed on other new industrial sites.

(12) DofE circularised all public housing authorities to request a quota of houses for the Ugandans. 1973.

(13) Housed in Runcorn at the request of the voluntary settlement agency the Ockenden Venture.

(14) RDC Household Survey 1970.

(15) The North West. Department of Economic Affairs. HMSO (1965)

(16) RDC Annual Abstracts of Statistics (1971-1981)

(17) RDC Annual Abstract of Statistics. 1981.

(18) WRDC Socio-economic profile of Runcorn from the 1981 Census.

(19) Only 9% of the first 500 families were key workers in new Runcorn industries (RDC Annual Report 1969)

(20) Nett Migration from Merseyside between 1965 and 1981 totalled ¼ million people. During that period Runcorn and Skelmersdale attracted about 30,000 people each from Merseyside. (Merseyside County Structure Plan. Written statement 1979). Furthermore if the Redcliffe Maud report's recommendations for the reorganisation of local government had been followed then the new towns would have been within Merseyside and the "loss" to the new towns would not have been apparent.

(21) RDC Annual Report 1974

(22) RDC Annual Abstract of Statistics 1981.

(23) BERTHOUD R. & JOWELL R. Creating a Community - a study of Runcorn New Town. S.C.P.R. 1973.

(24) TRUETT J. "Runcorn New Town". A paper to the international conference on new towns. Bologna 1974.

(25) Merseyside County Structure Plan 1979.

(26) Cearns and Brown, wholesale grocers moved to Whitehouse in Runcorn; a site adjoining the M56.

(28) The origins of companies have been analysied for this study. Previously the corporation had no organised record of the origins of companies.

(27) RDC Industrial Records.

(29) Information from Warrington and Milton Keynes Development Corporations.

(30) Information from JETRO (Japanese Trade Centre).

(32) Information from the principal Estates officer in Runcorn dealing with new industry.

(31) Information from Mr. John Davies, chairman C.C. Spice and RDC board member.

(33) Survey and analysis of industries' duration of stay in Runcorn prepared by writer from RDC records.

(34) From estates, architectural and planning records of the RDC

(35) Skelmersdale Dev. Corp. Annual Report 1977.

(36) Information from RDC estates officers.

(37) RDC Annual Abstract. 1981.

RUNCORN.

Organisation and administration of the new town.

The responsibilities of the new town development corporation in respect of development work has been briefly noted above and it is now appropriate to consider these in terms of the administration and management of the town once areas of development had been completed.

The adjustment made to urban district council of Runcorn's boundaries to coincide with those of the new town, and in compliance with Lewis Silkin's original intentions, did not last for long. In 1966 a royal commission was established to examine the structure of local government in England. It took three years to compile its report and in 1969 presented its recommendations. (1). The ancient shire of Chester, like Caesar's Gaul, was to be divided into three parts. One part would be in a new Merseyside metropolitan area, another part in the South East Lancashire and North East Cheshire metropolitan area and the third part in Stoke and North Staffordshire. Cheshire would cease to exist as a unit of local government. The principal thesis of the report was that the large conurbations and their hinterlands would be administered as single units. The report, made to a Labour government, was not accepted by an incoming Conservative government who devised their own reorganisation. The urbanised parts of Cheshire on the edges of Liverpool and Manchester were lost to new metropolitan counties, but, apparently as 'compensation', the south Lancashire towns of Widnes and Warrington were added on to Cheshire. The forecast made by the mayor of Widnes when the Runcorn/Widnes bridge was opened became a reality. Runcorn and Widnes, together with a small amount of peripheral rural land, were to form the new Cheshire district of Halton. In 1974 the change was implemented and the centre of influence in the local government of Runcorn moved across the river to Widnes. The new authority maintained offices on both sides of the river, used the council chamber in Runcorn, but had a majority of Widnes councillors. The population of Runcorn old and new town together in 1974 totalled 45,000, only around two-thirds of the population of Widnes. Furthermore the majority of the problems facing the new district council were in Widnes rather than Runcorn. There were three times as many unfit dwellings in Widnes than in old Runcorn, there was a deficiency in open space provision north of the river, derelict land and tipping sites were nearly all in Widnes and industrial sources of atmospheric pollution were more numerous in Widnes than Runcorn. (2). The effect of this on the development of the new town was that certain provisions that should have been made in the social infrastructure by the district council were not made. The responsibility for the provision of community centres and playing fields for the new town population rested, in

theory, with the local district council and not with the development corporation. The only local authority funded community centre and playing fields in Runcorn new town were constructed before the reorganisation of local government when the boundaries of both the new town and district council were coterminous. After 1974 the new council concentrated their limited capital resources on the older disadvantaged communities within the district rather than the new town. The powers of the development corporation to make up this deficiency were limited by a 'per capita' ceiling imposed by the Ministry on funding of amenity projects. Most of the resources that were permitted to the corporation in this respect were spent in partnership with the district and county councils in the provision of major recreational facilities at the new town's two comprehensive schools. This joint use provision included swimming pools, sports halls and other indoor sporting activities. Under this partnership arrangement the facilities were made available to the public outside school hours. The deficiency in the provision of community centres was partly overcome by the construction of 'tenants centres' in each of the major new communities. These were either converted farmhouses, new houses temporarily adapted for communal use, or temporary buildings moved around the town as more permanent structures became available. Playing fields were provided by simple levelling and grassing. Generally changing room provision and land drainage was not possible within the financial constraints imposed. The problems of Halton District council in funding capital projects were exacerbated throughout the rapid growth period of the new town by an increasingly strict imposition of spending limits on local authorities by central government. The considerable success of the council in tackling some of the conditions of dereliction that existed in 1974 had itself brought problems. Between 1974 and 1978 the council increased the amount of open space in the borough managed by its own amenities committee by 60%. During the same period the staff available to maintain open spaces rose by only 15% and standards of care and maintenance declined. (3). All these circumstances combined to create a situation whereby the area of the new town and the older towns of Runcorn and Widnes developed separate identities rather than being welded into one borough. In addition to the development corporation carrying out capital works in place of the district council, some of the local authority's management obligations stayed with the development corporation. From the outset the local authority rate had been collected from their tenants by the corporation on behalf of the district council so giving the new town corporation an appearance of being a local authority body. Furthermore the

adoption of roads, drains, street lights and footpaths by the council took far longer than it should so that continuing maintenance became the responsibility of the corporation. Much of this prolonged involvement in such matters was carried out by the corporation with the understanding that the resources of the council were put under severe strain by the rapid expansion of its urban fabric but without a commensurate increase in available resources. The increasing rate return to the council created by the growth of the new town was not adequate to allow the local authority to make the capital contribution it theoretically should. (4). A similar situation prevailed with the county council who were the recipients of the bulk of the rate income collected by the corporation and transferred to the county via the agency of the district council. Throughout the new town programme the county council kept to its obligation to provide schooling for the new population but in other areas their provision declined. The first two primary schools were both built by the county council so that they would open on the day the first homes were occupied and children required schooling. Both of these schools opened with very few pupils and this drew a great deal of adverse comment from both the local and national press. As a consequence the Ministry refused to sanction expenditure on later schools until a 'proven demand' had been demonstrated. This meant that the first children in some new communities were 'bussed across the town to schools as the new school was not ready or were housed in temporary mobile classrooms. Notwithstanding these problems of coordination of programmes liaison with both county and district councils and the development corporation was very close and managed by regular monthly meetings at a senior level between officers of the three organisations. These were chaired alternately by the general manager of the corporation and the chief executive of the district council and were used both to iron out the minor problems that inevitably arose in such a large and rapid building programme and also introduce and discuss major new projects. Continual liaison on day-to-day matters took place at professional staff level and major 'set-piece' meetings were held annually to coordinate financial submissions to Whitehall.

The effect of increasing problems of funding by the two local authorities in the provision of the social infrastructure of the new town can be best illustrated by comparison with the first and last major communities to be built in the new town. Both Castlefields and Murdishaw housed around 6,000 people but Castlefields was completed in 1971 and Murdishaw in 1981.

In Castlefields the district council built a spacious community centre and laid out a large area of playing fields, complete with pavilion, adjoining the new community. The county council together with the church authorities built the primary schools, a youth centre, an elderly persons' home, a childrens' home, a youth training centre and an adult training centre. These latter two facilities served a wider area than Castlefields but were not intended to be town wide facilities and became very much part of the social fabric of the surrounding community. The corporation, in addition to the housing, built shops and, with the two councils, contributed towards the cost of the joint use recreation facility at the adjacent comprehensive school. Whilst the permanent community facilities were under construction a temporary tenants' meeting hall was provided in two houses, 'knocked into one', but virtually all of the social buildings were built contemporaneously or very shortly after the 2,200 houses at Castlefields. In addition three public houses were privately funded on sites prepared by the corporation and a Roman Catholic church and manse and a Church of England vicar's house were built very early in the life of the community. The Church of England was built some years later. The area health authority built a health centre that was integrated into the fabric of the local shopping centre together with the community centre and opened contemporaneously with them.

In contrast the only local authority provision at Murdishaw were the primary schools and another joint use project at the comprehensive school. Shopping and a temporary tenants' centre were built by the corporation and a temporary building provided for community use. A permanent health centre was built at Murdishaw local centre but not until the community was substantially completed. The corporation subsequently built a permanent play building and laid out playing pitches on nearby open areas. The Aston chapel, built as an 'equivalent' reinstatement project was built in the local centre some years after the first phase of the development was completed as was a single public house. Sites were reserved for county old persons' and youth projects but with very little prospect of early occupation. The decade from 1970 to 1980 was therefore a period in which the provision of the essential social buildings in the new town declined severely and the contribution made by the local authorities to the management and organisation of the new town was reduced accordingly.

As a consequence of the greater involvement of the corporation in capital

projects their continuing involvement in the management and day-to-day administration of the town remained at a very much higher level than originally intended. Their responsibility for the maintenance of open space, parkland, roads, street lighting and sewerage were protracted. In addition to this attention to the physical fabric the social role of the corporation continued long after the settlement of people into new homes. The corporation's social workers provided a service that overlapped with the county council social services responsibilities. Provisions for young people and sport were organised and supervised by the new town corporation to a far greater degree than would have been anticipated at the time of conception of the new town.

This enhanced role of the development corporation in the settled town's administration diminished the apparent importance of the local elected council. The image of the corporation as a non-representative, non-elected 'big brother' organisation was enlarged by the relative non-involvement of the elected councils in the new town communities and, possibly as partial consequence of this, the non-involvement of 'new-towners' in the affairs of the local council.

When people move to any new address there is inevitably a period during which they effectively become disenfranchised unless they take particular care to ensure that they are enroled immediately on their new electoral register and removed from that of their previous area of residence. Unless they personally take action to ensure continuous enfranchisement their name will not appear on the new register until after the processing of the annual return required by the district council from each householder. When a community consists entirely of immigrants there is clearly a possibility of under-representation in local affairs. As time passes and ward boundaries are adjusted to take in new communities and new households become registered then the situation reverts to normality. However even at the end of Runcorn's fifteen year planned immigration period the new town settlers had involved themselves very little in local affairs. In 1981 approximately one third of the electors of Halton were housed in the communities of the new town. The Halton Borough Council was comprised of forty seven councillors but only four of these were from the new town communities. (5). Three were from rented houses built by the corporation and one from private housing built on new town land. Only one of these, Councillor Arthur Cole, was chairman of a committee and there were no vice-chairmen amongst them. (6). Councillor Cole had been an early settler in the new town, moving from Liverpool in 1968 to the Brow, the second of the

corporation housing estates to be built. A similar situation of under representation existed on Cheshire county council. Only one of the seventy-one councillors was from Runcorn new town which, in 1981, constituted between four and five per cent of the county electorate. The reasons for this low level of involvement in local politics clearly did not arise solely due to the corporation's dominance and the relative low profile of the district council within the new town areas. Any new community takes time to settle and the newcomers first preoccupations are inevitably concerned with home, work and family and the luxury of time to be involved in community affairs is not available to many. (7). Even before local government re-organisation in 1974 when the new town and district council boundaries were coincident a survey showed that about half of the people in the new town communities thought that there was some truth in the statement that the Urban District Council had very little say about what went on in Runcorn. (8). The removal of the district council to Widnes and the enforced protracted role of the corporation in the administration of the town must have reinforced this view.

If the role of new-towners in the local council affairs were minimal then they were non-existent in the development corporation. For most of the period from 1964 to 1981, when the corporation ceased to be an independent body, there was only one local district councillor on the corporation board. At one period there had been two but one had lost his local seat as a result of a virulent anti-new town election campaign in a ward of Runcorn old town. (9). Thereafter he sat on the corporation board in his own right rather than as a representative of the district council. Both of these councillors were locally born and represented old town wards and, although both very much involved in new town activities and trustees of new town social organisations, they were neither regarded by the community as representatives of the new town. New town interests were represented on the corporation board by two successive managing directors of new town industrial concerns but neither was resident within the town.

The administration of justice within the new town was centred on new crown and magistrates courts situated in the new town centre. A total of eighty-eight justices sat on the Halton bench which held courts in both Widnes and Runcorn. Only four of the justices were from the new town community in 1981 when it constituted a third of the population of the borough of Halton. Two of these were from new town rented housing and two from private housing estates built

within the new town. (10). The two Runcorn resident new town corporation board members, Mr. F. Sherliker and Mr. C. Helsby were also magistrates sitting on the Halton bench.

The lack of involvement of the tenants of new town rented accommodation in the affairs of their local authority may have been related to the social class structure of the new town residents. The survey of the first 500 families to move into the town commented "... at this stage of the new town's development a low proportion of professional, administrative and other "white collar" workers can be expected. Service employment will follow general industrial growth. This is reflected in Skelmersdale's higher white collar employment figure." (11). The survey then tabulated the breakdown of social class grouping and drew comparison with Liverpool.

SOCIAL CLASS GROUPINGS AS %'s BASED ON HEAD OF HOUSEHOLDS OCCUPATION
(ALL WORKING HEADS ONLY)

	Professional	Intermediate	Manual			Total
			Skilled	Semi-skilled	Unskilled	
Runcorn 1969	3.5	4.5	54.0	30.0	6	100
Runcorn 1966	3.7	11.4	50.5	24.4	10	100
Liverpool Survey Areas 1966	1.0	6.0	49.0	25.0	19	100
Liverpool C.B.	3.0	10.0	48.0	23.0	16	100

All of the respondents to the 1969 survey were tenants of corporation houses and virtually all of them had migrated to the new town once they had obtained employment there. By 1981 over ten thousand corporation dwellings for renting had been built together with more than two thousand houses for sale. Industry had developed and a large service employment area had been created in the new town centre. The social class structure of the population within the

new town area had altered considerably but still showed a substantial deficit of Social classes I and II within the new town by comparison with Cheshire as a whole. (12).

1981 HOUSEHOLD SOCIAL CLASS*

Social Class	Runcorn New Town Rented %	Private %	Total %	Rest of D.A. %	Cheshire %	
I	1	10	3	3	5	Professional
II	9	22	11	10	18	Employers & Managers
III NM	6	12	7	6	8	Intermediate & Junior Non-Man.
III M	27	32	28	21	22	Skilled Manual
IV	22	17	21	16	12	Semi-skilled
V	6	1	5	4	4	Unskilled
Inad. Desc.	3	1	2	1	1	-
Retired	26	5	23	39	30	-
	100	100	100	100	100	-

* Social class of Head of Household.

Despite the concentration of the professional and managerial groups in the private housing in the new town the overall percentage was, at 14%, very much lower than for Cheshire (23%), although marginally higher than in old Runcorn (13%). Both private and rented new town housing accommodated a higher percentage of skilled manual workers than either Cheshire or the old town and reflected the nature of light engineering industry in the new town. A considerably higher proportion of heads of households in both private and rented new town housing were classified as semi or unskilled by comparison with Cheshire as a whole.

Lord Lishowel, in introducing the second reading of the new towns bill to the House of Lords in 1946, expressed the hope that "new towns.....will be planned as a cross section of every occupational and income group in the population...". (13). This statement was made at a time when new towns were seen as isolated settlements within a greenbelt rather than, as Runcorn and Skelmersdale were, peripheral developments to the urban mass of Merseyside. Also, in 1946, the pattern of commuting permitted by the escalating level of

car ownership had not been anticipated. The number of vehicles on the roads of Britain had increased from 2.6 million at the end of the second world war to 12.3 million in 1964 when Runcorn was designated as a new town. (14). The car ownership amongst the first 500 families in Runcorn new town was at a level of 43.5% but this had risen to 58% in 1981 for the households in corporation rented housing and 113% for the owner occupied new town private housing. (15). With such levels of car ownership commuting to work both to and from the new town was an option open to many. A high proportion of the professional and managerial classes working in Runcorn chose this option and looked for houses in the "commuter villages" of North Cheshire. In 1981 a majority of those in professional and managerial occupations employed in Runcorn travelled to the new town to work. (16). The membership of the Halton Chamber of Commerce in 1984 all lived outside Runcorn irrespective of whether they represented industries from the old or the new town. (17). Such a situation was not unique to Runcorn new town. The attractive north Cheshire countryside bordering the highly industrialised Mersey valley and within easy commuting range was a very attractive magnet for those seeking private housing in the more expensive price range. Even in 1946 the problem was recognised with reference in the 'Plan for Cheshire" to ".....dormitory towns and villages of which the county has more than is really desirable, but which testify to its attractiveness for residential purposes." (18). The next three decades and the growth of car ownership increased this trend greatly and the county planners felt obliged to try and limit rural housing development to 'local needs' except in certain controlled areas. (19). That the new town was not an isolated self-contained unit but subject to the pressures of the region was recognised by the corporation and their own commercial promotion literature refers to "housing developments of particular quality and character at Delamere Forest and near Chester." (20). Not typical of such new town commuters but illustrative was the chairman and managing director of one of the new town's industries. Mr. John Davies of C. C. Spice Ltd., moved his company from the congestion of east London to Runcorn in 1969. After living in rented accommodation within the new town whilst the plant was being built he moved to a modernised farm house in the Clwyd hills in Wales. His journey to work took only 35 minutes which, after experience of London commuting, he considered to be of no consequence. Thus the excellent communications that gave Runcorn advantages in the attraction of industry also broadened the scope of new settlers who wanted, and could get, the best of both worlds; a good industrial location and pleasant working surroundings together with a home in the country. However not all

commuting took place into the new town to work. In 1981 the number of people travelling from outside the new town into work each day was 9,360, or 42% of the total workforce. (21). This figure was very nearly balanced by the 8,700 commuting out each day and, was in principle, in accordance with the forecasts of the original Runcorn Master Plan. (22). The plan had forecast a balanced commuting flow of 30% of the workforce and in doing so had recognised that Runcorn was part of an urbanised area reaching from Liverpool to Manchester and could not be planned as a totally independent town.

As a small part of this conurbation Runcorn new town was dependent on decisions taken away from the town for many of its activities and much of its administration. Primarily it looked to London for decisions on planning and finance. For local matters the district council of Halton and the county council at Chester became involved. Regional offices of government dealing with industrial development and roads were in Manchester and regional authorities controlling health and transport were located in Liverpool. The local churches responded to an Anglican bishop in Chester and a Roman Catholic bishop in Shrewsbury. The regional headquarters of the public utilities serving the town were in Chester, (Electricity), Liverpool (Gas), Warrington (Water), and Manchester (GPO). The priorities recognised by all these bodies when making decisions or considering allocation of funding were dictated by national or regional influences and matters seen as needing urgent attention in the new town were not necessarily seen as having priority in wider contexts.

The estrangement of decision making on certain matters from the new town reduced the effectiveness of the corporation and its master plan in some respects. An example of this was the building and operation of the busway. The busway was planned as a segregated route forming a transport system fully integrated into the structure of the town in such a way that it was intended to provide a level of service competitive with the private car. (23). The plan was conceived by Professor Ling and implemented as part of the town's infrastructure as development proceeded. The cost of construction was borne by the development corporation and justified by a saving greater than the cost of the busway by reduction in the scale of secondary road provision within the residential areas of the town due to the lack of need to cater for buses on all-purpose roads. Although the corporation could have asked for the consent of the Minister to operate buses themselves it was considered essential to harness the experience of a major bus operator and Crosville motor services, a subsidiary of

the National Bus Company, were involved in the detail design and then the operation. (24). Crosville operated the local bus services before the advent of the new town together with services covering the remainder of north-west England and North Wales. Undoubtedly the experience of Crosville was of great value in detail design of the busway but their management of its operation was constrained by working in a regional context. Fare structures were broadly based on those on their other urban routes despite the possibility of operating the busway at twice the speed of normal urban bus transport. Although a distinctive livery was adopted for some busway vehicles and publicity material the concept of a Runcorn Busway as an identifiable individual operation never fully materialised. The ideas of the corporation's engineer with regard to experimental fare structures could not be implemented without the active participation of Crosville and,from 1975, the County Council which then became responsible for subsidising deficits on some public transport operations. (25). The busway, as an experiment in urban transport, achieved considerable success and became an essential component of the developing town but the original concept must have been diluted by the remoteness of its operational paymasters in Chester and Liverpool.

In other areas of the new town's life such remoteness of decision making and response to differing regional priorities gave rise to delays in the provision of essential components of the town. The Master Planners, after consultation with the Ministry of Health, included in their plan a forty acre site to accommodate a new district hospital. (26). The first phase was not opened until September 1976 and contained little more than a permanent health centre to serve the communities adjacent to its town centre site and a geriatric day care centre. The permanent health centre replaced a temporary building that had been erected at nearby Palace Fields to provide a general practitioner service until such time as the delayed hospital was completed. The first phase thus added little that was new to the health care facilities that then existed in the town. The second phase of the hospital comprising 700 beds together with operating and specialist services was not completed until 1984 and was not due to open for patients until 1985, twenty-one years after the designation of the new town. The third phase comprising nurses' homes and psychiatric provision was, at the time of completion of the second stage, not programmed for any definite starting date. Such delays were beyond the control of the corporation but at the Public Enquiry into the compulsory purchase of the land required for the final section of the new town expressway corporation witnesses were asked why, if money was available, it was not spent on providing the new

hospital which was needed more urgently rather than the road. (27). The 'man in the street' found great difficulty in understanding the allocation of national resources to construction work in the new town from different ministerial budgets and in this respect the new town was similar to any other town. Despite the delays in the provision of the hospital it was eventually built as part of the new town centre and, in this respect, Runcorn fared better than its contemporary new town in the north-east of England. In 1983 the new town at Washington was still without any hospital facilities on the 40 acre site reserved for the purpose in the north of the town since 1964. (28).

Other elements that were originally planned to form part of the new town centre were deleted or delayed by decisions taken outside the town. The Runcorn Master Plan located a proposed College of Further Education in the town centre but, consequent upon the 1974 reorganisation of local government, and the incorporation of Widnes into Cheshire, a decision was taken to develop the Widnes college and abandon the Runcorn site. The college, together with the hospital, were seen by the corporation as elements likely to generate a demand for small dwellings built at a high density compatible with their town centre location. The development corporation constructed the dwellings but the delay of the hospital and the abandonment of the college reduced demand for this type of accommodation and the housing scheme became a major letting problem for the corporation.

In summation it can be seen that, although the development corporation were regarded by many as the ultimate authority on all matters within the new town, many important decisions concerning the development and administration of the town were made elsewhere. At best the corporation could use its influence and powers of co-ordination to ensure that work on the town advanced uniformly in all areas. How the development corporation attempted to achieve this will be described in a later section.

Just as the civil administration of the new town was largely influenced by decisions made remote from the town so the religious organisation of the town followed a similar pattern. When the development corporation was preparing its master plan, discussions took place with a body known as the Cheshire Churches Planning Committee which, at that time, represented the Roman Catholics, the Church of England, Methodists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists and the Salvation Army. The committee met in Chester and the purpose of their

discussions was to try to avoid competition for church sites and an over-provision of church buildings with a consequent waste of resources. In other areas of rapid urben development experience had shown that unplanned church development could give rise to the allocation of sites, often in prime areas, for the erection of expensive church buildings which were subsequently under-used. Alternatively sites in key areas remained underdeveloped for many years and were sometimes abandoned. The committee considered that the church had an important role to play in the life of the new town and that it was essential that the provision of buildings should be properly planned in order that church work both in the religious and social sense could be carried out effectively without causing an unnecessary financial burden upon the denominations concerned. (29). The Churches Planning Committee, which included only one member representing the Runcorn Council of Churches, did not prove to be an effective body for planning the provision of churches within the new town. In addition to the 21 churches already existing within the designated area, of which twelve were in the old town centre, the planning committee decided that thirteen further churches would be required. (30). This requirement was then reduced to twelve; one Church of England, three Anglican/Methodist churches, five Roman Catholic churches and one each for the Baptists and the Salvation Army.

The unrealistic level of site requirements by the committee led to the substitution of a more informal planning group on which the appropriate churches were represented at a high level. This group, comprising the Auxiliary Bishop of Shrewsbury (R.C.), the Archdeacon of Chester, (C. of E.), the District Chairman of the Methodists, the General Superintendant of the Baptists and the Provincial Moderator of the United Reformed Church, met regularly at the offices of the development corporation under the chairmanship of Mr. Vere Arnold. A policy was then formulated which both rationalised and considerably reduced the provision of buildings to little more than half of those originally required by the planning committee. Their policy was to reserve sites for churches only in the middle of estates although not all estates would be provided with a church due to their varying sizes. The sites would be divided roughly equally between the Catholics and non-Catholic denominations. Other sects, not represented on the planning group, would not be offered sites in local centres but peripheral to the estates. This latter policy caused considerable subsequent problems for the corporation when an evangelical church, the Brook Chapel, asked to acquire a vacant site in a local centre. After much consultation with the 'established' churches a site was eventually agreed and a

chapel built by the voluntary labour of the Brook Chapel congregation midway between and accessible from two of the new communities. (31). In disposing of sites to the churches the corporation were empowered to sell the freehold at a value not exceeding one quarter of the housing value of the land. (32). Some churches, however, did not qualify for such consideration. In a direction the minister stated that he did not consider the Jehovah's Witnesses to be a religious body and that sites should only be made available to them on a leasehold basis on commercial terms. (33). This directive also applied to the Church of Latter Day Saints (Mormons) who, when they obtained a site in Runcorn, paid full market value for the land.

The development of the town and the construction of new churches necessitated a reorganisation of the parish boundaries within the area designated for the new town. In 1972 an order was made establishing a 'team ministry' and a 'super parish' in place of the four existing parishes that had covered the developed part of the new town. (34). One of the clergy who had been working as a member of an informal team ministry became rector of the new large parish and the three other members of the team retained their status as vicars. As part of a team ministry the vicars lost the 'freehold' of their churches but were given security of tenure in their new posts for a period of ten years. A further reorganisation became necessary in 1980 to cover the formerly rural areas of the town that were then being developed. "The Queen's most excellent majesty in Council at the Court at Buckingham Palace" confirmed a new scheme which dissolved the team ministry created in 1972 and replaced it with five new beneficies and parishes. (35). The new parishes covered the whole area to be ultimately developed for the new town and marginally modified the boundary of the established parishes in the old town. All of the new benefices were vested in the Bishop of Chester and were to belong to the rural deanery of Frodsham.

The role of the church within the new town was greater than a religious function and was a major element in its social life. The Roman Catholics built a hall adjacent to their church at Castlefields and established a licensed social club within it. Subsequently they built two 'worship centres' integrated into Catholic primary schools so that the assembly facilities of the school could be used for social purposes. The Church of England were able to provide a high quality church hall by converting and adding to a 'listed' building which was within their ownership but in a considerable state of disrepair. The parish library, or Chesshyre Library, was built in 1730 in Halton Village which by 1965,

had become the geographical centre of the new town. It was a single storey sandstone building with classical detailing and lined with fine oak panelling. (36). It had been endowed by John Cheshyre as one of the earliest public libraries and, until its restoration, contained many of the orginal eighteenth century books, also in a poor state. The cost of repair was beyond the parish until the regional water board decided that to serve the new town with water at an adequate pressure it was necessary to construct a header reservoir on the top of Halton Hill adjacent to the ruins of Halton Castle. The only site available for the underground reservoir was occupied by the nineteenth century parish hall. This was also in a poor state the church agreed to transfer the site to the water board on the basis of 'equivalent reinstatement'. This opportunity was taken to carefully refurbish Chesshyre's Library and build a new parish hall adjoining at the expense of the water board. The books were removed for restoration and the library became a very valuable meeting room for social groups. The reservoir project was subsequently abandoned after the old hall had been demolished and the new building completed.

Another building previously associated with John Chesshyre also became an important element in the social structure of the town. A agricultural land was built over farm buildings became redundant and John Chesshyre's farm at Hallwood was amongst these. The farmhouse was an eighteenth century brick Georgian house with an adjoining barn faced on the frontage towards the house with stone mouldings and classical pilasters. (37). The buildings were converted into a public house, restaurant and 'disco' with virtually no alteration to the external appearance and the 'Tricorn' became an important social and visual element of the local centre at Palace Fields. Another former farm building at Castlefields was also converted into a public house. This was also an eighteenth century building although much less pretentious than Hallwood and considerably altered from its original form. It had been built alongside the Runcorn to Warrington road but, when the Bridgewater canal was built in 1776, the road was diverted and the canal constructed close to the house. The waterside situation was ideal for convertion of the farm house to a public house, appropriately named 'The Barge".

Convertions of farm buildings were carried out not only for public houses but other social buildings. Woodside farm was converted into a youth centre by a voluntary organisation and Greenhouse farm into a squash club. This was a privately funded venture comprising squash courts, bar, swimming pool and sauna.

Brookhouse farmhouse was also converted for social uses but under the aegis of a charitable trust. When the Master Plan for Runcorn was being prepared it became apparent that flat land suitable for industry would be very restricted and, for this reason, the corporation decided not to make land available to industrialists for use as company playing fields. Industrialists would instead be asked to contribute to a charitable trust set up to construct and operate a private sports club open to all residents of the town. The intention was to ensure a greater use of playing field facilities and thereby increase land available for industry. (38). This sporting and social club was to be centred on Brookvale farmhouse and would be complementary to the public playing fields laid out by the former Runcorn Urban District Council. Bass, Guiness, Cearns and Brown, Y.K.K., American Can and the development corporation all put money into the fund and mostly nominated trustees to act as the controlling committee. Interest-free loans were obtained from the District Council and grant aid from the Sports Council. The club developed rapidly and an additional bar and changing rooms were built on to the old farmhouse. Football, rugby and cricket grass pitches were laid together with a floodlighted all-weather pitch, tennis courts and bowling green. However the operation of the social side of the club did not match that of the sporting activities and anticipated bar profits did not materialise. In 1984 the Trustees decided to sell-off the licensed areas to a brewer to convert into a public house and concentrate on the development of the sporting facilities.

Contributions to other elements of the social fabric of the new town were also made by industrialists. The museum at Norton Priory was built as a result of a public appeal for £250,000. The development corporation, the county and district councils, new town industrialists and individuals within the town were all contributors to the successful fund raising effort. A director of Cearns and Brown was chairman of an appeal under the name of the Lord's Taverners for funds for a new boys' club and was himself actively involved in its promotion. The Japanese zip fastener manufacturers;Y.K.K, gave £40,000 towards the provision of a community centre in the old town of Runcorn. Considerable support, in the form of small subsidies, or prizes for competitions, was also given by industrialists to the many "unofficial" social organisations that rapidly grew up within the town.

Hitherto the role of the corporation, councils, other public bodies and commercial organisations have been considered in respect of their role in the

administration and organisation of the new town but, in social terms, these official bodies were greatly outnumbered by the organisations et up and administered by the new town settlers themselves. Many of these organisations were fostered by the corporation and provided with very small cash grants to enable them to get started. Such diverse organisations at the Something Else Poetry and Writers Group, the Palace Fields Sequence Dance Club, Canal Boat Adventure Project, Camp Project Wales, Samaritans, Chemical Industry Museum, Southgate Self-Help scheme, Visual Arts Association and several playgroups were all organised and administered by the new town residents themselves. (39). Their grant aid was generally not in excess of £100 and was intended to enable them to purchase basic equipment and stationery sufficient to help them get started. Additionally more formal voluntary groups such as the Red Cross, the Scouts, the W.R.V.S., M.E.N.C.A.P., and Sea-Cadets were helped to get started and provide an essential element of the social administration of the town.

RUNCORN. Organisation and administration of the New Town. References.

(1) Royal Commission on Local Government in England 1966-69 Chairman - The Rt. Hon. Lord Redcliffe-Maud. HMSO 1969.

(2) The Face of Halton. publ. Halton District Council. 1974.

(3) TURTON R. Chief Executive Halton Borough Council. Annual Report. 1978.

(4) This was not a problem unique to Runcorn. See ROCHE F. L. 'Building a New Town'. International New Towns' Association. Tehran Conference. (December 1977).

(5) Halton Year Book 1981-2. publ. Halton Borough Council.

(6) Councillor Cole, Chairman Technical Services Committee, Halton Borough Council.

(7) TRUETT J. Paper to Bologna International New Town Conference, 1980.

(8) BERTHOUD R. & JOWELL R. "Creating a Community". 1973.

(9) Interview with Mr. Sherliker. Oct. 84.

(10) Halton Year Book 1981-2 op.cit.

(11) Social Survey 1969. The first 500 Families. R.D.C.
The reference to Skelmersdale relates to the designation of Skelmersdale as a new town 3 years earlier (1961) than Runcorn (1964).

(12) Socio-economic profile of Runcorn from the 1981 Census - R.D.C.
The table is not strictly comparable with the table for 1969, although broad comparisons are possible, due to changes in the methods of classification over the period.

(13) HANSARD. House of Lords Vol. 6. Session 1945-6. 11 July 1946.

(14) The National Plan. HMSO 1965. p. 130.

(15) Socio-Economic profile of Runcorn from the 1981 Census. R.D.C.

(16) " " " (Supplement. Place of Work).

(17) Information from Mr. Carson. Secretary Halton Chamber of Commerce.

(18) A Plan for Cheshire. 1946. op.cit.

(19) Cheshire County Structure Plan - Population and Housing policies and forecasts prepared for Structure Plan examination in public. Oct. 1977.

(20) Commercial Development in Runcorn. R.D.C.

(21) Socio-economic profile of Runcorn from the 1981 Census. R.D.C.

(22) Runcorn New Town. (Master Plan) Appendix E. p. 127.

(23) For more detail of its operation see the "Runcorn Busway Study" published by the Transport and Road Research Laboratory. 1976.

(24) New Towns Act 1946. General Memorandum 21.

(25) Runcorn Dev. Cor. Report of Working Party comprising R.D.C., Ches.C.C. Crosville, D. of E. regional office (Manchester) and Halton D.C. 11/11/76.

(26) Runcorn Master Plan. p. 41.

(27) G.P.O. Order No 1. Runcorn Eastern Expressway. July 1980.

(28) HOLLEY S. Washington: Quicker by Quango. A History of Washington New Town 1964-1983.

(29) R.D.C. Board Paper Nov. 1977.

(30) Runcorn Master Plan p. 43. Minutes of Churches Planning Committee held at Chester. March 3rd 1967.

(31) R.D.C. Board Paper Nov. 1977.

(32) MHLG Circular letter (M46) to New Towns. 18th May 1951.

(33) MHLG Circular letter (M164) to New Towns. 13th May 1960.

(34) Runcorn Weekly News. 7th December 1972.

(35) London Gazette 19 Feb 1980.

(36) Cheshire County Council. Conservation Area 19. Report 1967.

(37) Runcorn Master Plan p. 34.

(38) Runcorn Master Plan p. 99.

(39) These are only illustrative of the many such groups that became established in the new town.

RUNCORN.

The economy of the new town. i) Employment.

At the date of its designation as a new town Runcorn's industrial structure was dominated by I.C.I.. Two thirds of all the employees in manufacturing industries within the Runcorn Employment Exchange area were accounted for by the chemical industry and virtually all of these worked for I.C.I.. (1). Compared with the national average there was a deficiency in the establishment of other manufacturing industries and service industry accounted for only 32% of total employment compared with 46% nationally. Office provision within the exchange area was lower than the regional average and employed a higher proportion of males at 70% in comparison with 62.5% and 63% for the north-west and Great Britain as a whole. The development corporation recognised the need to produce a greater diversification of industry within the town "to ensure that the level of employment will not be determined solely by the state of the world market for chemicals." (2). At the same time the corporation acknowledged the importance of I.C.I. to the economy of the town and that their expansion plans would be of "considerable assistance in giving a good start to the industrial development in the new town."

The Master Plan postulated that Runcorn would require 31,000 additional jobs to satisfy the need for employment of the planned 70,000 population increase. Having regard to the proportion of the working population in the region employed in manufacturing industry (46%) and that a significant part of new service industry would be located on industrial sites the master plan proposed that new industrial sites should accommodate 19,000 workers. Five thousand of these would be employed on I.C.I.'s expansion land and the remainder on sites developed by the corporation. At an anticipated employment density of 35 workers per acre it was calculated that 400 acres of new industrial land would be required. Two major new industrial sites were proposed at Astmoor and Whitehouse totalling 359 acres and employing 11,565 people. In addition 124 acres of unused land within the existing industrial areas of the town would be developed and fifteen acres of land within or adjoining new residential areas would be developed for light or service industry.(3).

Although the proposals contained in the Runcorn Master Plan were not formally endorsed by the minister until August 1968 work started on plans for the corporation's first industrial estate at Astmoor as soon as technical staff were in post in the summer of 1965. Even earlier than this the corporation were able to report on un-solicited interest being expressed by industrialists about developing factories within the new town. (4). The scope of the first

development was limited by the lengthy procedures required to re-route the main Runcorn to Warrington Road which diagonally transversed the site and its start was delayed by the public enquiry into the compulsory purchase of the land owned by Astmoor Holdings. A physical start on site was made in April 1966 and the first factory was opened in January 1967. This was in the first phase of development which consisted of twelve small units each of 3,500 sq. ft. and two larger units of 12,500 square feet. (5). The first occupiers of a new town factory were Irving Air Chute of Great Britain Ltd. who took one of the larger units for the manufacture of car seat belts. The other large unit was occupied by a light engineering company. Sloan Engineering (automatic vending machines) and the first occupants of small units were Mercia Weavers (carpet manufacturers), and two companies working in aluminium; Aluminium Tool and Die Ltd. and Mackamax Aluminium Ltd. The latter company was the British subsidiary of the American Amax Corporation and extruded aluminium for the manufacture, both by themselves and others, of doors and windows. Their occupation of an advanced factory was a temporary measure to establish their presence and recruit a workforce whilst a purpose built factory of 107,000 sq. ft. was constructed for them. (6). This was completed in 1968 and subsequently expanded to accommodate a greater production capacity. During 1968 two of the original accupants at Astmoor, Irving Air Chute and Sloan Engineering extended their factories by 100% by taking up development on the 'option sites' reserved for this purpose. By this date the second phase of advanced industrial units on Astmoor had been completed and the total area of rented advanced factory space had risen to 262,400 sq. ft. Six companies had reserved sites for purpose-designed factories on ground-lease land and the total employment on Astmoor had risen to 490. The smaller factories were occupied by a variety of light-engineering firms, the most notable of which was a subsidiary of the ill-fated Herbert Group, the Churchill Machine Tool Company.

By the end of the next financial year in April 1969 employment on Astmoor had risen to just under 1,000 in twenty two companies, and a further 200,000 sq. ft. of advanced and leasehold factories were under construction. New companies during that year differed greatly in their subsequent prosperity. E.H.E. Ltd., a subsidiary of Rolls Royce, took two small factories, expanded threefold during 1969, but subsequently withdrew from the new town when the parent company collapsed and was 'reconstructed'. Conversely Shandon Elliott Ltd. manufacturers of scientific and medical instruments, expanded from their original 25,000 sq. ft. during 1969, 1970 and again in 1982 to more than double their original floorspace.

Also by the spring of 1969 the layout of the corporation's second industrial estate at Whitehouse was finalised and site servicing works had commenced. The plan for this estate was to accommodate more lease-hold sites than Astmoor but experience at Astmoor had shown that an anticipated employment density of 35 workers per acre was too high in the light of the effects of automation of manufacturing processes. A target density of 30 workers per acre was therefore adopted in the Whitehouse plan but, as detail investigation had shown that more land could be developed than originally thought, the employment potential of the site increased by 28% over the Master Plan proposals.(7) Contemporaneously with the commencement of site works negotiations with two major companies for ground lease sites had been entered into.

Both of these companies were brewers, both had commissioned consultants to research the availability and suitability of sites for new plants, and both required absolute confidentiality from the corporation's negotiating team. At the negotiation stage the corporation did not know whether these two brewers would make compatible neighbours or whether one, or both, would withdraw if the nature of their potential neighbour was known. It was subsequently revealed that the two companies did not consider each other as rivals as their products were different specialities. Furthermore they had discussed the possibility of employing a single consultant to undertake their search for a site but had abandoned this idea as they thought their requirements were too varied. Bass and Guiness, despite employing different advisers, ended up occupying adjacent sites of 100 and 20 acres respectively for their Runcorn operation. (8). Guiness built a plant for conditioning and kegging stout brought into Runcorn by ship from their brewery in Dublin. The huge Bass plant concentrated on brewing and bottling lager produced on site but also took in Guiness for bottling under contract to their neighbours. A third leasehold site was developed at Whitehouse for Standardised Food Products Ltd. contemporaneously with the Guiness and Bass factories. This was a much smaller operation than the two brewers at 1.39 acres and produced food items for 'own label' retailers such as Marks and Spencer. The three leasehold sites between them anticipated employing a minimum of at least 3,000 people and possibly substantially more. (9).

The number of firms in production at Astmoor had increased to 35 by April 1970 and the level of new industrial employment had risen to 1,500. Although new companies were coming into the town, and amongst them several who were to expand at a later date, 'national economic pressures' and 'company reorganisations' were cited as the reasons for seven firms withdrawing from Astmoor. (10).

Despite the problems of the economic recession, which was to become a background to the new town's industrial growth throughout the 1970's, some companies prospered. Manufacturere of specialist products, particularly when backed with overseas capital, appear to have been better able to cope with recession than companies dependent on supplying components to larger organisations. In 1968 and 1969 respectively two American backed manufacturers of medical machinery were established on Astmoor and grew steadily throughout the 1970's. The Dylade Co. assembled artificial kidney machines and, with the growing use of dialysis by the medical profession, increased their original 3,200 sq. ft. factory by 6,400 sq. ft. in 1972 and a further 12,800 sq. ft. in 1978. Beeton Dickinson, manufacturers of medical and surgical equipment, started in an advanced factory of 12,800 sq. ft. and added two units of similar size in 1978 and 1982. Another successful company from this period of the town's development was Fillite, manufacturers of specialist insulation materials, who expanded from their original nursery unit of 3,200 sq. ft. to their own purpose built plant on a 2.2 acre site in 1977.

The provision of advanced factories, built speculatively and available for short term rent, became an accepted way of inducing footloose and new industries to settle in development areas. New towns, local authorities and public and private corporations adopted the practice and, inevitably, were often criticized for the failure rate of companies renting these units. Industrial development is a dynamic process and both 'profits' and 'losses' were to be expected. Runcorn's experience was that those companies that failed were generally small and employed very few, whilst those that succeeded often developed out of advanced rented accommodation into purpose built property on their own site. The level of employment and, more particularly, the stability of a firm operating from its own premises, more than outweighed the loss of the small enterprises. In the financial year 1971-2 this process was demonstrated by the commissioning of purpose built factories by two occupants of Astmoor advanced units. Schreiber Wood Industries negotiated for a 24 acre site at Astmoor to build a factory of nearly half a million square feet for the production of kitchen cabinets and bedroom furniture. The site was large enough to allow expansion to double this size when business had expanded sufficiently to justify it. The factory, designed for Schreiber by the architects of the development corporation, was to be a showpiece of modern industrial design and, indeed, won an award for architectural design on its completion. (11) The factory was to house a complete production line with chipboard sheets entering the factory at

one end and packaged 'knocked-down' units being loaded for delivery direct to retailers at the other. The boiler plant was designed to burn the waste chippings from the machining processes involved in manufacturing the furniture.

Very much in contrast to the Schreiber factory the corporation architects were also commissioned to design a factory for another Astmoor tenant, Y.K.K. Ltd.. They had set up in a 3,200 sq. ft. nursery unit and then leased a site at Whitehouse with options on additional land. Their first unit at Whitehouse was a relatively modest factory but was followed by ten more phases in the following ten years. These were not conceived in production terms as an entity but as 'ad hoc' additions to their existing structures. Within ten years their steady growth had filled a site of 18 acres and all facets of production of zip fasteners were contained within their complex. Tapes were woven and dyed, teeth and closers moulded or cast, and assembled into a huge variety of colours and sizes of zip-fastener for domestic, commercial and industrial use. The work-force grew to exceed 400 and for their first few years in Runcorn they were not unionised at their own request. The very small team of five or six Japanese managers worked alongside their employees on the factory floor when the occasion demanded and enjoyed no separate status in the staff canteen. To celebrate the opening of their first factory at Whitehouse Y.K.K. hired the ballroom of Chester's most prestigious hotel, the Grosvenor. A luncheon was held for V.I.P. guests followed by an evening party for all of their employees. On their tenth anniversary in Runcorn a similar event was held but on a much larger scale in the Adelphi hotel in Liverpool. On this occasion the guests included the Japanese ambassador to Britain and his wife, civic officials, business customers and Y.K.K.'s management and wives. The only wife notably absent was Mrs. Fujisaki, wife of the managing director of the Runcorn plant; she was in the kitchen at the Adelphi personally cooking the luncheon of the most honoured guest, the ambassador, as required by Japanese custom. A further benefit available to employees was the opportunity each year for some of them to spend two weeks in Japan visiting Y.K.K.'s factories and tourist sights with commercial guests of the company. A 'jumbo-jet' was hired each year to take the party to Japan.

Y.K.K.'s inexorable expansion was not matched by Schreiber. Work commenced on their massive new factory in 1972 and employment was promised for over a 1,000 people. (12). However, during the construction of the factory, Schreiber ran into financial difficulties and announced their withdrawal from the project.

The building contractor, McAlpine, was owed a considerable amount of money by Schreiber and promptly stopped all work on site. The development corporation, aware of the bad publicity that litigation between Schreiber and McAlpine might bring and also concerned that a half finished factory would sterilise valuable industrial land for many years, managed to persuade McAlpine to complete the factory at their own expense. If a client had not been found by the time the building work was completed the corporation would buy the factory from McAlpine and add it to its stock of 'advanced' units. The shell of the building, shorn of Schreiber's specialist internal requirements, was duly completed and bought by the corporation. To find a client for such a large structure was not easy but eventually one was found who was willing to spend the millions necessary to bring it into production. The purchaser was the original client, Schreiber, who by that time had been reorganised as an element of Arnold Weinstock's General Electric Company and were able to gain access to sufficient capital to pay for completion of the project. The details of the financial manoeuverings involved in this project are not available to comment upon but were extremely complex. There is little doubt that the intervention of the corporation and the flexibility of its approach, backed by government, enabled a major industrialist to survive and become an important element of the town's industrial structure.

The time at which Schreiber withdrew from their Runcorn contract was coincident with a steep rise in the rate of inflation. The first four years of the 1970's had seen a rise of 50% in prices and incomes but during the next four years the rate of inflation doubled. During this period total employment in neighbouring Merseyside was falling at a rate of about 2,000 jobs a year. (13). Even in relatively prosperous 'new' Cheshire, jobs were being lost by existing firms at a rate of between 900 and 1,600 per annum. (14).

Notwithstanding the national and, particularly the regional, economic situation, the new town increased the number of new jobs available to its immigrants, although not without casualties. Irving Air Chute, the town's first new industrial settler, ceased trading during 1973 but their premises and work-force were taken on by rival seat-belt makers Britax. During the same year C.C. Spice moved from an advanced factory unit to a lease-hold site and production started at Bass. In the period from March to December 1973 the number of jobs on the two industrial estates increased by 800. (15).

The increase in jobs during the equivalent nine month period in the following year saw a much more modest increase of 281 jobs with only three new companies occupying premises during the year. Unemployment in the new town, although low by Merseyside standards, was noted as a problem for the first time in the corporation's 1974/5 annual report to the minister. As the rate of inflation increased and the attraction of borrowing for industrial investment decreased the difficulties of persuading new industry to come to the new town grew. Nevertheless during the latter part of 1975/6 eighteen companies had either agreed plans for expansion, commenced construction of new premises, agreed terms or occupied priviously vacant premises. Most of this expansion was from within the industrial estate at Astmoor by firms such as Mercia Weavers, carpet specialists, Lux Lux, makers of ladies underwear, and Fillite, manufacturers of specialised insulation.

A similar pattern of company losses more than offset by expansion of existing plant and the introduction of new factories continued during 1976/7 and the number of jobs in the new town steadily increased.

The corporation's industrial difficulties at this time were compounded by tight restrictions on the availability of government money for industrial investment. The escalating rate of inflation caused a cut-back to be made in public borrowing with a consequent effect on new towns. The corporation were committed to continue the rate of industrial provision to give job opportunities to new settlers coming into new houses being completed under contracts made some years earlier. Private capital for industrial work was successfully sought and the second phase of advanced units at Whitehouse were funded by a lease-back arrangement with a private company. The private company funded the construction of the factories which, on completion, were leased back to the corporation for letting as part of their advanced factory stock. Another feature of the international economic situation and the declining value of sterling was the growing willingness of European companies to invest in British plants. Companies from Holland, Sweden and Denmark were amongst new companies agreeing terms with the corporation during 1977/8. The Danish company, Scanbech, specialised in blow-moulding plastics and occupied a 12,800 sq. ft. advanced factory. They doubled their capacity by the acquisition of another factory of the same size during 1981. The Dutch company, Curver, made plastic containers and occupied an advanced unit whilst their purpose built premises at Astmoor were constructed. Similarly the Swedish company, Duni Bila, manufacturers of disposable tableware,

rented an advanced factory of 31,000 sq. ft. at Whitehouse until their purpose built factory was completed on an adjacent 2.2 acre site. The advent of these companies onto ground-lease sites was a change-point after a number of years during which leasehold sites had been extremely difficult to dispose of. They were followed by other companies who took large sites at Whitehouse. British Gypsum developed a twenty acre site at Whitehouse for the manufacture of glass fibre insulation but, in negotiating for the site, caused problems for the corporation. As part of the initial interviewing procedure all new companies were asked to state what effluents they were likely to release to air or drainage, and what special precautions were necessary to cope with effluents. Bass had been obliged to build a sewage pre-treatment works within their site capable of treating nearly 5 million gallons per day of biologically contaminated water before it was released into the public sewers. British Gypsum's effluent was not to be water borne but air-borne. Their production processes would release very small quantities of phenol into the atmosphere via a high flue-stack but they were confident that no problems would be caused by its release. Whilst not a health hazard, phenol can taint the taste of food even in very small quantities. Their potential neighbours at Whitehouse were Bass, Guiness and Standardised Food Products, all of whom were understandably concerned that their products would be affected if Gypsum were allowed to develop. Not willing to assume a competence they did not have the corporation employed effluent specialists from Harwell to advise them and also asked the potentially affected companies to make their own technical study of the effluent problem. The smallest of the three companies drew upon the experience of one of its major clients, Marks and Spencer, to advise them and, together with experts from Bass and Guiness, they were able to satisfy themselves that no problem would occur. Simultaneously with the construction of the factory for British Gypsum another large leasehold site at Whitehouse was developed by American Can for the manufacture of one-piece drink cans. (16).

American Can took the last large site available at Whitehouse and, at Astmoor, only one large site of 20 acres remained undeveloped. On both estates land was available for a continuing programme of advanced units on small sites but, without the potential for expansion on to a lease hold site, advanced units lost some of their attraction. If the land use provision and the programme expectations had been accurate, then by the end of the fifteen year planned immigration period enough land should have remained at Whitehouse and Astmoor for the 'natural' growth phase of the town's development. Also five thousand

new jobs should have been provided by I.C.I. on the third of the master plan industrial sites at Norton. The economic problems during the 1970's had two effects on the industrial development of the new town. Firstly I.C.I.'s expansion was continually delayed by rising energy costs and a shrinking international market. Overseas competitors, particularly in the U.S.A., enjoyed lower electricity costs and were able to dominate the markets that I.C.I. had planned to exploit. Secondly the escalating cost of employing labour, coupled with the recession, had caused many firms to shed labour. This occurred, not only in established companies in traditionally 'over-manned' industries, but in companies only newly formed. This reduction in manning proved to be no temporary set-back as firms learnt how to manage with fewer workers both by increasing efficiency and adopting automative techniques. The forecast by the three companies at Whitehouse made in 1970 that they would be creating jobs for over 3,000 workers proved to be very wrong fourteen years later. In 1984 the three firms employed under 900 workers, although at one stage their total workforce had exceeded 1,300. In each case their sites were developed to nearly their full potential and their anticipated production levels achieved, but with very many fewer workers. Similarly the Schreiber factory, at one stage expected to employ 1,200, employed only 400.

The density of employment at Whitehouse was little more than ten workers per acre and, at Astmoor, fifteen. This contrasted with the master-plan prediction of thirty-five workers per acre. At the time of drafting such a forecast appeared not to be unreasonable. The master plans for Runcorn's two contemporary new town foundations at Warrington and Redditch each adopted a ratio of thirty workers per acre. (17). A similar figure was used by the consultants for Warrington's Master Plan in 1969, but by 1974, a ratio of 25 was adopted for the plan for Central Lancashire new town. (18). Runcorn's figure, therefore, accorded with generally accepted practice at the time, especially if the Runcorn average had been re-calculated to include I.C.I.'s proposed development at six workers per acre. The experience of other new towns is similar to Runcorn's with average industrial densities dropping very significantly in the period from 1965 to 1984. In Runcorn the average industrial density during this nineteen year period had fallen to between one half and one third of its forecast figure. The equivalent period prior to the designation of Runcorn had seen a similar proportional decrease. Runcorn master plan's figure of 35 jobs per acre must be seen in the context of Cheshire's first post-war planning study of 1946. (19). In this the density of

employment for engineering is calculated as 90 persons per acre, for salt and chemicals at 108 workers per acre, and for silk and cotton manufacture at 208 persons per acre. Thus, during a period equivalent to a man's working life, employment densities had fallen at least ten fold. The problem caused by this reduction for Runcorn was compounded both by a net reduction in labour levels of the industries of the old town and the lack of suitable land for industrial expansion outside the area originally designated for the new town. However, in 1980, after much pressure from the officers of the corporation, I.C.I. agreed to release 150 acres of their land at Norton and, by 1983, planning permission had been obtained from the minister and work started on the infrastructure for a third major corporation industrial estate. Subsequently I.C.I. agreed to make all of their land available to the corporation for industrial development and this should make it possible in the long term to achieve the volume of industrial jobs required by the new town. In the meantime industrial development in the new town experienced a prolonged period of virtual stagnation and unemployment levels rose to a very high point. The details of unemployment levels will be discussed later, but before doing so it is appropriate to examine the growth of non-industrial employment in the new town.

The master plan assumption was that 60% of the working population should be located on the industrial estates and that the balance should be in the town centre and within the new residential communities of the town. (20). The corporation originally intended that the development of the shopping component of the new town centre should be built in three phases during the planned growth period of the town, and that the first phase should be open for business by 1971. (21). The plans for the town centre complex were drawn up by the corporation's own architects and comprised elevated, covered shopping decks with servicing at ground level and direct access to shopping level from adjoining multi-storey car parks and an elevated length of busway. At an early stage in the development of the plans a partnership agreement was entered into between the corporation and Grosvenor Estate Commercial Developments. The basis of the agreement was that the corporation should service the site with roads and sewers and then lease it to Grosvenors who would finance the building of the structures. The advent of private funding changed the situation with regard to phased construction. If the development had relied on government funding then cash would only have been allocated as and when demand could have been shown to justify expansion of the shopping facilities. Grosvenor's were willing to fund, not only the shopping building of 579,000 sq. ft. lettable floor space, but four

multi-storey car parks to contain 2,400 cars and 110,000 sq. ft. of commercial offices. At building costs then current the Grosvenor investment totalled nearly £5M. (22). Site works for the new centre commenced in 1967, construction work in 1969 and the completed centre was opened on schedule in 1971. A formal opening on 5th May 1972 was performed by Her Majesty the Queen. Prior to the development of the town centre offices an office development had been undertaken in the old town on a site adjoining the corporation own offices. Vestric, pharmaceutical distributors, built temporary offices in the old town but replaced them with a purpose built office block in the town centre fifteen years later. Simultaneously with the construction of the town centre shopping and offices an office block was constructed for the Ministry of Labour. This was intended to relocate part of their Watford headquarters and to employ 400 people. Subsequently, with the reorganisation of government departments and the creation of a new Department of Employment, Runcorn became the computer centre for the ministry and employment rose to over 700. (23). In addition to the speculative offices built by Grosvenor the corporation built 30,000 sq. ft. of offices on a lease-back arrangement with an insurance company. Subsequent development during the first half of the 1970's added a central police station, law courts and Postal Sorting Office to the new town centre. The only other elements of the town centre to be constructed during the planned immigration period were the first phase of the district hospital and an ambulance station.

Trading commenced in the town centre shops in November 1971 and by the end of the following year virtually all units were let. This remained the position subsequently although the centre was, in theory, too large for the town's population until the end of the plan period. As with any 'High Street" the pattern of trading within the centre changed over the years in relation to the current financial and trading situation. In the initial lettings an excess number of shoe and decorating shops had been opened but as time passed the mix of shopping corrected itself and adjusted to local demand. Only one shop was opened by a local trader but this did not survive for long and withdrew to its original premises in Widnes. Their problem was that their traditional stock of conservative middle-age clothing did not suit the young immigrant population of the new town. All other permanent shops were rented by branches of multiple shops although the stalls in the market-hall were principally operated by local traders. The multiples included Woolworths, Littlewoods, W. H. Smith, Tesco, Kwik-Save, Halford's, Curry's, John Menzies, Boots, Co-op, Burtons and Hepworths together with the major banks and building societies. Two public houses, two

cinemas and an upper entertainments area were included within the decked shopping structure.

The rapid development of the new town centre made it the most important area of new employment in the town. By the end of the plan period a total of 3485 jobs had been created in the town centre compared with 2880 at Astmoor and 2180 at Whitehouse. (24). In addition a considerable number of jobs had accumulated within residential areas. It has been noted earlier that the first new community to be wholly developed at Castlefields was better provided with amenity buildings than subsequent communities which were built during more financially restrictive years. At Castlefields a total of 654 jobs were created by the comprehensive and primary schools, the local shops, and other social buildings. At Murdishaw, built ten years later and with a more limited range of social buildings, approximately 400 new jobs became available to the immigrants to the new town.

Employment within residential areas did not include any light industry although this had been a proposal of the master plan. A number of such schemes were examined by the corporation but always rejected for the same reason. To make industry compatible in terms of noise, traffic, smell, dust or other potential nuisance, restrictions would have to be put on development that would negate their attraction to small, often self-employed, businesses.

At the end of September 1981, fifteen years after the planning and design work on the new town had commenced, the total number of jobs in the designated area of the new town was 21,769. (25). Of this number 11,122 were employed on sites established by the development corporation and 10,647 in the remainder of the designated area. This total represented a fall of 1,035 jobs over the previous September when employment had reached 22,804. This latter figure had been achieved by steady annual growth during the entire period from 1965 even during the difficult years of recession. The fall of 5.0% on development corporation sites and 4.1% in the rest of the designated area was approximately the same rate as for Great Britain as a whole, but slightly better than the remainder of the north west. The stagnation of industrial development caused by lack of land in the new town was a major factor in this decline although it is unlikely that, in the prevailing economic circumstances, the decline of 500 jobs on corporation sites would have been eliminated entirely by new industrial development. (26).

Within the town as a whole 63% of all employees were male and 37% female. This compared with a national percentage of 58% males and was caused by the high incidence of male employment in the old town's chemical industry. Conversely, in the new employment areas, only 53% of employees were male. This figure related to the high proportion of female shop and clerical employment in the new town centre. The recession in the year prior to this survey had caused a reduction of 6.0% in male employment and of only 3.8% in female employment on new town sites. In addition the amount of part-time working increased in both the new and old town. Up to 1980 the proportion of full-time employees in the town, at 84%, had been higher than in the remainder of Britain, at 81%, and the recession brought Runcorn roughly into line with the rest of the country.

The structure of new employment in the town compared with the national situation showed a higher proportion (38%) of new town jobs in the manufacturing sector than in the rest of the country (28%) but a lower proportion in construction at 1% compared with the national figure of 6%. The proportions in the service sectors at 61% and 63% respectively were very similar in the new town and nationally as was the breakdown between male and female employment within this sector. The low incidence of construction workers living in the town was due to the daily importation of building workers to the construction sites of the new town from Liverpool, Manchester and Stoke by building contractors. Differences in economic status and the structure of the workforce between the old and new towns were exaggerated by the dominance of the chemical industry with the old town. But significant differences also occurred between the rented and owner-occupied housing within the new part of the town. The economic activity rate, (the percentage of people working or available for work) was very high for males in the private sector of the new town (94%) compared both with the rest of the designated area (84%) and Cheshire as a whole (80%). For female employment the difference between public and private sectors was more marked with only 39% of women in the rented sector working or being available to work compared with 48% in Cheshire and 59% in the private sector of the new town. (27).

The explanation for this latter figure is that the 'typical' private house purchasers in the new town area were young couples in what the developers call 'starter' homes. Without the second wage being available during the first few and most difficult years of mortgage repayment the purchase of property would not have been possible for many of these young people. (28).

The state of being economically active and available for work did not mean that jobs were available to all those seeking them. Although the rate at which new jobs had been provided kept fairly steady throughout the development period, apart from the last two years, the rate of immigration into the town together with children of early settlers becoming of working-age, meant that job supply was outstripped by demand. During both 1980 and 1981 there was a large increase in the number registered as unemployed in Runcorn. At the same time the usual seasonal changes and the absorption of school leavers into the work-force did not significantly alter the total number of jobless. Runcorn was not alone, either nationally or regionally, in experiencing an upturn in unemployment at this time. The rate of unemployment in the Runcorn/Widnes area had, throughout the development period of the new town, been 1% or 2% lower than Liverpool, but in December 1981 the Runcorn/Widnes rate of 17.9% unemployed was only 0.3% lower than Liverpool's. (29). Within Runcorn the rate of unemployment in the new town was almost twice that for the old town (9%) and over twice that for Cheshire (8%). (30).

Within the new town area even greater differences occurred with only 5% unemployment within the private sector and 19% within rented accommodation. Most of those in private houses had bought their houses during the period from 1974 to 1980 and were, both in their own view and that of their mortgage company, secure enough financially to embark on house purchase. The age structure of the population of the new town areas showed considerable differences when compared both with the old town and Cheshire. The most significant difference was in the 16 years to 29 years age groups; 26% of the new town population were within these age groups compared with 20% for the old town and Cheshire. In all three areas these age groups experienced the highest level of unemployment in comparison with older groups, but in the new town this situation was exacerbated by the high proportion of young people within these groups.

Conscious of the problem affecting the young people of the new town the corporation pursued an active policy of job-creation and work-experience schemes with the Manpower Services Commission and several hundred short-term jobs were created. The reconstruction of an eighteenth century walled garden at Norton Priory employed between 60 and 140 people each year for four years and other similar "non-commercial" schemes employed many others. These were,

worthwhile as experience to the individuals concerned but were only short term palliatives and intended as stopgaps until the job situation improved. Although the availability of apprenticeships actually increased in Runcorn during 1981 by 8.5% a high proportion (42%) of these were within the chemical industry and not within the new town. No data is available to compare the structure of new Runcorn industry with the national structure but, despite the high incidence of manufacturing industry within the new town, the majority of firms were small concerns with 65% of them employing less than fifty workers. (31). The opportunity for a substantial increase in apprenticeships was therefore limited and generally confined to the larger companies such as I.C.I. or Bass.

The takeover of I.C.I. land interests at Norton will expand the number of jobs available within the new town but none of these will occur before 1985/6 at the earliest. When they do occur the new industrialists will recruit whoever they consider is suitable for the job and increasing employment will not necessarily reduce the number of unemployed residents of the town. The planned immigration period during which incoming employers recruited their workforce largely as new town settlers finished with the completion of the corporation's rented housing programme in 1981. New employees will qualify for corporation housing if they move into the town but the relationship between an immigrant workforce and immigrant industry no longer exists. If the unemployed young people of the town do not succeed in obtaining employment within the new industrial area there is a danger that unemployment will become 'structural' within certain areas of the new town.

As noted above Runcorn new town is physically, politically and administratively inseparable from the remainder of the conurbation in the Mersey Valley and must be affected by the economic health of the region. If the Redcliffe-Maud recommendations for local government reform had been followed then Runcorn would have been within the new Merseyside metropolitan county and the 11,000 'new' jobs in Runcorn would have been regarded with pride by the county administration. From discussions with Runcorn industrialists, however, it appears that few industrialists would have set-up within the older urban fabric of Merseyside and would have preferred locations elsewhere in the country. Without the twenty three thousand new jobs in Runcorn and Skelmersdale unemployment in the Mersey region would have been even higher. (32).

The relationship between employment levels in new towns and the regions of which they are an economic part is repeated in other areas of Britain. In the north-east of England Washington new town had generated over 11,000 new jobs by 1983 yet suffered from an unemployment level at 18.8% commensurate with the north-east region as a whole. Conversely the unemployment levels in Crawley (5.7%), Welwyn Garden City (7.0%) Hatfield (7.0%) and Bracknell (7.4%) reflected the comparitive prosperity of the south-east of England in relation to the north. (33).

"In terms of industrial growth and job creation most of the new towns have been outstandingly successful especially compared with similar efforts by local authorities and other agencies." (34). Of the fifteen fastest growing 'labour market areas' in Britain between 1971 and 1981 eight were new towns, and all of the remainder except one were in the southern half of England. The exception was the Scottish oil district of Dingwall and Invergordon. (35). The government's current proposal to wind up all new towns except the Scottish ones, sell off new town assets, and dismantle the new towns commission would appear to threaten not only the economic future of the new towns themselves but the economy and employment prospects for the regions in which they are situated. (36).

RUNCORN. The economy of the new town. i) Employment. References.

(1) Runcorn Master Plan p. 33

(2) R.D.C. First Annual Report to the Minister, April 1965

(3) Runcorn Master Plan p. 36

(4) R.D.C. Annual Report April 1965

(5) R.D.C. Board Report p/19/65. 1965

(6) This and subsequent information on individual companies has been extracted from the annual reports of the development corporation and the 'confidential' files kept by the corporation in respect of each of their clients. I have been limited in the information extracted from these files as much information given to the corporation by the companies is on a confidential basis and cannot be quoted. This sanction particularly applies to employment figures and where I have quoted these they are necessarily very generalised to avoid embarassment to the companies concerned.

(7) R.D.C. Whitehouse Industrial Estate March 1968

(8) Information from Arthur Seddon, formerly general manager of Bass (N.W.) Ltd., Runcorn.

(9) R.D.C. Annual Report 1969/70

(10) R.D.C. Annual Report 1969/70

(11) Structural Steel Design Award 1975

(12) R.D.C. Annual Report 1972/3

(13) Merseyside Structure Plan. Written Statement 1979

(14) Cheshire County Structure Plan (Eamination in Public) Statistics on Population, Housing, Employment and Land. Oct. 1977 p. 9

(15) R.D.C. Annual Report 1973/4

(16) R.D.C. Annual Report 1978/9

(17) Washington New Town Master Plan 1966. Llewellyn-Davies Weeks & Partners p. 53.

Redditch Master Plan 1965. Wilson Wormersley and Partners. p. 52.

(18) Warrington New Town Plan. 1969. Austin-Smith and Partners. p. 118

Central Lancashire New Town. 1974. Mathews, Johnson and Partners. p. 101.

(19) W. DOBSON-CHAPMAN op.cit.

(20) Runcorn Master Plan p. 34

(21) Runcorn Master Plan p. 81. R.D.C. Annual Report 1966/7

(22) R.D.C. Annual Report 1967/8

(23) R.D.C. Annual Report 1971/2

(24) Runcorn Employment Survey 1981 (R.D.C.)

(25) Runcorn Employment Survey 1981 (R.D.C.)

(26) The average increase in job numbers per annum throughout the preceding development period was 729 jobs (Annual Abstract. Statistics R.D.C.)

(27) Socio-economic profile of Runcorn from the 1981 Census. R.D.C.

(28) All of the major housing developers, Barratts, Wimpey, Maunders, S.N.W., built small houses as 'starter homes' with cookers, carpets and refrigerators within the mortgaged price.

(29) The Department of Employment measure unemployment in 'travel to work' areas and Runcorn and Widnes together with neighbouring commuter villages such as Frodsham and Helsby form one such area. Within such an area very significant differences in employment levels occur geographically.

(30) Socio-economic profile of Runcorn from the 1981 Census. R.D.C.

(31) Runcorn Employment Survey 1981. R.D.C.

(32) Town and Country Planning Vol 52 No 11. Nov. 1983. p. 294

(33) Town and Country Planning Vol 52 No 11. Nov. 1983. p. 296

(34) T.C.P.A. Evidence to Nuffield Foundation Inquiry into the planning system (printed in T.C.P.A. Journal Nov. 1983)

(35) Newcastle University Centre for Urban and Regional Development Studies.

(36) The Times Dec. 1984

RUNCORN.

The economy of the new town. ii) Housing.

The prime reason for the establishment of Runcorn new town was the provision of rented housing. House construction was the largest single element of expenditure by the corporation and accounted for costs equivalent to over £320M in 1981 values.

In 1969 a survey was carried out by the development corporation which examined the social and economic characteristics of the first five hundred families to move to the new town. (1). All of the respondents were living in corporation rented houses and about three-quarters of the heads of households worked within the town, both in new and existing industry. They were asked what the normal 'take-home' pay of the head of the household was and this averaged £19 for the 486 families responding. (2). This average was within a wide range from £14 to £24 with only 10% within the range of £12 to £16 per week and 50% earning £18 or more. In contrast almost one third of heads of household in inner-city Liverpool were within the £12-£16 per week bracket. (3). Some Runcorn families, in addition to the earnings of the head of household, had additional income either from Family Allowance or earnings of the wife or other member of the household. The estimated average household income in 1969 for new town families was £22-14s-0d compared with £15-12s-0d for inner city Liverpool families in 1966. Even allowing for inflation in the three year period between these surveys the Runcorn families were better off than those in Liverpool and this increased earning potential may well have been a factor in motivating the movement to Runcorn of some Liverpool families. Having moved, however, a number of the new settlers found that life in Runcorn was more expensive than in Liverpool and one in six surveyed expressed this view to the interviewer. (4). A major factor of expense in living in Runcorn was the level of rent, which under ministry requirements for new town housing rents, was higher than asked by local authorities. Council house rents were determined by a formula which took account of the authority's older property and the 'pooling' effect reduced rents for new property. In the early years of the new town all houses were recently constructed and the rental levels were correspondingly higher. Examples were cited of rents in Runcorn of £6-14s-0d comparing with £3-19s-0d for council housing in Liverpool. This comment was, however, qualified by the comment that the extra rent was "worth it for the garage and the central heating." (5). The average rent at that date for a three bedroom family house in the new town without a garage was £4-19s-6d. (6). In fact rents were rebated so that the maximum rent was not payable unless the household income exceeded £30 a week. For a household

earning only £10 a week the minimum rent of only 15s was payable. Rates were collected on behalf of the local authority by the development corporation and often aggregated by tenants as 'rent' but, whereas local authority rates rose rapidly in the period from 1970 to 1975, development corporation rents remained virtually static until this later date. (7). Prices had risen in parallel with the local authority rates during this period but wages nationally had risen even more, and house prices in the private sector more than doubled. In Runcorn average wages were probably lower than nationally but nevertheless had advanced considerably in relation to corporation rents. When rents were raised in 19/6 considerable controversy arose in the new town, not only concerning the rise of about 10% in rents, but over the way in which the corporation dealt with rent arrears. Increasing rents led to increasing arrears in payment and the corporation adopted the practice of serving a formal "notice to quit" if two letters to a tenant concerning arrears had not brought about payment. The majority, often advised by a corporation social worker, found ways of paying off arrears but not before some local councillors had accused the corporation of "terror tactics". (8). Such "terror tactics" and increased rents did not shorten the queue to Runcorn and 60% of new tenants stated that they had moved because of someone they already new living in Runcorn. (9).

The second half of the 1970's under both Labour and Conservative governments was a period during which new town rents rose sharply. By 1980 rent levels had increased to nearly double their 1970 level although average earnings nationally had more than trebled during the same period. (10). Notwithstanding the rapid rise in earnings, the particular circumstances in Runcorn in relation to young families and a rising incidence of unemployment in the new town made a higher proportion of families eligible for rent rebates in 1980 than in 1970. At the earlier date one-fifth of families received rent rebate but by the end of the decade this proportion exceeded one half of the houses available for renting. (11). At the other end of the financial spectrum many tenants of corporation houses were taking the opportunity to buy their homes under a scheme introduced by the Conservative government. Under this scheme sitting tenants could buy their houses from the corporation at considerable discounts. (12). These could be from 32% off the open market value after two years of tenancy to 60% after 30 years. Tenancy of other publicly owned housing such as council or coal-board housing

counted towards length of tenancy in addition to the term of tenancy of a new town house. If tenants could not afford repayments on the total purchase price then the scheme included arrangements for part rent/part purchase until such time as the occupier could afford full repayments. The value of the property was set by the district valuer, not the corporation, but discounts could not reduce the value below the original cost of construction unless the open market value was lower. The scheme had great attraction for the longer resident tenants of the new town in houses where historic cost had been low and many took up the offer to sell. For example the first house to be constructed by the corporation in 1966 cost approximately £3,000 to build, was valued at 12,000, and with 50% discount 'earned' by over twenty years tenancy, was sold for £6,000. (13). This was a three bedroomed house with attached garage for which the rent at the time of sale was in excess of £14 per week. A fifteen year repayment period for a loan equivalent to the full purchase price would have amounted to £14-20p each week. (14). Valuations of newer corporation property was correspondingly higher but generally less than the historic construction cost so that discounting was not of much benefit to the would be purchaser. For example the value of the last corporation houses to be built in 1979 was set at around £16,000 and this became the effective 'cost floor' irrespective of tenants qualifications for discounts. (15). By March 1983 nearly 1,500 former tenants had purchased their houses from the corporation; one of the highest percentage sales in all of the new towns outside the south-east of England. (15). Also by that date approximately 3,000 houses for sale had been built by developers on corporation sites, so making the total of owner occupiers in the new town 4,500 with 9,000 houses remaining in rented tenure. (16). The levels of home ownership, employment and rent-rebates were the only measures by which the personal economy of the new settlers to Runcorn could be measured as no income survey subsequent to those of 1969 and 1971 has been carried out. A further indication of the level of prosperity of the new town in relation to the country generally can be gained from the levels of car-ownership. In 1969 only 41% of corporation tenants owned a car, whereas in 1981 this figure had risen to 52%. This rise of 26% parallels exactly the rise in car ownership nationally but in 1981 the distribution of ownership was different from that recorded amongst the first 500 families in the new town. Households in corporation rented housing with one car increased by only 14.6% during this period whereas the proportion of households having two cars doubled. This factor, together with growing unemployment and rent rebates, suggests that an element of the new town

population was becoming a disadvantaged group with little prospect of betterment unless new industry was attracted to the town. Even then, if this industry is the highly technical industry that the development corporation appeared to be advertising for, the prospects for the unskilled or semi-skilled would not be improved. (17). The effect of inflation will slowly decrease the real cost-floor at which corporation rented houses can be sold to sitting tenants and, with increasing rent levels, more appear likely to purchase their dwellings if they are in work and have the means. The effect of this could be to polarise the residents of the new town into owner occupier 'haves' and rebated tenant 'have-nots'. Such a situation is all too common in the inner cities and was one of the things that new towns were inted to rectify. Starvation of the town's basic raw material, industrial land, during the latter part of the planned growth period could prove to be the prime factor in the creation of a depressed ghetto of unemployed within the new town.

The construction of houses by private developers started fairly late in the new town programme. The corporation had constructed 2,350 of its rented houses and had a further 2,400 under construction before any private houses were completed in 1972. (18). By the end of the corporation rented housing programme about three thousand houses had been built by developers on land serviced by the corporation. The majority of these were in the low to medium price range with great emphasis being placed by the developers on the provision of 'starter homes' for young couples. Exception to this pattern was the Marina village built by Welmar by the Bridgewater canal at Preston Brook. This contained 130 dwellings and a secure mooring for 400 pleasure boats. These were berthed in a newly constructed pool alongside the canal and immediately opposite to the new village. Also out of the mainstream of new private housing were the houses built on plots by individual purchasers in Norton village. These were all large detached houses built by their owners and sited on either side of the medieval main street of Norton village. Most of the older houses had long since disappeared from the village which was the home farm for the Brooke family estate. Before development the site was excavated by the corporation's archaeologist to establish the pattern of the tofts and crofts of the medieval village. This was satisfactorily achieved and the line of the back land and some foundations and post holes revealed which delineated the layout of houses. No remains were found either substantial enough or important enough to preclude development and the new houses were able to proceed. Unfortunately the economics of preparing sites

such as these for individuals to build on were such that, unless development could take place on either side of an established and serviced road as in Norton village, the infrastructure costs were too high in relation to eventual site value. It may be that the corporation should have been willing to subsidise the preparation of such plots to attract more affluent people to stay within the new town rather than seek housing in the Cheshire countryside. It was considered, however, that it would not be appropriate to subsidise the more affluent house owner when the corporation's main task was to house the less well-off.

Private housing being built in Runcorn in 1985 ranged in price from £18,850 to £45,950 and these prices represented two bedroomed houses at the bottom end of the price range to four bedroomed detached houses with garages at the top end. Eight developers were working in the town with the main thrust of their sales comprising small semi-detached houses at around £28,000 without garages. The infrastructure provided by the development corporation together with a policy of restraint in the availability of housing land in the remainder of Cheshire ensured that private housing in Runcorn would continue to expand after the planned growth period. In the years 1978-85 over half of the new private housing built in Cheshire was in Runcorn and Warrington new towns with Runcorn contributing approximately 400 completions per year. With the renewed availability of industrial land, consequent upon the agreement reached with I.C.I., the continuing availabilty of private housing land should enable the new town to grow steadily towards its ultimate target population.

RUNCORN. The economy of the new town. ii) Housing. References.

(1) The first 500 families. R.D.C. 1969

(2) This figure was probably low as it excluded occasional overtime or bonuses.

(3) Liverpool Inner Area Social Survey. 1966

(4) The first 500 families. R.D.C. 1969

(5) SCPR. Runcorn Community Study 1971

(6) Runcorn New Town Progress Report No. 1 1971

(7) Halton D.C. Annual Report 1978

(8) Runcorn Guardian 14/4/1976

(9) R.D.C. Annual Report 1975

(10) R.D.C. Progress Sheets No's 1-24

(11) Information from R.D.C. Finance Dept.

(12) The Housing Act. 1980

(13) The open market valuation would have taken into account the house's situation amidst public rented housing and this would have greatly affected the level of valuation to the benefit of the purchaser.

(14) Department of the Environment booklet "Your right to buy your home".

(15) Town and Country Planning Nov 1983. Vol 52 No 11

(16) R.D.C. Progress Sheet 24. March 1983

(17) Within the rented sector of the new town in 1981 28% of households were classed as semi or unskilled compared with 18% in the private sector. The view that part of the new town population were in danger of forming a 'structural' element of unemployment has been generally confirmed by discussions with social and finance workers within the corporation. (1984).

(18) R.D.C. Annual Report 1972

RUNCORN.

The economy of the new town. iii) The development of the town.

In terms of conventional profit and loss accounting new town development corporations work on an artificial basis. Their single source of direct borrowing for capital works is central government. Money is borrowed for 60 year periods at a rate of interest fixed at the time of borrowing. Apart from capital grants received for derelict land reclamation or through government agencies such as the Countryside Commission, all of the capital expended is liable to repayment over the loan period. A corporation's annual housing revenue account has, however, been subject to government subsidy.

The economic performance of new towns have therefore been very much affected by the time and place of development and eventual 'profitability' determined as much by inflation and rising levels of interest rates as by the commercial effectiveness of the operation. Because of this an undefinable social investment return has been an important factor in the support of new towns by all governments of both parties during the period from 1946 to 1979. The current policy of selling off capital assetts, such as new town centres at a profit, not to the new town but to the Treasury, is contrary to this previously accepted 'social accounting'. Any asset that is saleable to private investors is, by definition, profitable. The original intention was that such profits would balance the loss-making elements of a new town's fabric such as parks and highways. Without the benefit of such profits, future new towns will show worse overall deficits and appear to confirm the political view that new towns can no longer be afforded as an element of public expenditure. Thus government intervention and the effect of inflation and interest rates, have materially changed the financial situation in which Sir Henry Wells described new towns as "goldmines of the future". (1).
In 1975 Harlow new town, which had been started shortly after the second world war, made a profit on its general revenue account of £1.8M. During the same year Harlow received £1.6M in subsidy for its housing revenue account. That the new town's profits more than balanced its losses was exactly the situation that had been intended to be achieved over the long term but government policy at that time allowed the corporation to accumulate its profits and paid the housing subsidy in addition. This anomaly was corrected in the following year when government appropriated £8.8M from Harlow's accumulated surplus in their general revenue account. (2). Another anomaly brought about by changing government policy is illustrated by Stevenage new town's housing account.
In 1957, ten years after its designation as a new town, Stevenage obtained 29% of its housing income from government subsidy. Ten years later the

proportion had dropped to 21%. The historic cost of older houses was having the effect of increasing rental income in terms of rent levels then current. The 1972 Housing Act, the so-called "Fair Rent Act', was intended to standardise rents between different public housing authorities but it had the effect of doubling Stevenage's housing subsidy so that in 1977 it amounted to 42% of housing income. (3).

The economic variables caused by date of development are also well illustrated by Stevenage new town by comparison to Runcorn. By the end of the financial year 1970-71 Stevenage had completed 17,106 houses at an average cost of £2,283. By that date Runcorn had completed 2,354 houses at an average cost of £5405. Similarly Stevenage's industrial units averaged less than 75% of Runcorn's in their building costs although for both housing and industry rental levels were very similar. To make comparisons of economic viability even more difficult the interest rate on money borrowed in Stevenage between 1946 and 1971 varied from 3% to 9⅜% and averaged 6%. In contrast Runcorn borrowed at fixed rates of interest varying from 5⅞% to 9¾% and averaging 8.43% by 1971. By the end of the planned growth period Runcorn's average rate of interest exceeded 12%. (4).

Geographical differences in the location of new towns also makes economic comparisons difficult. The affluence of the south east of England in comparison with the northern regions makes, for example, the sale of land for private housing much more profitable in the south despite similar expense to the development corporations of original purchase and infrastructure costs.

These variables of time, location and government policy make the accounts of all development corporations mean little in conventional accounting terms and also one in comparison with another. A more relevant appraisal can be made by looking at the capital costs involved in the development of a new town and the cost of the organisation necessary to bring it into being.

The total capital expenditure incurred by Runcorn development corporation during the new town's planned growth period amounted to £142M and the accumulated cost of the corporation to nearly £30M. At current (1984) values these approximate to £543M and £98M.

The peak years of the corporation's activity were 1969/70 and 1970/71 when capital expenditure was £8.02M and £9.11M respectively at then current cash values. The administration costs for these years totalled £1.05M and £1.26M. These annual totals had been achieved since the first year of building in Runcorn in 1966 and were a peak for the first ten years of the new town's operations. Thereafter annual expenditure declined during a period when escalating building costs made it very difficult for the corporation to achieve it's targets and the town experienced it's only serious labour disputes in the construction industry. By the mid-seventies the capital programme had regained it's momentum and the capital spend rose, in 1976/7, to £19.23M, approaching the same level in real terms, as the 1970/71 figure. However the 1970/71 figure fell considerably short of the total capital being expended in the new town at that time as the privately funded town centre complex was also under construction together with a number of large industrial plants at Whitehouse and Astmoor. (5).

By far the largest part of the £9.11M expended in 1970/71 was accounted for by housing construction which cost £5.62M during the year. Over twelve hundred dwellings had been completed during the year and a further 2,381 were under construction. The majority of expenditure on housing was on the Castlefields housing contract which was for 2,202 dwellings at a total cost in excess of £10M of which nearly £4M was spent during that single year. This very successful contract was the result of a corporation policy to maximise the use of industrialised building to achieve the planned housing programme. The economics of scale introduced by a very large contract allowed the corporation to design the type of housing that it required. The range of houses and flats to accommodate from one to six persons were designed in detail by the corporation's architects and the building contractor adapted his industrialised building system to suit. At Castlefields the contractor tendering the lowest bid was a partnership between S.N.W. Ltd. and McAlpine and the very ambitious construction programme was achieved ahead of time. This principle of tendering was next adopted on a large scheme of 774 dwellings designed for the corporation by a private architect, James Stirling. The scheme was a high density scheme of five storey flats and maisonettes designed to provide accommodation in the new town centre. The tender for the scheme was arranged to allow a number of building contractors to tender on the basis of their own pre-cast concrete construction systems but within the planning and appearance controlled by the architect's designs. The

successful contractor was a Liverpool based company, Unit Construction, and work started on site in 1969. Unlike the Castlefields contract work did not proceed smoothly and less than half of the anticipated expenditure was incurred during 1970/1. Continual problems arose between the contractor and his workforce and site stoppages were frequent. Eventually work on site stopped altogether and the contractor stated that there was no prospect of completing the contract at the originally agreed figure. The corporation were faced with two equally difficult alternatives; firstly to accede to the contractor's request and negotiate an increased contract sum or, secondly, to determine the contract and invite other builders to tender for it's completion. The corporation, with the agreement of the Ministry, chose the former course and renegotiated the contract at a considerably enhanced sum as this was the cheaper of the two options. The site work was then recommenced and the scheme eventually completed satisfactorily but the problem highlighted a situation that caused continual financial problems for all public housing schemes at this period.

The problem arose from the imposition by the Ministry of Housing of both physical standards and financial cost limits for all public sector housing. The physical standard were derived from the report of a committee, chaired by Sir Parker Morris, which was asked to "consider the standards of design and equipment applicable to family dwellings and other forms of residential accommodation, whether provided by public authorities or by private enterprise, and to make recommendations." (6).

The recommendations of the Parker Morris committee were far ranging and intended to be a flexible set of guidelines for housing design and layout. They were ignored by the private sector but adopted by the Ministry of Housing and redrafted as absolute standards in 1967. (7). Accompanying the mandatory physical standards were maximum cost levels that related to both the mix of house types and sizes within a scheme and the density of the housing layout. The physical standards referred to overall floor space, the volume of storage, heating standards and general specification. The allowable cost tables were adjusted to take account of regional variations in cost. The new "housing cost yardstick", which was intended to introduce better amenity standards, became a millstone around the neck of architects. In 1970, when it had only been fully operational for three years, it was called "the over-riding factor in house design." (8). Social decisions were made in respect of

dwelling size mix that were more influenced by allowable cost tables than human factors. Physical standards of construction were squeezed lower and lower as each annual review of the cost yardstick resulted in an increase less than the current level of inflation in an attempt by government to control public spending. This situation applied nationally but Runcorn's position was even more difficult as the permissible regional cost variation for Runcorn was 12% whereas for Liverpool it was 17% extra over the base yardstick cost allowance. As much of the labour required to build the new town was imported each day from the Liverpool area Runcorn's level of building cost was as high, if not higher, than Liverpool's. The effect of the yardstick system on contract prices was that contractors could calculate the maximum allowable cost whilst preparing their tender in competition with other builders. They had to beat, not only their competitors, but the yardstick. There is little doubt that a number of contracts that subsequently caused problems were obtained by tender price levels that were unrealistically low. Efforts were then made during the building contract to create situations whereby extra cost could be claimed. This appears to have been the position on the contract referred to above when extra payments had to be agreed to ensure satisfactory completion of the contract.

The local unrest caused by this contract and the difficult problems of the housing cost yardstick also affected other Runcorn housing contracts and the peak expenditure in 1970/1 fell sharply to only around half this figure in 1972/3 before recovering to it's earlier level by 1976/7. House completions fell from over a thousand each year in the financial years 1970/71 and 1971/2 to only 436 in 1972/3.

The second largest capital expenditure in Runcorn's peak year of 1970/71 occure d on the provision of site development works at a cost during the year of £1.25M. This expenditure was on the provision of estate sewers, surface water drains, estate roads, pavements, footpaths, cycle-tracks, play grounds, trees, shrubs and landscaping. During the year work was being carried out on twenty-one contracts for site development work in relation to housing, industry and the commercial development in the town centre. In addition to this engineering works involving main drainage, main roads, the busway and the sewage treatment plant cost a further £800,000. Nearly £200,000 was spent by the corporation on industrial buildings during the year but this was only a small part of the total industrial and commercial expenditure in the town.

A number of large industrial concerns were under construction and the town centre shops, offices and car parks were being built. The total cost of construction works in the new town during 1970/71 is not possible to calculate as the cost of private industry, commerce and housing are not available. It appears probable, however, that taking all construction work into account, total expenditure was at least double the amount spent by the corporation. A sum of £18M, or £125M at 1984 prices, being spent within a very small geographical area was partly contributory to the labour problems experienced in the new town at that time. The daily influx of labour to the new town exceeded 2,000 workers at a time when the building industry was very active nationally. Skilled labour was in short supply and building workers were able to manipulate the situation to their own benefit.

The cost of administering the new town programme during 1970/71 was £1.2M. The major part of this expense was accounted for by staff salaries, board members remuneration and fees to professional consultants. Corporation staff numbered 453 with a further 135 weekly paid manual and domestic staff. The majority of this latter group were employed in building and landscape maintenance and in the corporation's tree and shrub nursery. Over half of the office staff were in the departments of the chief architect and chief engineer which, together, totalled 268 staff. The size of the technical staff was in relation to the scale of building operations then taking place in the new town. As the construction programme proceeded towards the end of the planned growth period the proportion of technical staff fell. Overall numbers of corporation staff remained the same as more were employed to manage and maintain the corporation's building stock. By 1979 only 150 out of 640 total employees we re employed in the technical departments on planning and new construction work. In 1970/71 the cost of the administration of the corporation amounted to 12.7% of the capital expenditure during the year. By 1980 this had increased to 37.8% as capital expenditure fell and the stock of corporation buildings and the population of the town grew.

Another major item of expenditure for the corporation was interest payable to government in relation to capital spent in previous years. In 1970/71 this amounted to nearly £2M and was the second largest item of expenditure after the cost of housing construction. Income to the corporation at this stage of development was limited to a total of £421,000 from housing, industrial and commercial rents and £440,000 in government housing subsidies. Ten years

later, in 1980/81, the corporation's stock of property had grown considerably and annual income from prop erty commensurately. Total income for this financial year was £5.62M made up of £4.47M from housing rents and £1.15M from industrial and commercial property.

This chapter has attempted to do no more than illustrate the scale of expenditure and some of the related problems involved in the construction of Runcorn new town. The plantation of a new town is a political decision with economic consequences rather than vice-versa and normal profit and loss criteria do not apply. Much of the expenditure would have been necessitated whether a new town was involved or not and cannot be realistically balanced in the corporation accounts. For example, the new Runcorn sewage treatment works accepted sewage from the old urban district of Runcorn as well as the new town. Previously it had been discharged directly into the river Mersey, and, although the local authority paid a contribution towards the cost of the works, this did not adequately cover the provision that would eventually had to have been made if the new town had not been designated. New houses would have been required for the thousands of families sharing accommodation in Liverpool and the rental subsidy would have been payable by government to the local authority rather than the new town corporation. Runcorn's expensive road system serves not only the new town but provides regional access from the M56 to the Runcorn to Widnes bridge and is more properly seen as an item of regional expenditure. New social buildings in the town, such as schools, either cater for a totally new demand or provide a relocated replacement for decaying inner city schools and their cost would, at some time and place have been attributable to a public authority.

The real economic benefit in new towns is poorly measured by scheduled accounts. The most tangible gain is from investment in new industry, particularly from overseas, which is attracted to the new towns by the way in which elements of public expenditure are organised. Furthermore the physical arrangement of such public investment provides a new social environment in which over two million people have chosen to live.

RUNCORN. The economy of the new town. iii) The development of the town. References.

(1) T.C.P.A. Review 1968

(2) THOMAS R. Town and Country Planning Nov. 1983 Vol 52 No 11.

(3) BALCHIN J. First New Town - An autobiography of Stevenage Development Corporation. 1946-1980

(4) Annual reports to the Minister of Runcorn and Stevenage Dev. Corps.

(5) The following financial details are abstracted from both published accounts of the development corporation and the writer's own records and diaries.

(6) Homes for today and tomorrow. HMSO 1961

(7) MHLG Circular No 36/67

(8) New Towns Chief Technical Officers' Committee August 1970.

RUNCORN.

The New Town Development Corporation.

The staffing and organisation of Runcorn development corporation was the responsibility of the corporation board with only minimum guide lines imposed by central government. In Runcorn the board of corporation members adopted the conventional departmental approach already existing in other new towns. In 1964 the new board made the first full time staff appointments and by March 1965 a General Manager and five chief officers were appointed and in post.

The general manager, Derick Banwell, had formerly been the deputy town clerk of Swansea, and from the start structured the management of the organisation to minimise or eliminate the 'departmentalism' that was so typical of large public or private concerns.

> "To produce this result required good leadership, complete involvement by all the professions in the whole project and an elimination of internal rivalries. It was essential that staff should have the opportunity to express their own ideas and translate them into action. Departmentalism stultifies progress and encourages division and jealousy; the aim was, therefore, to create an organisation which removed traditional departmental barriers." (1).

He considered it essential that the chief officers should be welded together into one team, with a sense of loyalty firstly to that team rather than to their professional staffs. To achieve this chief officers were located in close proximity to one another and the general manager in a corridor of the corporation offices which came to be known to staff as the "psychiatric wing." They met informally each day at ten o'clock in the morning, to discuss problems, take any necessary immediate decisions, and to read incoming mail for both their own and colleagues departments. Each fortnight a more formal day conference of chief officers was held with a formal agenda and pre-distributed papers and at which matters of planning and policy were discussed. The decisions of this meeting were then the basis of papers submitted to the monthly meeting of the board of the corporation. These were presented as concensus recommendations and board papers were presented with no departmental reference on them. At the meetings the general manager introduced papers and normally then asked the chief officer or officers originating the paper to explain it more fully. The chairman of the corporation was equally concerned to manage by consensus, despite the apparent different social and political origins of his board, and matters were discussed until such a consensus was reached. Voting was not resorted to and, if genuine differences were expressed by board members, a matter would be referred back to officers for

further consideration. In this way the entire management element of the corporation both board and officers, were able to promote the interests of the town and enter into public debate with a single viewpoint in respect of any particular policy. The importance of this was not only that it ensured good progress, a 'team spirit' and mutual understanding, but it avoided the possibility of board members being isolated by political colleagues from outside the corporation. Such an attitude was a pre-condition of board membership for nominees from political backgrounds but was not always successful in eliminating ' party factions' from the boards of other new town development corporations. A further factor in the unification of the board was that no sub-committees were formed. All matters were discussed by all members of the board, although occasionally a board member was asked to meet with officers or outside agencies to pursue a particular matter. This was generally done only when the member concerned had a particular professional skill that could be utilised and was never done for political purposes. An example of this was the involvement of Mr. F. Sherliker in a sub-committee formed to discuss the technical aspects of metering heat used by tenants served by a district heating scheme. Mr. Sherliker was an industrial chemist with I.C.I. and fully cognizant with the technical problems involved.

The philosophy of non-departmentalism extended to professional working level within the corporation. For major projects a team was formally constituted with representatives of all professional disciplines. The leader of the project team was usually an officer with the greatest professional interest and reported to the chief officers' conference through his own chief officer. The project team leader attended the discussions of chief officers on his project to represent the views of the team and frequently argued from a different standpoint from his chief officer. By this means the original intention of the general manager that staff should have the opportunity to express their views was put into practice. Project teams discussed many matters before individuals would brief their own chief officer on both their own professional views and the attitudes of the team.

Notwithstanding this inter-disciplinary approach the staff were formally organised into professional departments. Originally there were five departments headed by a chief officer with a number of other disciplines being directly responsible to the general manager. These were for public

relations, project co-ordination, social development and the management of the corporation's tree and shrub nursery. In 1971 the social development responsibility was put into a separate department led by a chief officer.

The total staff built up to nearly 600 by 1970 and stayed around this level for the whole of the planned growth phase of the new town's development. As development proceeded the balance between departments changed when construction work gave way to management of the corporation's built resources. (2).

The individual departments performed the function that their titles suggest but each contained a wider range of professional skills than apparent from the title. The department of architecture and planning grew to a peak of 131 staff in 1971 but only a quarter of these were architects or architectural assistants and eight were town planners. A further quarter of the department was constituted by quantity surveyors who prepared bills of quantities for engineering contracts in addition to costing and contract work for their own department. A group of six landscape architects worked on all aspects of the town's development from highway landscaping to housing layouts and planning the town's parks. Mechanical services engineers and clerks of works made up the remainder of the technical staff together with one graphic designer and three model makers. Each professional and technical group was administered by it's own secretary and two other administrators were responsible for departmental cost control. This latter function was to ensure that the department operated within the professional fee scales that would have applied had the office been run privately and also to control the payment of fees to private architects employed by the corporation. Originally it had been intended that the corporation's "in house" technical staff would cater for the main workload and that consultants would be employed to cover peaks in the work programme. Experience with private consultants was not particularly successful from the corporation's aspect and only three firms of architects were employed during the first five years. (3). Thereafter all corporation architectural work was done by their own architects. In addition a number of industrialists, Grosvenor Estates, the district and county coun cils, the GPO and the area health authority all employed the corporation to carry out architectural work in the new town on their behalf. (4). This was done at the normal fee rates that a private architect would have charged for the project. In the period from April 1966 to May 1982, 656 contract starting orders were issued by the department; a rate of roughly one every

week. These ranged in scale from the Castlefields contract valued at around £10M down to small contracts for the construction of play areas within housing developments but all needed similar processes of design, contract documentation, cost control and supervision on site.

The concentration of such a high proportion of the architectural work in the new town into one office was consistent with the corporation's policy "to establish a Runcorn vernacular which would give the town an unmistakeable character of it's own." (5). Initially this policy met with opposition, particularly from industrialists who had been accustomed to "the cheapest possi ble shed app roach" to factory architecture. The corporation's policy was to control layout, building materials and landscaping on it's industrial estates in order to achieve a consistently high design standard and an efficient workplace that, in addition to providing work, was an attractive place to work in. After initial doubts industrialists came to agree that the policy worked and was not any more expensive than the conventional approach. A similar approach applied to a consistency of materials and particularly landscaping within housing estates, both public and private, and in the town centre. Another measure of the success of this policy was that the department won nineteen architectural awards for it's housing and industrial work.

In order to achieve an efficient architectural office a close relationship with the engineering department was essential. This department was, at it's largest, about the same size as the architect's and provided a range of skills necessary for the building programme and the infrastructure of the new town.

The development of the town required the construction of over nine miles of maj or foul sewers and nearly nine miles of surface water sewers. Twelve miles of urban motorway with overbridges and underpasses, nearly fifty miles of estate roads and thirteen miles of busway constituted the road structure of the town and were all designed and supervised on site by the engineering department. The structure of the department reflected the various specialist engineering skills involved and separate sections dealt with sewerage, main roads, site development, electrical service and structural engineering. The latter section were also greatly involved in the architectural work in the town as they were responsible, not only for engineering structures such as

road bridges, but the structural aspects of buildings. This involved both the structural frame of all buildings and foundation design. To support this function a small laboratory was set up to test soil and concrete samples. A further function of this department was liaison with and co-ordination of the underground utilities installed by water, gas, telephone, electricity and television authorities.

For the first five years of the new town's development programme the corporation's other professional staff acted in a support role to the technical departments. The legal department's main responsibilities were concerned with land purchase and contract documentation. The chief estate's officer was responsible for assembling the land necessary for the construction of the town and the finance officer for payments and receipts of money, staff salaries and overall management of the corporation's accounts. The financial management of contracts was the responsibility of the technical departments who calculated and certified the payments to be made by the finance officer.

As the corporation's stock of property became larger and the new town population grew the emphasis slowly changed from development to management. In 1971 the social development department was made a separate office with it's own chief officer. The department encompassed family welfare work, community development, social planning and research. The family welfare group dealt with families both before and after their move to the new town and helped to alleviate problems that might have risen during the settling in period. Community development work was largely concerned with encouraging and supporting clubs, voluntary groups and community associations in the embryonic town. Social planning was the departmental input into the corp oration's physical planning and policy-making process. Representatives of the social development department were involved in most project teams fee ding in social requirements and a 'client's brief' to design teams. The department's research group were responsible for all aspects of statis tical work in the corporation and worked closely with the planning section in the architect's department. (6).

An increasing stock of property necessitated a larger staff in the finance officer's department to deal with rents and a larger maintenance and management staff for the chief estate's officer. More staff were

required to negotiate industrial and commercial development and by 1978 staffing in the management departments was twice the level of that in the architect's and engineer's. Considerable expansion had also taken place in the number of manual workers employed by the corporation. In 1978 248 out of a total employment of 640 were engaged in manual work, either in building or landscape maintenance.

Although the construction programme was maintained at it's originally intended level, and new population and new industry continued to be attracted to the new town, considerable staffing problems were experienced throughout the latter half of the 1970's. Many of the professional staff had joined the corporation in the 1965-1970 period imbued with the idealism of Ebenezer Howard and with few worries about their long term professional futures. All knew that working in a new town corporation could not be a permanent job as the very nature of the planned development programme was that it was a period of rapid growth after which the town would grow organically at a pace determined by social and economic forces. In 1974, however, the reorganisation of local government fundamentally changed the long term employment prospects for many professional officers working in new towns. The effect of the reorganisation was that all pre-1974 employees of the "old" local authorities were re-employed in the "new" authorities except those who chose to volunteer for early retirement. Many chief and senior officers retired and the posts in the new authorities were filled by upgrading people from the pre-1974 authorities. Although new town staff were in the same trade-unions as local government staff and many had previous service in local government, they were excluded from applying for the posts advertised by the new authorities. This was because the union, NALGO, had negotiated a 'ring fence' agreement with employers that gave virtually all jobs to applicants already in local government service. The immediate effect of this on new town staff was that their contemporaries in local government were upgraded into more responsible posts. Because most of them were fairly young, many of the older staff having retired, the prospect of turnover of senior posts was also reduced. At the same time pay scales in new towns, which were negotiated separately from those in local government fell behind as government attempted to hold back inflation by keeping annual pay awards wi thin it's own sphere of influence as low as possible. In 1974 the Runcorn Development Corporation took the unusual course of publicly stating that "The quality of the work that is undertaken depends a great deal upon the

ability of these officers and their enthusiasm for the work they are doing. As matters now stand their salaries in particular are far below those which are being paid to professional officers carrying out comparable duties in Local Authorities and Statutory Undertakings. The result of this is that it is almost impossible to recruit new staff to these posts, and the existing officers are being lost at an ever increasing rate to other Authorities and to private practice." (7).

The pay situation was never rectified but further problems outweighed salary considerations. As the end of the development period approached the future of the corporation itself became subject to uncertainty. In November 1977 the problems of facing the organisation were discussed in conference by the chief officers but little was achieved except the identification of problems and possible solutions to them. (8). No positive plans could be made without some indication from government as to their future intentions. In the meantime senior job vacancies were difficult to fill due to both the uncertainty of the future and the possibility of new recruits being "first out" in any redundancy policy that the corporation would be obliged to adopt. Existing staff faced an equally uncertain future even when, in 1978, the Secretary of State, Peter Shore, announced that the corporation's assets would be vested in December 1981 and the Corporation dissolved in March 1982. The corporation had just let the contract that would complete it's programme of rented housing and welcomed the apparent certainty that the Secretary of State's decision brought about.(9). Vesting was presumed to mean what it had hitherto meant; that housing would be transferred to the local authority and commercial and industrial assets to the New Towns Commission. (10). Staff would be transferred to the authority managing the asset; either local authorities or the commission. Such an elegant political solution was however not to the liking of the local authorities. They considered that housing assets, were in the short and medium run a financial liability and that the direct housing subsidy available to the new town corporation should be available to them. (11). The reluctance of local authorities to take over housing prolonged the uncertainty of staff and this feeling was compounded by the retirement in June 1978 of two founder members of the corporation's management team. Derick Banwell, General Manager, and Alan Smith, Legal and Administrative Officer, had both been with the corporation since 1965 and were closely identified with the town both professionally and personally. A new general manager was not appointed but the Chief Finance Officer was

given the job in addition to his financial responsibility " in view of it's significance in the transfer of assets and the winding up of the Corporation."(12). Even more uncertainty was added when the new conservative government announced in the summer of 1979 that it was their intention to sell the assets of new towns to the private sector and wind up new towns and the new towns commission. The older new towns would wind up almost immediately and the so called Mark 3 new towns in the late 1980's. (13).

On January 27, 1981, Mr. Geoffrey Finsburg, Minister at the Department of the Environment announced in the House of Commons that "After consulting the two development corporations and the local authorities concerned, my Right Honourable friend has decided to make an order under section 5(2) of the New Towns Act 1965 transferring on 1st April, 1981 the functions of Runcorn Development Corporation to Warrington Development Corporation which will then be renamed Warrington and Runcorn Development Corporation. The two new towns will continue to develop separately, but in view of the stage that Runcorn has reached, it is both sensible and economical to have a single development corporation on which Runcorn interests will be properly represented." (14).

The new corporation board constituted thirteen members, four of whom were from the former Runcorn Board. One had been the chairman of Runcorn Development Corporation, one was the chairman of a Runcorn industrial concern, one was a county councillor and the other a Halton District councillor representing a Widnes ward. None of them were resident in Runcorn.

RUNCORN. The New Town Development Corporation. References.

(1) BANWELL D. F. Paper to New Town Chief Officers Seminar Windermere. April 1973.

(2) R.D.C. Annual Reports 1965-1981

(3) The three firms were Anthony Grimshaw (The Brow local centre + 36 flats)
Derek Walker (Halton Brook phase 3, 198 dwellings)
James Stirling (Southgate phase 1, 1A, 2, 1340 dwellings)

(4) Factories designed by corporation architects were for Schreiber, Kawneer, BICC, YKK, and a number of smaller industrialists. The town centre shops, car parks and offices were designed for Grosvenor. The law courts, police station and Palace Fields old persons' home were designed for the county council, Castlefields community centre for the district council, the Runcorn old town health centre for the area health authority, the town centre sorting office for the GPO and a 150 bedroom hotel for Esso.

(5) R.D.C. Annual Report 1970/71

(6) TRUETT J. Runcorn New Town. Paper to Bologna International Building Fair, September 1974

(7) R.D.C. Annual Report 1974

(8) New Town Chief Officers' Seminar. Matlock. 28-30th November 1977

(9) R.D.C. Annual Report 1978

(10) The New Town Commission had been set up in 1961 to take over all assets of new towns when they completed their planned growth programme. In 1976 the New Towns (Transfer of Assets) Act was introduced to allow the handing over of new town housing to local authorities. Commercial and Industrial assets would remain with the Commision.

(11) Halton District Council. Annual Report 1979

(12) R.D.C. Annual Report 1979

(13) Milton Keynes, Peterborough and Warrington.

(14) Hansard 27 Jan 1981

RUNCORN.

The established town.

Only twenty years after the decision to build a new town at Runcorn it is very early even to attempt to consider the established town. Even before it was started a number of doubts concerning it's suitability as a site for a new town were expressed at the designation public inquiry. (1). The inspector holding the inquiry inferred in his opening remarks that "while Runcorn would have a good chance of attracting industry from elsewhere in the country, the need to make a substantial contribution to the housing problem of Liverpool and other areas of North Merseyside might mean that there would be some commuting between Runcorn and North Merseyside."(2). Runcorn Urban District Council in their evidence were anxious to see the new town merged with the old town "which had so much to offer in it's historical associations, public spirit and civic life." Warrington Borough Council wished to see that the built up area of the town was as far away as possible from the Warrington boundary. Runcorn Rural District Council expressed the view that the fragmentation of the proposed site made it unsuitable for a new town and that it's development would create a continuous urban sprawl linking Warrington and Frodsham. (3). Halton Parish Council considered that the new town could not have an existence independent of Liverpool but instead would be a part of the Merseyside conurbation both for local government and other purposes; the Liverpool people would not wish to move to Runcorn. The Cheshire County Council, whilst welcoming the proposal in principle, objected to Runcorn as the site for the new town on the grounds that it would not be independent of Merseyside. Other objectors, mainly from the rural areas to be developed as the new town echoed these sentiments but the inspector was not swayed by them and recommended to the minister that the new town should be designated. Even before the inquiry most of the possible objections had been recognised by an interprofessional team of officers within the ministry who whilst recognising that the new town would be "too near to the built up area by conventional ideas of where a new town should be sited", nevertheless considered the site to be suitable. (4). Now that most of the physical structure of Runcorn new town is constructed it is possible to examine these forecast problems of social, physical and administrative identity and assess their validity.

The physical identity of a town is difficult to define but would appear generally to relate to only a small part of the urban fabric. The perceived character of Chester as an affluent, walled, medieval city is not confirmed if one looks objectively at the whole urban area of Chester. There are large characterless areas of council housing at Blacon which are by no means affluent and occupy a larger area than the historic core. Other areas of Victorian, inter-war and post-war housing differ little from those in any town from Sunderland to Southampton. The ragged edges of the town straggle out towards Wales through Saltney in a fasion that would not be out of place in inner city Liverpool. It appears that Chester's character is perceived in total as that characterized only by it's relatively small nucleus. Undoubtedly that has considerable charm, affluence and character and is also the commercial and administrative centre of both the town itself and of a very much larger region. A similar picture can be drawn of Oxford which draws it's character from the dreaming spires of the university and not the barren suburbs of Cowley and Headington or the post-war dormitory 'village' of Kidlington which guards it's northern flank. Another factor that Oxford and Chester have in common is their inefficiency in modern urban terms. Their ancient pattern of streets may be attractive to tourists but is a nightmare to residents. It is necessary either to totally by-pass these cities on their ring roads or struggle through their medieval middles and their complex of traffic regulated streets. Either way one is conscious of being there and, in what is perhaps a perverse way, this adds 'character' to the city.

How does Runcorn compare in establishing an identity for itself? In the latter case it fails totally as it is too efficient in traffic terms to provide a punctuation to a journey. Although traversed by great volumes of traffic from the Widnes bridge to the M56 motorway, this passes through Runcorn without recognising it's whereabouts. The town's expressway roads are either sunken below ground level or verged on either side with grassed and planted banks. There are no junctions as all traffic movement is by grade separated interchanges where the stranger must follow the signs and turn left in order to go right (or left). Runcorn is not perceived by the passing traveller at all, unlike Chester or Oxford. This makes it difficult to establish it's identity but it immeasurably improves the quality of life for those living there. The expressway is an efficient avenue of both local and regional communication but, in order to reduce the intrusion of

traffic noise, is hidden from the resident by mounding. By this device it is also hidden from the passer-by.

For the resident of the town the expressway provides across town and external communication of a high standard and this is also matched by the quality of bus and footpath communications. The busway was conceived to provide a general public bus service within the town and to particularly benefit journeys to work. It has been successful but not in the way the master plan forecast. It was assumed that shopping journeys to the new town centre would primarily be by car but both the busway and footways have proved to be equally popular. A survey carried out in 1984 showed that 35% of those arriving in the town centre had travelled by bus, 35% by car and 30% had walked. (5). These figures compare with 21% by bus, 64% by car and 13% walking in a contemporary new town, Washington, and 68%, 17% and 10% respectively in Milton Keynes. Although car ownership was lower in Runcorn than Britain generally these figures do demonstrate the success of Professor Ling's plan in making access to the town centre by all modes of travel a high priority. (6).

The same survey showed a high dependence on the shops in the new town centre by the residents of Runcorn. Two thirds of all shoppers using the centre came from the new town areas of Runcorn and most of the remainder from the rest of Runcorn. A very high proportion of those using the centre (82%) said that it was their main centre for food and grocery shopping but under half said that it was their main centre for other important shopping such as clothes and household goods. A number of other centres were used for comparison shopping, notably Liverpool (22%), Chester and Warrington (each 7%). This situation is much as predicted by the master plan and the 1963 pre-designation study which predicted that Liverpool shopping would continue to be a major magnet for the whole of Merseyside.

In other respects, however, the new town centre does not perform the same function as a traditional centre as it lacks certain elements. The history of local government reorganisation has been described above and as a consequence of this Runcorn new town centre has few of the administrative attributes of an older town. The district of Halton is administered from the council offices of the former Widnes and Runcorn district councils. The Widnes office is north of the river and the Runcorn town hall is a converted Victorian soap magnate's house in the suburbs of the old town.

There is no town hall or even any presence whatsoever of the district council in the town centre. The county council rent part of a commercial office block for education, welfare and registry services but these do not impose a civic character on the centre. The only buildings symbolic of local government are the public library, new law courts and police station but these are no substitute for the pomp and circumstance of a Victorian town hall.

Just as the local authority functions are distributed around the town so are recreational facilities. These are generally in shared use buildings within the campus of the comprehensive schools and provide excellent meeting and sporting facilities. When the new district hospital is fully in service this will add another element of identity to the new town centre and re-inforce it's strength as the focal point of the new town.

Another problem of identity that Runcorn shares with many older historic towns as a consequence of the 1974 reorganisation of local government is it's legal anonymity. There is no town of Runcorn. Since 1981 there is not even a Runcorn Development Corporation but a Warrington and Runcorn Development Corporation. Ironically the name chosen to solemnise the marriage of Runcorn and Widnes was Halton which is the small village dominated by the ruins of a medieval castle standing high on a rocky outcrop at the centre of the new town. Great care was taken in the preparation of the master plan to preserve Halton village as a 'close' within the centre of the town.

"In order to underline the individuality of Halton Village with it's castle, the layout and disposition of buildings of the enlarged community should be in sympathy with the contours and avoiding disruptive competition in height with the Rock. Visually this will mean that the eye is led naturally from the lower edges of the community towards the castle and the town centre." (7).

This philosophy was carefully followed in the design of the new town and no buildings exceed four storeys in height in order to avoid visual competition with the castle on the rock. This, and the other high point of the new town at Windmill Hill, give the opportunity for distant focus that creates a sense of place within the new town. In other new towns like

Peterborough or Skelmersdale, built in areas of flat topography, such distant views are not possible and a sense of identity much more difficult to achieve. The people of the new town of Runcorn can visually identify with their whereabouts in the town but it's name or presence are not imposed on the through traveller. Whether the new town's nucleus formed by Halton Castle, Halton village and the town centre become identified as Runcorn in a way similar to the centre of Chester remains to be seen but Runcorn does function as an independent town with an identity of it's own even if it's whereabouts and ways of functioning are more apparent to the residents than to a stranger. It belies the expectation voiced at the designation enquiry that it would be a dormitory estate for Liverpool and it's people would commute there for work. It is true that a considerable part of Runcorn's workforce travelled out of the town to work but the 8,700 who left the town each day were more than balanced by the 9,360 who travelled into Runcorn. Nearly 14,000 or 60% of the workforce both lived and worked in Runcorn. (8). For those travelling out of the town to work the most common destination was Merseyside with 14% of the workers resident in Runcorn travelling there each day. A further 19% worked in Cheshire, mostly in Widnes or Vale Royal District. Warrington provided employment for only 4% of Runcorn's workforce. More detailed analysis of these statistics shows that the pattern of commuting was not even across the old and the new towns or even within the estates of the new town. Within the old town the workforce was very dependent on employment at the I.C.I. plants at Weston which also brought into the town a high proportion of the daily in-commuters. Nevertheless, even in Weston ward where the I.C.I. works are situated, nearly one third of the workers worked out of Runcorn. Within the new housing areas the proportion of out-commuters was higher. This reflects the volume of people who moved to the new town in order to get better housing and either kept the employment they had before the move or, more probably, got a job outside the town once they had moved. This latter category was largely recruited by the Ford motor works at Speke and the Vauxhall motor works at Ellesmere Port. Both of these factories are within very easy reach of Runcorn by dual carriageway road and with Speke only five miles distant and Ellesmere Port only ten, they exercise a great attraction to people in the new town.

Another problem foreseen for the new town at the public inquiry was a supposed reluctance on behalf of the people of Liverpool to move to Runcorn. The very high proportion of new town residents originating from Liverpool has been noted above as has the large waiting list for new town houses that

prevailed throughout the growth period. Local folklore has subsequently amended the proposition that Liverpudlians would be reluctant to move with a knowledge of the "fact" that if they did come they didn't stay long but hurried back to Liverpool as quickly as possible. This has proved not to be the case with nearly 40% of the first 500 immigrants still living in Runcorn twenty years after their more from Liverpool. But many that did move to Runcorn inevitably then moved elsewhere and the turnover in corporation rented housing averaged around 10% per year and reached a high point of 16% in 1971. (9). This was a period when a number of the first industrialists left the town and consequently caused problems for some of the early residents. As has been noted above in respect of industrial companies the 'honeymoon' period lasted between two and four years and if a company established itself longer than this it was likely to remain for very much longer. The same appears to be true of the residents although no statistics are available to support this in detail. (10). Generally, however, the average stay of emigrants from the new town was nine to ten years, so producing a turnover of about 10% of dwellings each year. Unfortunately nearly two-thirds of emigrating households did not provide information to the corporation concerning their destination or reasons for leaving. Of those that did give reasons one quarter moved from corporation property to buy their own house and nearly 40% because of rent arrears. The destinations of those that did provide the information were elsewhere in north-west England (12%), elsewhere in Runcorn (10%), Liverpool (9%), elsewhere in the United Kingdom (5%) and Merseyside (1%). More than half of those who left corporation rented property for other parts of Runcorn did so to purchase their own house. (11). Even if the majority of emigrants who did not give reasons or destination all went back to 'mum' in Liverpool, the length of stay of most people and the range of destinations given do not support the forecast of a precipitate return to Merseyside by the new town population.

In supporting the proposal to site a new town at Runcorn the council of the old Runcorn urban district expressed the wish that the old and new towns would merge into one. How far such a merger has progressed in the new town's first twenty years is difficult to assess but there are some pointers that can be evaluated.

The residents of the old town have little or no necessity to go to the new town centre. Shopping and library facilities, albeit less extensive, are available in the old town centre. Local authority rents are collected by the

council and any other business with the town hall is carried out either in the old town or in Widnes. Health services are equally available in the old town or the new town in recently constructed purpose built health centres. Some hospital facilities are available in the old Runcorn cottage hospital whereas the new hospital in the town centre only provides for clinic and geriatric facilities. When the second phase opens in 1985 the hospital will serve the entire Halton district, including Widnes. The busway equally serves the old and new towns and the main railway station is in the old town. Public houses and clubs are as well, if not better, established in the old town as in the new where they are not centrally located but spread amongst the new communities. Primary and secondary education is provided locally in both parts of the town and further education, originally planned to be in the town centre, is available in Widnes. The only unique feature of the new town centre that would necessitate people from the old town going there are the Runcorn Law Courts and the town's Police Station. These are visited by only a minority of the people of the old town who, should they wish, can totally ignore the Liverpool invasion together with the new town and it's centre. However the survey carried out in 1984 into the use of the town centre shopping showed that 28% of shoppers using it were from areas of Runcorn other than the new town. (12). The population of the new town area (40,500) is larger than that of the old town (26,500) and the survey shows that for shopping the new centre is drawing custom from all parts of Runcorn. Although it is possible to measure the merging of the old and new town population in terms of shopping it is much more difficult to assess how they have merged socially. In order to attempt such a measure an analysis has been made of all the marriages recorded in the Runcorn newspaper for the whole of 1980. (13). Residents of Runcorn who married out of town are not included in this survey so that it cannot be considered comprehensive although they were largely balanced by residents from elsewhere who travelled to Runcorn for their wedding.

A total of 278 marriages were recorded during the year and 27% of these were between residents of the new town area of Runcorn. A further 23% were between old town partners but 17% were between partners from the old and new town. When new town and old town individuals are analysed separately both groups found 29% of partners in the other 'half' of the town. There would appear, therefore, to have been considerable social mixing between the two communities within the town whereas very few of new town residents found marriage partners from Merseyside (8%). Even fewer old town partners looked

to Merseyside for their spouse, (5%), although 9% found a partner in Widnes, compared with 6% from the new town.

It would appear that the young people of Runcorn were far from being dependent on Merseyside for marriage partners and this is confirmed by the applications for housing received by the corporation. By 1981 the young children who had come to Runcorn in the first few years were maturing, marrying and seeking a home of their own. The waiting list for housing in 1981 stood at 2,296 of which 12% were 'second generation' applicants. During the year 23% of all applications received were from second generation households. (14). A significant proportion (13%) of the applications in 1981 were from brothers and sisters of existing tenants, illustrating the continuing build up of extended families within the town that has been referred to above.

The young generation that are marrying within the town are mainly the product of the three comprehensive schools built as part of the new town's development programme. When the first such school was built at Norton Priory it functioned for the first few years as a secondary modern school and did not have a comprehensive intake. This was due to the education authority allowing children who were at grammar schools before moving to the new town to continue their education at the county grammar school at Helsby some six miles from Runcorn. Norton Priory school did not achieve a full sixth form until 1978 when the first year of fully comprehensive intake had worked their way through the school. A considerable number of this school generation have gone on to higher education and the school has now a sizeable crop of graduate old boys and girls. Whether this generation will return to Runcorn after graduation must be doubtful as job opportunities are few for young people of all educational standards. It is more likely that they will join the drift of the more talented to the richer south east so denuding the town and the region of an element of it's economic potential. The moratorium of regional development grants will further aggravate the problems of industrial recruitment to the regions of the United Kingdom and encourage even more of the younger talented and mobile people to seek opportunities elsewhere. (15).

Before the new town was developed the area of farmland between Runcorn and the southern suburbs of Warrington was one of the few parts of the banks of the Mersey that was not built over. Fears had been expressed at the

designation inquiry that "the creation of a new town would mean the merging of Frodsham and Warrington with Runcorn into a continuous urban sprawl which itself would become part of the Merseyside conurbation." (16). The Runcorn master plan recognized the possibility of this happening and recommended an extension of the green belt be included in Cheshire County Council's Development Plan eastwards around the eastern and southern boundaries of the designated area. (17). Local fears were added to be a study commissioned in 1964 by the ministry into the designation of Warrington as a new town. The consultants engaged to carry out the study proposed that Warrington new town should contain a substantial acreage of permanent agricultural land within it's designated area. (18). There were strong objections to this from agricultural interests and, when the minister made the draft designation order, he excluded such land from his proposals. A substantial part of the land excluded was along the southern bank of the Manchester ship canal between Moore village and Warrington. Had it been included it would have created a continuity of new town designated areas along the south side of the Mersey valley. The Cheshire County Structure Plan eventually included the green belt around Runcorn in it's proposals in order to prevent the coalescence of urban developments on the southern banks of the Mersey and both new towns' master plans recognise this. The open space structures within the plans provide footpath routes around and out from the towns. The Bridgewater canal runs directly between Runcorn and Warrington through the green belt and is an important part of the recreational plans of both new towns as it provides a footpath and pleasure boating route out of the built-up areas. Should any urbanisation of the green belt land be proposed it is probable that both new towns would now strongly object to it. Adjoining open country, in addition to it's recreational potential, is a powerful factor in the attraction of private housebuilders and it is in this area that the entire future housing programme of both new town lies.

Most of the fears expressed before the development of Runcorn have not materialised. It has not become a dormitory commuter suburb of Liverpool, it has an economic life of it's own, people have wanted to move there, there is a gradual merging of the old and new towns and the spectre of continuous urban sprawl has been dispelled. But it does have problems of identity in the urban hierarchy that makes up the Mersey Valley. The pre-designation study by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government concluded that Runcorn was "too near to the built up area (of Merseyside) by conventional ideas of where a new town should be sited." (19).

By conventional ideas they presumably meant a self-contained town set in a rural hinterland without dependence on a major conurbation and itself the centre of sub-regional commerce and administration. But the garden cities conceived by Ebenezer Howard were not to exist in economic or social isolation. (20). Howard saw the garden city as an element of the 'social city' in which new towns of limited size were each related to one another and also to a larger Central City within a rural hinterland. The Central City would contain the regional administration and larger scale public buildings and would be within easy commuter reach of it's cluster of garden cities although each of these would have it's own administration and industry. In these terms the plantation of Runcorn and Skelmersdale new towns within easy reach of the regional centre in Liverpool was not unconventional but in accord with Howard's principles. Where Runcorn failed in this context was not to have any local government or administration of it's own but to be controlled by external agencies in Widnes and Chester.

Whether Runcorn, despite this lack, will develop into a strong and independent town remains to be seen. It will partly depend on matters determined 200 miles away in London that concern regional and local government policies. It will also depend on the people of Runcorn itself and it is appropriate to profile the new town as it was about to leave the paternalistic protection of the development corporation and become a normal town.

The physical state of the new town at the end of the planned growth period has been described above. In summation the physical infrastructure of the town was completed by 1981 but with land available for future development of industry, housing and the town centre. The population of the new town was then 64,196 made up of 39,096 people in the new town and the remainder in the old. (21). Runcorn's population comprised 52.7% of Halton Borough's and 13.2% of Cheshire's population. The average household size within the new town was at 3.12 persons substantially higher than the rest of the designated area (2.77), Cheshire (2.81), and England and Wales (2.70). Within the new town the rented sector had a higher average household size than the private sector. The new town contained fewer single person households (15%) than Cheshire (19%) or the rest of England and Wales (22%). The proportion of single parent families, at 4%, was twice as high as in the old town or Cheshire.

The age structure of the new town population was lower than in the old town or Cheshire with more people in the 0-4 years, the 5-15 years and the 25-29 years age groups and correspondingly less in the older groups. Only 8% of the new town were pensioners compared with 15% in Cheshire as a whole.

Unemployment levels have been noted above as 19% for the new town rented sector and 5% for the private sector housing. The problem was worse among the younger age groups, particularly school-leavers. The working population comprised more skilled manual and semi-skilled workers than in Cheshire and also more unskilled workers.

Just over half of the households in the new town rented sector had a car available compared with 93% in the new town private sector and 67% for Cheshire as a whole. Over half of the workers (56%) in the new town travelled to work by car, including two thirds of these in their own car. A fifth of the working population travelled to work by bus and 13% on foot.

Industry in the new town comprised a higher proportion of manufacturing than the rest of Cheshire (39% and 32%) and correspondingly less in construction, energy, catering and other service industries. Marginally more worked in transport in the new town compared with Cheshire (8% and 7%).

Within the rented housing sector only 4% of people had a professional or vocational qualification compared with 14% in the new town private sector and 12% in Cheshire. Overall the new town figure was half of that for Cheshire.

The residents of the new town were housed at a density of 0.55 persons per room in rented housing, and it is interesting to compare this with the inner city occupancy of 1.5 persons per room in Liverpool in 1963. (22). At this date it was the pressure on housing that was largely instrumental in the decision to designate Runcorn new town but even in 1981 48% of applications for corporation housing were currently living in a shared dwelling. (23).

The population of the new town can thus be seen as young, relatively poorly qualified and suffering from a high level of unemployment although well housed and enjoying a town well endowed with amenity and a well-functioning infrastructure. But what of the future for the new town?

The Warrington and Runcorn Development Corporation is due to be wound up in the latter part of the 1980's. By that date it is the government's policy that commercial and industrial assets of the corporation will be sold and the housing stock transferred to the local authority along with community related assets such as parks and open spaces. The practice may, however, prove to be different from the theory.

Industrial assets, under the government rules controlling sale of assets, must be offered initially to the sitting tenant either of leasehold land or rented factory. Thereafter the remainder may be sold 'en bloc' to financial institutions. The difference between practice and theory is that, once a 'pepperpotting' of an estate by factories that have been sold has occurred the fragmentated remainder become less attractive as a management proposition and will not certainly attract a buyer. Failing a sale to private enterprise remaining assets will be taken over by a recently established N.W. branch of the New Towns Commission which itself is threatened with wind-up.

Runcorn's town centre assets may be more simple to sell although they are mainly in land rather than buildings. The shopping centre, car parks and most of the commercial offices are built on land leased from the corporation and were funded privately. Very protracted negotiations have taken place with the leaseholders of the site but no agreement reached over valuation. If a mutually accepted figure is agreed between the consultant valuers acting for the corporation and the consultant valuer acting for the leaseholder, it will have to be approved by the Secretary of State before the deal is concluded. In the first two years of the sale of assets, from 1979-91, the government also retained consultants to advise them on the level of bids for new town property but corporations are now permitted to certify sales themselves.

The vesting of housing and community related assets in the local authority is a very different exercise. Many of the district councils in which new towns are situated are socialist controlled and politically keen to add the corporations rented housing to their stock of council housing. This is the case in Halton but they have so far refused all offers of vesting on the grounds that the proposed financial arrangements are not satisfactory. In Halton's case there is another dimension to vesting created by the scale of Halton's own stock of council housing. This approaches 1,200 dwellings and the addition of the corporation's housing

would increase this to 21,000. More than half of the residents of Halton would be tenants of the district council and such a high proportion of council housing in one district is also something that the district council regard with caution. If no agreement is reached on vesting housing in the district council it appears probable that the solution to the problem adopted by government in Central Lancashire new town will be pursued. Here the government have set up a housing association to own and manage the former corporation's rented housing when the corporation winds up in March 1985. Whilst decisions are being made about the eventual landlord of Runcorn's tenants more of them will buy their houses as their length of tenancy and historic costs effectively reduce the selling price. The scattered nature of such sales increases the management problems for the remainder which will inevitably include a higher proportion of both difficult properties and tenants. This is not an argument against selling people the houses that they may have lived in for twenty years but another dimension to the problem of housing management and vesting.

These uncertainties, together with cut-backs in regional development aid and the demise of public corporations with the expertise to foster development, make for a very unpredictable future for the regions of the United Kingdom outside the south east of England. The new towns in the north of England, most of them hardly yet established, share in the problems of their regions but, in addition have problems of identity common to all fledgling institutions or beings.

New towns are currently unfashionable, as they have been from time to time over the last two thousand years, but with a change in political climate they may once again become instruments of effective government intervention in the less favoured regions. Meanwhile their high standard of infrastructure and environment add to the quality of life for the residents, most of whom go about their daily work and pleasure unaware of the political manoeuverings that control their future.

"Does one not, perhaps, detect in the silence of the Latin writers with respect to the new towns - in so many ways more livable and more humanly desirable than Rome - something of the same fashionable snobbishness one finds in similar circles in England over the new towns that now dot the landscape around London? They had rather be found dead in Rome than alive in Turin or Pavia. (Read Harlow or Crawley)" (24).

RUNCORN. The established town. References.

(1) 11th December 1963.

(2) Mr. A. F. Skinner, inspector appointed by Minister of Housing and Local Government.

(3) The fragmentation referred to was thought to be due to the proposed M56 motorway and the chemical pipelines and rail lines that crossed the area.

(4) MHLG internal memorandum May 1964. "Runcorn, technical examination for a proposed new town."

(5) R.D.C. Survey February 1984.

(6) Runcorn New Town 66% car availability, England and Wales 80%.

(7) Runcorn Master Plan. p. 108 (14.6).

(8) R.D.C. Place of Work from the 1981 Census.

(9) R.D.C. Annual Abstract of Statistics. 1981.

(10) This point has been discussed with the housing officers of the corporation and is supported by analysis of the first 500 families records.

(11) R.D.C. Annual abstract of Statistics. 1981.

(12) R.D.C. Survey 1984.

(13) Runcorn Guardian 1980. The year was chosen as being the end of the planned immigration period. Also the local newspaper, although called the Runcorn Guardian, became very much an edition of a Warrington biased paper and less comprehensive in it's coverage of Runcorn matters after 1980.

(14) R.D.C. Annual Abstract Statistics.

(15) Statement by Mr. Norman Tebbit, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry. House of Commons January 17, 1985.

(16) Evidence of Runcorn Rural District Council.

(17) Runcorn Master Plan. p. 2.

(18) Austin Smith, Salmon, Lord Partnership.

(19) MHLG Memoranda April 1963.

(20) HOWARD E. Garden Cities of Tomorrow.

(21) National Census. 1981

(22) The North West Study 1963. p. 73

(23) R.D.C. Annual Abstract of Statistics. 1981

(24) Or possibly read Runcorn or Milton Keynes! Extract from Lewis MUMFORD. "The City in History" p. 210.

MEDIEVAL AND MODERN NEW TOWNS.

Comparisons and Contrasts.

MEDIEVAL AND MODERN NEW TOWNS.
Comparisons and Contrasts.

i. Plantation of the new towns.

Almost exactly seven hundred years after the foundation of a new town at Aberconway the fifteen year planned growth period of Runcorn was ending. The advance in technology, the democratization of the political system and changes in the structure of society and the national economy make comparisons between the towns difficult and in some respects impossible. There are, however, comparisons that can be validly drawn even in areas where technology has changed totally such as in transportation. Pack horses and cogs have been superseded by electric trains and container ships but the importance of the routes along which goods travel is of equal importance to the economy of towns in any period of history. Similarly, although the domestic lives of new settlers in Conway and Runcorn would bear little comparison, the relationship of each settler to the economy and political life of his new town is worthy of examination and comparison. It is in the social, political and economic fields that comparisons can be made despite the intervention of seven hundred years.

Both the medieval Welsh and modern British new towns were conceived during periods of war. The war waged against Llewellyn by Edward 1 in 1277 and the ensuing uneasy peace initiated the plantation of new towns in the territory ceded by Llewellyn. Flint and Rhuddlan were established in the Perfeddwlad between the rivers Dee and Conway. A second period of war in 1282 gave rise to further new towns encircling the troublesome heartland of North Wales in Snowdonia and centred on a new regional capital at Carnarfon. The strategy was not wholly successful as was shown by the Madog rebellion twelve years later and, as a consequence, Beaumaris was planted on the northern shore of the Menai Strait. The plans for the plantation of the new towns must have been drawn up whilst the wars were in progress. Construction at Conway started only four months after the death of Llewellyn.

The modern British new towns also were conceived as a programme of postwar reconstruction albeit for very different reasons. The first of the modern new towns at Welsyn and Letchworth in Hertfordshire were built between the two world wars and became forerunners, like Flint and Rhuddlan, of a larger programme to be constructed after the second war. The gestation of the plan

for these latter towns also took place whilst the war was still being fought. Specialist committees were established to consider various aspects of postwar life and consultants engaged to draw up plans for greater London. The plans included a ring of new towns around London and, once the war was over, work started on these very rapidly. Construction was not commenced as early as it had been in Conway but just over a year after the end of the war Stevenage New Town was designated. This was remarkably soon considering that totally new enabling legislation had to pass through both houses of Parliament. The royal assent to the New Towns Act in 1946 demonstrated an urgency that compared well with Edward's achievements in Wales.

New town planning has taken place for much longer than seven hundred years and, even within their own periods, the ideas pursued by Edward and after the second world war were not new. Many new towns had been built in the thirteenth century and the king was able to draw his plans in the light of much recent experience in England. Similarly the modern new towns were planned with the benefit of the experience of the pre war private foundations in Hertfordshire and the various "ideal" villages and suburbs built during the preceding century such as Saltaire, Port Sunlight, New Lanark and Hampstead garden suburb. What was original in the programmes of Edward and postwar Britain was the use of new towns as a tool of regional planning strategy. The aims of the two periods were very different but the imposition of new urban structures on previously undeveloped sites were similar in concept. The ring of towns planted by Edward around Snowdonia were conceived as an entity as was the ring of new towns around London planned by Abercrombie in his study of greater London. It was after the production of this plan and the earlier experience on the ground at Welwyn and Letchworth that an expert committee under Lord Reith was established to consider a future new town programme. It was also with the benefit of experience in Wales that Edward called a Parliament at Harwich in 1296 to advise how best to lay out a new town at Berwick on the Scottish border.

Another similarity in the new towns of the two periods is that they were to be self-contained towns and not merely garrisons or dormitory suburbs. The Romans had established garrisons in North Wales without surrounding them with new settlements and kept the peace by force of arms in the hands of a mobile professional soldiery. Edward's approach was very different as, although the new towns were garrison headquarters, their primary aim was to re-orientate the local economy towards his castle towns and pacify through commerce rather than

with a permanent military occupation. The castles housed and employed a minority of the new town settlers and the new towns were planned to develop their own agricultural and trading economies. Moreover they were to be chartered boroughs with all the attendant rights and responsibilities of such status. An equivalent status was planned for the modern new towns and great stress was made in the discussions on the new towns bill in both houses of Parliament that they should be largely self-contained communities and not dormitories for the large conurbations. The problems of such dormitories had become apparent in the endless spread of suburbia along the radiating electric railway lines from London and the new towns were intended to be independent and quite different from amorphous commuter-occupied 'Metroland'!

The suburbs of London and Britain's other major cities had expanded rapidly to house a rapidly expanding population. Similar population pressures were apparent in England at the end of the thirteenth century and agricultural land was becoming inadequate to feed a larger population. The opportunity of using "new land" in Wales to house and feed some of his subjects may have been a factor in the king's decision to create the new towns. (1).

ii. Investment in the new towns.

The modern provincial new towns like Runcorn or Washington in north-east England were designed not only to ease population pressures on their parent conurbations but to provide industrial growth points in areas where the established economy was backward compared to that of southern England. Investment in the new towns was partly to induce a modernisation of the region's economy. Edward's very considerable investment in north Wales also had the effect of modernising a backward regional economy and increasing national wealth although Edward's motivation was undoubtedly less altruistic than that of a modern government. The medieval and modern programmes differed greatly in the scale of new town provision in relation to existing urban centres. Runcorn, when fully developed, will only house a population one tenth that of Liverpool but Edward's three towns on the Menai Strait were at least equal to, if not larger, than existing urban centres at Nefyn, Pwllheli and Llanfaes. The scale of Conway in relation to these towns is better compared with the effect of Milton Keynes on Buckinghamshire than of Runcorn on Merseyside.

Milton Keyns will be the largest town in the county and massive public and private investment will equip it with an infrastructure and economy much more modern and potentially prosperous than other towns of the area. The effect of Conway, Carnarfon or Beaumaris must have been similar on the local economy of north Wales. Like Milton Keynes these towns also grew by the importation of funding from outside the region rather than by locally generated capital. Thus local wealth was created by the introduction of new money with permanent effects on the economy of the region. Initially such investment in Wales would have benefitted the immigrant English settlers just as Londoners benefitted from the money spent on Milton Keynes or Liverpudlians from investment in Runcorn. But with the succession of generations the benefit would accrue to the indigenous population and local economy whatever the origin of their ancestors. Within fifteen years of their foundation both Conway and Runcorn were occupied by a population containing a high proportion of indigenous second generation settlers, descended from the original settlers but born or brought up in the new towns.

The volume of money introduced to the provincial regions by both the modern and medieval new towns was very large. At 1984 prices public investment in the construction of Runcorn was equivalent to over £500M, or £9 per person in the country. This is equivalent to about one quarter of a day's pay for a skilled manual worker such as a mason or carpenter. Their medieval equivalents earned about five pence a day and the cost of Conway apportioned nationally amongst a population of three million amounted to 1.13d or about the same proportion of a day's work as Runcorn. But if the cost of the new towns was not apportioned amongst the national population but amongst the new town settlers then investment in Conway was very much greater than any modern new town. At modern prices the investment in Conway would have been about £50.000 per head of the town's population compared with £12,500 in Runcorn. These comparisons do not mean a great deal in real financial terms but do illustrate the scale of the movement of resources into the new towns. Conway, Carnarfon and Beaumaris were very small towns by modern standards but in 1300 they were as large or larger than other towns of the region and recipients of a very significant part of the national budget.

There were in the thirteenth century, as there are in the twentieth, many other demands on the national budget of which the most significant was military hardware and personnel. Morris has estimated that the cost of Edward's wars in

Wales was nearly £100,000 and the capital cost of the castles and towns built after the war was also this amount. (2)(3). Although the king had military commitment elsewhere, particularly in France and Scotland, the share of his resources spent on new towns in comparison with his military budget was much higher than in postwar Britain. The total cost to the public purse of all new towns built in Britain in the forty years following the second world war has been £3,000M (actual costs) compared with an annual defence budget in 1984 of nearly three times this amount. (4). Such levels of military expenditure placed a great strain on the exchequer and the completion of both the medieval and modern new towns was curtailed as a result of other demands for money. Edward's wars in France and Scotland precluded adequate finance being made available for the completion of Beaumaris and the rebuilting of Carnarfon. By the end of his reign he was greatly indebted to the Italian bankers who had financed his military adventures, and foreign bankers were not without their influence on the modern new town programme. British postwar economic policy has been characterized by regular and repeated constraints on public expenditure. Such constraints were not without a direct effect on levels of government investment in new towns and none more so than the public spending squeeze imposed on the Callaghan government in 1976 by the International Monetary Fund. These enforced restraints were continued as a matter of policy by the incoming conservative government in 1979 which, by 1983, had declared that all new town development corporations would be wound up by the end of the decade. Some of Britain's postwar new towns would seem to be threatened with the same fate as Carnarfon and Beaumaris and remain incomplete in essential elements of infrastructure. (5). Beaumaris had to wait over one hundred years for the construction of the town walls but it must be hoped that contemporary new towns are not treated in this way.

The introduction of large capital sums into new towns necessitated a parallel importaion of expertise in the expenditure of such sums. Neither Conway nor Runcorn had an indigenous technical staff or a building force capable of constructing a new town. Even if such expertise had been available it is certain that the king would not have trusted the native Welsh to handle such sums of money on his behalf. It is almost as certain that modern governments would not allow local authorities to handle large building programmes exclusively funded from central sources. He who pays the piper calls the tune and,even where new towns' legislation has been adapted to revive the dockland areas of Liverpool and London, government chose not to invest it's

money through the agency of the local authorities but through urban development corporations whose constitution was basically similar to that of new town development corporations. In both ages, although the capital assets created in the new towns were of benefit to the local community revenue returned to the source of investment rather than the local administration. The fee farm of Conway was paid to the royal exchequer and interest on borrowed capital was paid by Runcorn development corporation to the Treasury in London.

iii. Planning the new towns.

The organisation introduced by the king to design and build the Welsh new towns was headed by an architect of proven reputation in the construction of castles. James of St. George had established himself in France and was recruited to Wales to design all of the king's new castles and towns. The physical scale of the medieval programme of works was small enough to be within the compass of a single man's ability but their modern counterparts were much larger and more complex. Each of the 1946 Act new towns employed an individual planning consultant to devise their master plans. Arther Ling was chosen to prepare the Runcorn plan on the basis of his previous work in Coventry and on the Greater London plan. Although his overall planning responsibilities were similar to those of James of St. George his role was much more restricted in the architectural and construction phases. The passage of time had firstly seen the establishment of a professionalism which precluded an architect being involved in the construction process and also a division between the professions of architecture and planning. So whereas James of St. George was responsible for the overall planning of the towns, designing the castles and some of the building work, Arthur Ling's sole responsibility was the preparation of the master plan. These are not appropriate pages on which to discuss the philosophical question of disinterested professionalism and the differences between the medieval architect/contractor and the modern consultant but if quality of architecture is relevant to the discussion then the medieval system cannot have been very wrong.

Just as the role of the architect differed between the two periods so, as a consequence, did the organisations necessary to implement the construction work. James of St. George had other architects and craftsmen working with him on both the detailed design and construction sub-contracts. The purchase of materials, organisation of finance and the recruitment of labour were the responsibility

of an administrator working closely with James and who was also responsible directly to the king. None of these tasks were done in Runcorn by Arthur Ling but by various professionals working for the development corporation and the building contractors employed to carry out the works. Building design and the organisation of finance was carried out by the corporation and purchase of materials and recruitment of labour by the contractors.

In the role of town planners the parameters within which James of St. George and Arthur Ling had to work changed little in seven hundred years despite the advance of technology. Neither man was responsible for the initial selection of the new town site although James may have had some influence on the king in this respect. Once the sites were chosen they became major influences on the planning process. In Conway the topography of the site determined the allocation of land to castle, town, quay and agriculture. Slopes and bearing capacities had to be allowed for in planning the sequential relationship between ditches, walls, castle and quays. Both military and commercial functions needed to be considered and accommodated in the plan. Similarly in Runcorn the topography determined elements of the plan such as the location of industrial sites and influenced the allocation of land to housing and recreational use. As in Conway the lines of external communications had to be related to the internal structure of the town. The fundamental sequence of survey, analysis and plan were equally applicable to both the medieval and modern situations. A secondary but important factor affecting both planners was the architectural character they intended to create for the new towns. The Welsh castles and towns, most particularly Carnarfon, were intended not only to function practically in military terms, but to dominate and impress. This undoubtedly was considered by James of St. George in the initial design stages just as Arthur Ling wrote a chapter in his master plan for Runcorn about the proposed architectural character of the new town.

An unfortunate similarity between the planning of Conway and Runcorn is that both were granted an inadequate area of land within which to build. The size of a burgage plot determined the internal arrangement of Conway but not enough land was available to allow all of the settlers a standard 100 ft. x 50 ft. plot. Within fifteen years of the town's foundation houses were being built outside the walls by the water, near to the ferry and under Twthill. Some years later the burgesses were petitioning the king for more agriculatural land and this was eventually granted to them. The population therefore exceeded

that which was originally envisaged but in Runcorn the final population of the town will be less than planned. The option of expanding outside the notional walls was not available to Runcorn and, as housing densities have been less than in the master plan, the final population level expected can never be achieved. Housing land availability was less than envisaged due to increasing safety corridors necessary along underground pipelines. Housing density was deliberately reduced in order to build most of the town in the form of two storey houses with private grardens and it is interesting to note here that average house plot size in Runcorn was about one quarter of the size of a Conway burgage. In addition to problems in respect of housing land Runcorn also ran out of available industrial land by the end of the planned growth period. This shortage caused it's economy to stagnate just as Conway's must have done in the years before extra agricultural land was granted to the town. Due to the rapid growth pattern and highly structured allocation of land the problem of land shortage is perhaps a characteristic shared by new towns of all periods in comparison with slow growing 'organic' towns.

It was the squalor present in the growing organic towns of the nineteenth century that prompted Ebenezer Howard to both write about and establish new towns. He saw new towns as being able to eliminate such squalor and provide a planned and civilised environment for working people. Whereas he recognised the advantages of new technologies and incorporated them into his planning he cannot have been uninfluenced by the romanticism of Victorian England and it's pre-occupation with pre-Raphaelitism and Arthurian legend. His concept of new towns surrounded by their own areas of agricultural land relate uneasily to an age when mechanised transportation and agricultural specialisation were expanding. It was more appropriate to Conway than the twentieth century new towns that resulted from Howard's writings where agricultural interests are not seen as part of a new town's economic structure. But, despite Howard's quotation of Blake and Ruskin, the most important link which his writings forge between the medieval new towns of north Wales and post second world war Britain is that of resettling people in new towns well away from their origins. Early thirteenth century new boroughs and the new villages of Victorian philanthropic industrialists were local resettlements whereas the new towns being discussed here all involved the migration of people into self-contained towns set in a 'foreign' environment. They were built exclusively for the immigrants and excluded the indigenous population from enjoying their benefits. Thus the Welsh were generally excluded from settlement in the king's new towns just as

local people generally did not qualify to be housed by Runcorn development corporation. Although the immigrant population of Runcorn was drawn from a distance of only fifteen miles it was nevertheless as "foreign" a population to the natives of rural Cheshire as the English settlers in Conway must have been to the Welsh. To the youths of old Runcorn the immigrants from urban Liverpool were 'scousers' and intruders. To the new settlers the indigenous youth were 'woollybacks' unversed in the sophistacation of the big city. This difference manifested itself in Runcorn, just as it would have done in Conway, in language with the strong dialect of central Liverpool contrasting strongly with local Cheshire accents. Any community whether Arlechwedd or Runcorn resents the imposition of strangers especially when the newcomers are provided with modern and expensive facilities at the expense of a government to whom they all pay taxes. In this context the settlement of Conway and Runcorn imposed strains and problems of identity on both the immigrants and the local populations. In an interview for this study a nineteen year old boy who had been brought to Runcorn as a toddler complained that in Cheshire he was regarded as a 'scouser' but when he went back 'home' to Liverpool he was treated as a Runcornian or 'woollyback'. Such a comment echoes the protestations of the people of Llanfaes who complained that to the Welsh they were seen as English but to the English they were Welsh. As second generation settlers replaced their parents then these tensions were bound to diminish and in both the medieval and modern new towns were reduced by intermarriages between the native and new communities. Within fifteen years of their foundations both Conway and Runcorn contained a considerable proportion of second generation settlers to whom the new town was home.

During this fifteen year period about 600 people must have moved to Conway from distances averaging around 100 miles whereas in Runcorn 40,000 people had moved from Merseyside about 15 miles away. Both of these migrations were undertaken voluntarily but neither can have been spontaneous. Inducements such as burgess status and rentfree periods were offered to potential medieval migrants. Subsidised housing and industrial grants were on offer to migrants to Runcorn. In order for people to take advantage of such inducements they need to be explained by an authority that can be both believed and trusted. Even with the availability of newspaper, cinema and television advertising Runcorn development corporation found it necessary to employ a Liverpool based administration to inform potential immigrants of what was available in Runcorn. Without the benefit of the modern media of communication the king and lords

in his entourage used the administrators of their estates to recruit settlers for the new towns. Such a programme of positive recruitment was essential in both periods if the investment made by the founders of the new towns was not to be wasted. Additionally, in the medieval period, the military function of the town would be jeopardized if a full complement of settlers was not resident. When vacancies occurred in Flint and Rhuddlan the king sent a senior clerk to report on the scale of the problem and to recommend what action was necessary. In like fashion modern government required a quarterly return from each new town in respect of both physical progress and the level of housing and industrial vacancies.

The incentives offered to would be settlers in Edward's towns indicates that migration was voluntary but the incentives would have been only one factor in a family's decision to migrate, Then, as now, a variety of pressures pushed and pulled people to migrate to the new towns. Personal ambition, financial betterment or social status may have pulled them to Wales whilst domestic problems may have pushed them. The thirteenth century growth of population had virtually exhausted the availability of agricultural land in England and overcrowding may have been a factor in any decision to migrate. Family pressures and trouble with the law, employer or neighbours would have been as potent reasons for moving in 1284 as they were in 1984. But once a medieval family had moved the possibility of returning would have been remote compared with their modern counterparts and this may have been a factor in the relative stability of the Conway population during the early years. The difficulties of travelling back without the protection of their lord's administration would have been overwhelming compared with the ease with which a Runcorn family could journey back to Liverpool if their move to the new town proved to be unsuccessful.

iv. Local government.

The plantation of both Conway and Runcorn took place against a background of the reorganisation of local government. Edward had imposed the English shire system on Wales and the new towns were a fundamental part of the new administrative structure. This undoubtedly benefitted the economies of the towns, especially Carnarfon, by the imput of resources to administer local government. The king's local government structure stayed in being for seven

hundred years until 1972 when the royal counties of Anglesey, Carnarfon and Merioneth were replaced by a single county of Gwynedd. The 1972 reorganisation of the Welsh counties was followed by the 1974 reorganisation of local government in England which has been described above. The effect of this on Runcorn was to remove it from the list of administrative districts. In this respect Runcorn fared poorly compared with the medieval new towns, not only in loss of identity but in the financial imput that is essential to an administrative centre. The change was also contrary to the ideas of Lewis Silkin when he introduced the New Towns Bill to Parliament and expressed the intention that new town and administrative district boundaries should be coincident. In this respect medieval recognition of a new town's status and structure could be said to be in advance of modern thought.

v. Land for the new towns.

The raw ingredient of any new town is the land on which to build and the assembly of the necessary land in Conway and Runcorn reveals a number of parallels. Both sites were initially selected due to their strategic positions at important river crossings. Conway was sited for defensive reasons and Runcorn to take advantage of the improved river crossing facility created by the construction of a new bridge. This opened up new commercial possibilities for the area that had not been viable before. Such strategic considerations determined the location of both Conway and Runcorn without apparent regard to the existing occupiers of the selected sites. It would have been much simpler and cheaper for Edward to have found a site that did not involve the relocation and reconstruction of an abbey. The new town at Runcorn would have been simpler to plan if I.C.I. had not had a major existing chemical plant in the area and plans to build another exceeding a thousand acres in size. If the Cistercians at Conway or I.C.I. at Runcorn had been determined to resist the settlement of a new town then it would have been politically very difficult to proceed with the work on either site. On the other hand it was convenient that a monastic order had accumulated land in the right place and of the right size to suit the foundation of the new town. The king had to deal with one owner only and the site was undeveloped apart from the abbey buildings. The land owned by I.C.I. in Runcorn had also been assembled by a monastic order in the twelfth century. After the dissolution of the monasteries the land of Norton Priory was sold to Sir Richard Brooke and his descendants held the land until they

sold it to I.C.I. in 1958. During their ownership the Brookes resisted the intrusion of urban influences onto their land and it was probably due to their long ownership and their attitude to development that kept the land open for the eventual construction of the new town. The Brookes had resisted the passage of the Bridgewater canal through their land and fought three Acts of Parliament before they had to accede to it's construction in 1776. They were involved in lengthy litigation at the end of the nineteenth century against the owners of alkali works in Runcorn and Widnes because chamical effluents were harming their woodland. The recent archaeological excavations and conversion of the remaining priory buildings to a museum devoted to an exposition of monastic life has a relevance to both pre-new town Conway and Runcorn.

The assembly of land for Runcorn new town was carried out in accordance with established laws and principles of compensation. No such codification of the law and compensation relating to acquisition of land by compulsion governed Edward's actions in North Wales. Here he claimed title to land by act of conquest rather than act of law and yet his settlements with existing landowners were not very different with transactions in Runcorn. For the translation of the Abbey of Aberconway to Maenan he operated on the basis of "equivalent reinstatement". An almost identical procedure applied to the relocation of the United Reformed Church in Runcorn. Both religious houses were moved by agreement to new sites and new buildings were paid for as part of the construction expenses of the new town. Both churches were left undisturbed until their new premises were ready and they were able to move without interruption of their religious duties. The sites to which the churches were moved were also occupied and arrangements had to be made to compensate the occupants. The tenants at Maenan were found land elsewhere and the owner/farmer in Runcorn agreed to sell his land to the corporation. Just as the tenants at Maenan were found alternative accommodation so tenants in Runcorn whose houses were required to be demolished were offered corporation housing. In Carnarfon, Beaumaris and Runcorn house owners were paid the value of their property when the sites were required for use by the new town authority. It does not appear that in either period an enhanced value was paid for property acquired for new town purposes; the price paid was the theoretical open market price and not the value to the purchaser. Compulsory acquisition of property and the rights that are vested in that property always leaves the unwilling seller with a feeling of being cheated however fair the price paid. The people of Llanfaes complained that their property and commercial rights were

being taken and re-granted to strangers. Similar reaction was expressed by Astmoor Holdings in Runcorn at the inquiry into the compulsory purchase of their land for use as a development corporation industrial site. The Welsh landholders around Carnarfon petitioned the king that their land was being taken by foreigners and these sentiments were echoed by the tenant farmers in the Runcorn designated area. As tenants the compensation they received was, they considered, niggardly. A difference between Carnarfon and Runcorn was that the land in Carnarfon was being cleared and occupied illegally by the English settlers of the new town whereas the Runcorn farmers lost their land only after the legal processes of acquisition had been completed. Nevertheless both groups of farmers saw part or all of their livelihood disappear without alternative sites being made available. Undoubtedly in the medieval period less attention was paid to smaller landed interests than in the modern age but where a case for compensation was recognised by the king the principles he applied conformed quite closely to what became codified into compensation law.

vi. Legislation and administration.

Although both medieval and modern new towns were established against a background of national laws that applied to all areas, they each owed their existence to a single act of legislation. Edward 1 granted each new town a charter which set out their responsibilities, obligations and liberties and these charters were inspected and confirmed by successive kings up to the time of Henry VIII. (6). The New Towns Act of 1946 was also re-adopted by successive governments but with minor amendments to bring it into line with parallel legislation on housing or other matters affecting the operation of the new towns once built. However there was a fundamental difference in the two legal instruments. The town charter governed the operation of the new towns once built, whereas the 1946 Act was concerned with the development of the town and not it's continuing management. The charter superceded the existing p attern of local administration whereas the new towns Act ran with it. This difference in law accounts for a basic difference in the social and administrative structure of the new towns of the two periods. The settlers in Conway and the other boroughs were responsible for their own town and were required to elect two bailiffs to manage the town from amongst their own number. In Runcorn the new town continued to be administered by the existing

structure of local government. It was, of course, open to the residents of Runcorn new town to become involved in local government but very few chose to do so. The burgesses of Conway had to be involved and the future of their town depended largely on their collective responsibility whereas in Runcorn the local administration was remote and did not apparently impinge on the life of the residents. In medieval Conway the administration of justice was also supervised by the bailiffs and coroners elected by the burgesses annually. In Runcorn, as elsewhere in modern Britain, the magistracy was established by confidential soundings and invitation without any consultation with the residents of the town. New town immigrants were conspicuously absent from the magistrates bench although two corporation board members who were also local councillors were magistrates. Charles Helsby and Frank Sherliker were thus the only people who were involved in all aspects of the development of the new town; it's construction, management and legal administration. Both of these very hard working men were, however, from the old town and their triple roles were achieved by accident rather than design. The change from regal to democratic government in the seven hundred years separating the foundation of Conway and Runcorn has not, perhaps, been as fundamental and democratic as would first appear.

Although the borough charters and 1946 Act governed different aspects of new town life they did have one important point in common. They established that the most powerful paid officials in the new town were the nominees of central government rather than the people. The constable of Conway castle was the ex-officio mayor of the town and presided over both civil and legal processes. His modern equivalent was the general manager of the corporation. Although responsible to government through his board and chairman it was his responsibility, like the constable's, to ensure that the development of the new town took place as required by the Treasury and other government departments in London. Sir William Cicon was resident constable of Conway for many years from it's inception and effectively chief executive of the new town. Derick Banwell was general manager of Runcorn development corporation from 1964 to 1978 and, like Cicon, was resident in the centre of the new town and involved in local social and religious life in addition to his professional duties. There is little doubt that the drive and energy with which most new towns develop stem from the personality of their general managers and this was probably as true in medieval Wales as it was in modern England. He was the fulltime agent of government in the new town and all decisions were in the

last resort his. The extent of the influence of a general manager could be seen in Runcorn by the slowing down of progress in the new town after the retirement of Derick Banwell in 1978. It was true that the major part of the work had been completed by this date but his succession by an officer briefed to act as a caretaker general manager in addition to his existing demanding duties until such time as the government found a way of winding up the corporation stultified onward progress. The strength of the position of constable or general manager was a great asset to a developing town but this strength could become a potential weakness if successive holders of the post were not able to continue the policies of their predecessors. (7).

Both Cicon and Banwell were responsible, not to the people of the town, but to government in London which was where their financial support originated. In this respect neither was a free agent and was required to submit accounts in great detail for audit by the exchequer. Both men were fortunate in being able to secure the backing and finance necessary during the early years of the construction of their towns.

vii. Markets.

The importation of funding into the towns had the effect of increasing the local money supply but in both Conway and Runcorn it was the intention that increasing revenues would benefit the new town and not the pre-existing local economy. Edward's Welsh new towns were instituted to become market centres and replace the old patterns of trade. Inevitably the changes brought about protests about the unfairness of the new system and such protests were echoed when Runcorn's new town centre was planned. The conflict between the corporation and the district council over the location of the town centre has been described above. It was largely brought about by pressure from shopkeepers in the old town concerned about protecting their trade against the newcomers. Even after the council had agreed to the new location arguments over the shopping content of the new centre continued. It was planned by the corporation that part of the new centre would be devoted to market stalls but this brought objections from the district council. They were the legal market authority and wished to protect the market in the old town and vetoed the new proposals. When the centre was built it had a small part designated as a 'Traders Hall' but this never developed the attraction that a proper market might have done.

The king imposed a compulsory market area very much larger than the town itself from which trading was only supposed to take place in Conway market. This affected neighbouring market centres and brought protests from the Bishop of Bangor about the operation of his own market. Runcorn could not impose a market catchment but, nevertheless, set out to capture a wider market than the town itself. The decision to fund the centre privately and build it in one phase meant that a wider market had to be pursued than the partly developed new town. The centre was advertised widely and did draw in trade from the surrounding areas but as these upgraded their own shopping provision Runcorn's influence waned. By the end of the planned growth period the centre was serving little more than the population of Runcorn itself which by this time had grown to match the scale of its town centre. (8). The erosion of Runcorn's early influence on shopping patterns was similar to the decline of Conway. As markets were chartered at Aber, Trefriw and Llanwrst the effect of Conway diminished. Although both Conway and Runcorn upset existing trading patterns during their early years they also introduced significant new population into their regions and enabled equilibrium to be regained.

viii. The Church.

Importation of population into new towns involves reorganisation of the religious as well as the secular administration of an area. The plantation of Conway necessitated a change of parish responsibilities and the conversion of the abbey church into a parish church to serve the new community. The increasing population of Runcorn required a redrawing of parish boundaries on two occasions during the planned growth period. But Runcorn's church affairs had a dimension that would not have been understood in Conway. The established Anglican church, the Roman Catholics, the non-conformist churches and the 'new world' sects such as the Mormons and Jehova's Witnesses all required consideration in the planning of the town. This change in the structure of religious life over seven hundred years was highlighted by the archaeological excavation of Norton Priory. Over one hundred and twenty skeletons of monastic brothers and their benefactors were excavated for examination and the question was posed by the churches as to which church should attend to their eventual reburial; the church that buried them or the one that superceded it as the religion of the state. The two contending parties came together in August 1984 to hold an ecumenical open-air service at Norton Priory to celebrate the 850th anniversary of the foundation

of the Priory. Over six hundred people of various denominations took part in the service which was to have taken place in the excavated nave of the monastic church. At the exact moment of commencement of the service a huge thunderclap heralded the onset of torrential rain and the congregation hastily re-assembled in the inadequately sized vaulted undercroft of the medieval priory. It is interesting to speculate as to what the monks and people of Conway would have made of this apparently divine intervention into monastic affairs.

ix. Social, economic and cultural aspects.

The commercial activities of both Conway and Runcorn depended to a marked degree on businessmen who were not resident in the town. Trading in Conway was dominated by merchants from Chester and Bordeaux, who, in times of war or rebuilding, were joined by men from Dublin, Bristol, Shrewsbury, Preston and Newcastle under Lyme. Many small businesses must have been operated by resident burgesses but none on the scale of the Chester merchants. They had interests in many towns and were the medieval equivalent of the multiple shops that dominate all modern shopping centres. Virtually all of Runcorn's new shopping was controlled by national retail companies and local shopkeepers only traded on a comparatively small scale. It was, perhaps, inevitable that such established traders were able to dominate the rapidly growing markets in the new towns as they were already equipped with transport fleets, sources of supply and operating capital. A similar sub-branch economy characterized much of Runcorn's new industry and the absence of main commercial and industrial interests had an effect on the civic and social life of the town. In this respect Conway and Runcorn, like most new towns, were different from towns that grew organically and by internally generated capital. Such towns were often dominated by small groups of families who controlled the industry and commerce of the town. The self-made middle class of Victorian Britain who made their fortunes from industry often lived in and dominated the life of towns they often largely owned. They exercised a patronage that was absent from the new towns except in the sense that the paid officers were appointees of government in London rather than the local people. Elected officials of medieval Conway were drawn from the ranks of the more prosperous tradesmen whilst in Runcorn councillors were typically either owners of small businesses or officials of trade unions. Many of these tradesmen in Conway were brought to the town to be involved in the building programme and formed a significant proportion of the town's population but in Runcorn the

building programme introduced very few new residents. What was common to both building programmes was the need to use labour resources drawn from far outside the new towns and to import materials from many distant sources.

The origins of the architects responsible for the overall planning of Conway and Runcorn has been discussed above but these men needed technical support staff to manage the building programme. The scale of the programmes drew men into the towns from all over Britain but very few stayed longer than was necessary in professional terms. The architects and engineers employed in Conway and Runcorn were required to be cognisant of the latest technical matters and, once their work in the new towns was complete, their expertise was in demand elsewhere. James of St. George moved with the king and his army to Scotland where he was engaged on the design of Linlithgow Castle. Richard the Engineer also worked in Scotland and Walter of Hereford worked in London and Hull. Their modern counterparts moved from Runcorn to Irvine new town in Scotland, Warrington, Milton Keynes, Northampton and many other public and private offices. Thus for the short period of their rapid development both the medieval and modern new towns were part of the mainstream of building design and technology. Ideas were brought to North Wales that had originated in Europe and even as far afield as Constantinople. Here they were developed through the sequence of castle and town building from Flint to Beaumaris. Studies were made in America and Europe for the development of Runcorn and the introduction of Japanese technology was an important part of the town's industrial development. By the imposition of the new towns and the concentration of finance and skill that they introduced the receiving areas were much more rapidly introduced to new ideas than they otherwise might have been. In turn the work carried out in the new towns influenced designers elsewhere. Even during the short period from 1277 to 1296 it can be seen that castle design within Wales progressed from the relative simplicity of Flint to the richness and complexity of Carnarfon and Beaumaris and this progression of thought would have proceeded elsewhere after the completion of and with the benefit of the Welsh construction programme. In a similar way Runcorn benefitted from works at Harlow and Stevenage and the presence in the Runcorn design team of architects and engineers from the earlier new towns. The concentration of the building programme allowed ideas to be developed in a way that would not have been possible in a conventional town and time scale. Work completed in Runcorn has already influenced later work in other new towns and by the surrounding local authorities. This local influence would also have been present in North Wales and influences of English craftwork

in stone and timber have been traced in subsequent native work. Very few of the men responsible for building either Conway or Runcorn settled as residents of the towns. Their influence was great whilst it lasted and moulded the physical character of the towns but left little effect on the social environment. Once they had departed the new towns were left with a deficiency of technical skills that also made them different from their contemporary organic towns. Some professional and technical skills that would have found steady employment in a traditional town which was slowly developing and re-developing itself became superfluous in the new towns once the frenzied burst of initial creation was over. Conway had to look to Chester for such skills. Boatbuilders were imported from Chester to Conway and in Runcorn, once the development corporation's offices were closed, there were no professional architects or engineers working in the town in either the public or private sectors. For such skills industrialists had to go to Warrington, Chester or Liverpool.

Another deficiency in the social make-up of the two new towns was the absence of some ethnic minorities. The Welsh and the Jews were precluded from holding land in Edward's new borough although there were some exceptions. Runcorn, again with a few exceptions, housed very few people from Asian or African origins. This was not due to any policy of the corporation or government, indeed government from time to time circularised new town corporations asking them to ensure that they took their "share" of the coloured population. Any shortfall was due to the unwillingness of families to move away from the ghettoes in which they tended to live in the conurbations. Both new towns were, therefore, largely populated with people of English origins although both had a proportion of Irish residents. In Conway these were probably actual migrants from Ireland whereas Runcorn's Irish population stemmed from the ancestors of the substantial Liverpool/Irish community.

An aspect of new town development that was common to both Conway and Runcorn was the presence in the towns of highly paid government administrators during the years of construction. The king's clerks and other officials in Conway were well paid in comparison with the main body of residents and had better job security and the possibility of a pension on retirement. Similarly the professional officers of Runcorn development corporation were well paid in comparison with many of the workers in the town's new industries and enjoyed guaranteed pension rights. It is interesting to note, that the maximum pension payable to a modern public servant is half the rate of his last year's pay

whereas James of St. George and Richard the Engineer both retired on a very high level of full pay and were also granted manorial rights. Should James have pre-deceased his wife then she, Ambrosia, would have been eligible to receive half of her former husband's pension and this again was much better than her modern counterpart. The real difference is that the medieval pensions were granted to a few as a royal favour whereas all development corporation officers received pensions by right and by paying contributions towards them whilst in work. The pay differentials in the medieval period were also much greater with the top official in Conway, the constable, being paid at twelve times the rate of a foot soldier. His modern equivalent would need an increase of salary at least twofold to catch up with the constable.

The constable and other officials also had opportunities to increase their incomes by profits of their offices and by engaging in trade. Architects carried out building contracts in addition to their salaried work. Such secondary forms of income were not permitted to the employees of Runcorn development corporation by their terms of contract. Also, as has been noted above, the emergence of a professional ethic has precluded both public officers and professional men from engaging in work that might put them in conflict with their employer or client. The rules of conduct governing the architectural profession were, however, changed in 1983 to allow architects to act as developers. Maybe a new generation of develop/architects will rise who will be able to match the performance of James of St. George and Richard the Engineer. The considerable wealth and standing that Richard achieved has not yet been achieved either by professionals or industrialists working in Runcorn although the town is as yet still very young. Richard's fortune, however, had a direct if distant impact on the development of Runcorn. A female descendant of his married into the Grosvenors taking title and money with her and it was the Grosvenor family company that financed Runcorn's town centre six hundred years later. (9).

The rapid construction of a new town with the importation of both labour and settlers was bound to have an effect on local inflation and scarcity. In Conway victuals were in short supply and it appears that costs escalated accordingly. In Runcorn during the five years of settlement before the new town centre was opened new residents complained of the level of prices charged by shopkeepers in the old town. The pressures of Runcorn's construction programme and the consequent shortage of building labour caused an escalation of building wages. This does not appear to have happened in Conway where

building workers were recruited by sheriffs writ although both new towns shared the experience of shortages of particular building skills on occasions.

Many of the building workers recruited to Conway stayed on to become residents of the town and would have been able to build houses for their fellow settlers. Little evidence survives about the cost of housing but it would appear that a small house cost roughly the equivalent of a craftsman's annual pay. In Runcorn all of the early housing was built by the corporation but when housing was built for sale the cost of the cheapest houses was rather more than twice the average industrial wage. If, however, the elements of modern technology such as plumbing, electrics and provision for the motor car are discounted from the cost of a Runcorn house then it's cost would also be roughly equal to an annual industrial wage. The major difference between the periods was not relative price levels but the availability of social housing at subsidised rents that were themselves calculated in relation to income levels. Also the subsidising of private housing through tax relief on mortgage interest payments was a form of social housing that would have been foreign to medieval Conway.

x. Communications.

Another area in which the advance of technology conceals basic similarities between the medieval and modern new towns is in their external communications systems. Although a day's journey from Conway would only have reached Rhuddlan or Carnarfon and in Runcorn almost any part of the world could be reached within twenty-four hours, the importance of such lines of communication was equally great for each town. The M56 motorway, the Widnes bridge and the electrified railway were Runcorn's equivalent of Conway's quays, ferry and trackways. Both towns, being sited at important river crossings, were at nodal points in the regional transport systems and this was a major factor in the economic structure of the towns. Towns without the benefit of such a location such as Bere or Harlech were inevitably less successful and their isolation was matched in the modern age by new towns with no access to the national motorway system. There was a close parallel between the petition of the burgesses of Conway asking the king to repair the town quays "because the town is poor and merchants do not come" and the motor car sticker common in Telford in 1983 exhorting "Build the M54 now".

xi. The settled towns.

It is difficult to compare the process of "normalisation" of the new towns because the political backgrounds were so different in the medieval and modern periods. The new towns in North Wales were maintained as English settlements for many generations and this delayed their absorption into the local economy and culture. Eventually the privileges accorded to Conway were eroded or withdrawn and an increasing level of intermarriage gradually eliminated the differences between the English and the Welsh towns. Once the castles became militarily obsolete and the financial imput to them and, in effect, the town was reduced or withdrawn then the town had to operate as a conventional economic unit. But this process was very protracted in Wales for political reasons and the new towns did not fully cease to be "new" for 250 years. In the modern new towns the artificial prop to the local economy was not the castle but the development corporation and this was partly removed from Runcorn in 1981 only seventeen years after designation. Increasing social and physical mobility has also hastened the rate of intermarriage between settlers and natives in Runcorn compared with Conway. Royal support for Conway and it's economy lasted as long as it was politically expedient so that by the time complete normalisation had taken place the original reasons for the foundation of the town were no longer apparent. That was not so in Runcorn which was founded to help alleviate the problems of Merseyside. Many of these problems such as inadequate housing, industrial stagnation and population loss from the region are still occurring and will do even after the end of government support for the new towns of the region.

Both Conway and Runcorn were the creation of London based governments and conceived as elements of a regional strategy which involved expenditure on a scale that could not have been afforded by the existing populations of the receiving areas. The question must be addressed as to whether these policies were effective.

As military establishments Edward's towns suffered mixed fortunes. They were founded at a time when united and organised resistance had been crushed and so during their early years were hardly put to the test. The Madoc rebellion caused the sacking of Carnarfon and the beseiging of Conway and Edward found it necessary to establish a third castellated town on the Menai Strait. Before the reconstruction of Carnarfon was complete and Beaumaris was finished the

king's attention was elsewhere and neither scheme was ever totally accomplished. Nevertheless their function as military centres was not found wanting until the Glyndwr revolt one hundred years later. By that time gunpowder had become available to European arsenals and the castle structures were becoming obsolescent although, following the Glyndwr revolt, Beaumaris was eventually furnished with it's town walls. The physical success of the castles was therefore far from total although they may also have had an effect that was more symbolic than physical in that they represented the might of a conquering nation. The decline in the role of the castles did not diminish the importance of their attendant towns. Conway, Carnarfon and Beaumaris remained small but viable towns and amongst the most important in North Wales right up until the time of the industrial revolution. It is not easy or necessarily profitable to assess what might have been if the new towns had not been planted when and where they were. If Wales had been absorbed into the English shire system on a totally peaceful basis or had remained semi-independent then it appears probable that the main urban centres of North Wales would have developed in the normal way around the ecclesiastical and market centres of the region. Bangor and St. Asaph were both the seats of bishops and at important water crossings and would probably both have become the equivalent of English county towns. Pwllheli, Nefyn and Llanfaes would have remained the main trading centres and with the trend towards urbanisation would have slowly grown accordingly. As it was, just as urban development of these centres was incipient, a new group of privileged towns were imposed on the economy of the region. Their imposition and the establishment of a shire system largely centred on English towns was at the expense of the potential growth of the native towns and permanently affected the urban geography of North Wales.

Whether the recent establishment of Skelmersdale, Runcorn and Warrington new towns will permanently affect the urban balance of Merseyside is not yet possible to assess but it appears very probable that they will. The provision of jobs and new housing in the new towns must have stemmed the decline of the region although the scale has not been sufficient to halt it completely. As with the new towns of North Wales it appears that the Merseyside new towns are having the effect of re-orientating a significant part of the regions industrial economy. Development of open green field sites alongside the national motorway network is more attractive to industrialists than redevelopment sites in outworn urban areas served by old road patterns. Whereas employment has declined in Liverpool it has grown in the new towns with the introduction of industries,

many from overseas, which would not have settled in the north west if old urban sites had been the only ones available. Parallel to the choice of industry to relate more closely to the motorway network was a change in retail shopping patterns which has also had an effect on the old urban centres. The new towns have built shopping centres easily accessible by car and this trend has been followed in Liverpool itself by the establishment of large retail warehouses on the periphery of the city in areas such as Speke. The change in industrial and shopping locations and the establishment of the new towns could lead to a long term recentring of economic activity away from old urban centres. This pattern of relocation was not unique to Merseyside but the investment in new towns and the regional infrastructure of south Lancashire and north Cheshire has probably induced a permanent change to the regional economy. The intention was that the new towns would take some of the pressures off Merseyside to allow it time to recover it's industrial strength but, although the new towns largely achieved their set objectives, the old urban areas did not. The relative success of the new towns was not a reason for the failure of Liverpool to regenerate itself. The reasons were to be found either within the city or in the level of economic imput it received from government.

Both Conway and Runcorn were constituent parts of programmes of new town building directed towards the re-orientation or regeneration of a provicial region. Seven hundred years have enabled the development of Conway to be seen in perspective and in relation to the general economic development of it's region. It appears certain that the scale of investment required to build new towns did have, and probably will have, an effect on the urban and economic structure of their regions but no systematic research has been carried out into the effectiveness of such great government investment. Runcorn and Skelmersdale alone have cost the taxpayers over £1,000M but no research has been done to establish whether this was money well spent. Social and transportation studies were carried out by government funded agencies in the early 1970's but never followed up. They were, in any case, internal studies of the new town and not assessments of regional influences. This study has only been able to examine relatively limited aspects of new town development but does suggest that the effects of new town development were both far reaching and enduring. Further work is required to assist in future policy making by government on the role of new towns in both national and regional development for Conway was not the first new town and Runcorn will not be the last. At present the pendulum of government policy has swung away from new towns and all corporations will be

wound up by the end of the 1980's. Already, however, calls are being made for new planned settlements to form part of government's economic and planning strategy. Mr. Wyndham Thomas has called for clusters of garden cities on the pattern advocated by Ebenezer Howard to be established in Hertfordshire in order to control and channel the demand for housing land in the south-east of England. (10) Mr. Ian Wray has proposed a "planned resurrection of the New Town and Town Expansion programmes." (11).

If any general thesis concerning new towns can be drawn from this study it is that the time scale of new town development sits uneasily with that of government. Kings were human and, therefore, by nature were fickle and easily transferred their attentions elsewhere and away from the new towns they had created. Democratic government elected for a five year term is possibly even more fickle and impatient than kings. Now that the post second world war programme of new town building is virtually completed it would make sense to research their effectiveness as instruments of government policy. This would cost only a small fraction of what the towns themselves have cost and provide a basis on which future policy might be formulated. Edward at least recognised the wisdom of drawing on accumulated experience when he called a parliament to advise on the establishment of his last new town at Berwick. It is widely acknowledged that British postwar new town legislation and development led the world. The considerable volume of skill and experience that made this happen is still available and capable of providing direction to research into both the completed programme and possible future directions of policy. It does not appear probable, however, that the government now in power will call a parliament expressly to advise "how to devise, order and array a new town to the greatest profit of Ourselves and merchants." (12).

MEDIEVAL & MODERN NEW TOWNS. Comparisons and Contrasts. References.

(1) Opinions of historians vary as to the degree of growth of population in the 13th century but it seems generally agreed that agriculture had extended to utilise all suitable and available land. It is not suggested here that land acquisition for subsistence farming was an important motive behind the king's plans, but that the availability of land was a gratuitous benefit brought about by his town planning programme.

(2) MORRIS J. E. The Welsh Wars of Edward 1. p. 196.

(3) TAYLOR A. J. The King's Works in Wales. p. 407.

(4) ORCHARD-LISLE P. New Towns for Sale. (Town & Country Planning Nov 1984)

(5) Carnarfon castle lacked the top and turret of one tower and some stone detailing; Beaumaris was short of considerable parts of the castle structure and town lacked a defensive wall or even banks and ditches as had been built at Flint and Rhuddlan. (See History of the King's Works. Vol I. p. 390, 394, 403 and 405).

(6) LEWIS E. A. Medieval Boroughs of Snowdonia. p. 33.

(7) LEWIS E. A. (op.cit) see page 147 et seq for the diminishing role of the constable.

(8) This is not intended to suggest that Runcorn's town centre was failing commercially. It was, in fact, trading at a high level but drawing it's trade from a more local catchment than when originally built. It was never an intention of the Master Plan that the centre should have a regional influence in an area well served by major shopping centres at Liverpool, Chester and Manchester.

(9) Richard was granted the manor of Belgrave three miles south of Chester. In later life he assumed the surname of Belgrave and this title was kept by the Grosvenors when it came in to their family through marriage to a female descendant of Richard. The Grosvenors still hold land in Belgrave and gave this name to their extensive estate in London, also acquired by marriage.

(10) THOMAS W. Ebenezer Howard Memorial Lecture. (Oct 1983)

(11) WRAY I. The False Trail to Private New Towns. (The Planner. Feb 1985)

(12) PALGRAVE F. (ed) Parliamentary Writs i.(1827) p. 48.

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Maps and diagrams.

1. Location of King Edward 1's towns in North Wales.
2. Conway town lands.
3. Conway c. 1300.
4. Conway c. 1300 with notional building pattern.
5. Burgage divisions in relation to modern Conway.
6. Conway; medieval and modern building density.
7. Conway; accumulated expenditure.
8. Shipping related to the North Wales new towns.
9. Medieval rates of pay.
10. North Wales new towns; origins of settlers.
11. Runcorn; origins of settlers.
12. Washington; origins of settlers.
13. Milton Keynes; origins of settlers.
14. Location of modern new towns.
15. Runcorn; regional setting.
16. Runcorn; built-up land 1964.
17. Runcorn; I.C.I. land 1964.
18. Runcorn; amended master plan.
19. Runcorn; progress record.
20. Runcorn; Land acquisition.
21. Runcorn; Industrial floor space.
22. Runcorn; Population growth.
23. Runcorn; Employment.
24. Runcorn; House completions.
25. Runcorn; Economic trends.
26. Runcorn; Annual expenditure.
27. Runcorn; Annual expenditure (1984 prices).
28. Building Cost Index 1967-1981.
29. R.D.C. total staffing.
30. R.D.C. Departmental staffing.
31. Runcorn New Town; original Master Plan.

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