This issue of the newsletter opens with an article by Stephanie Decker, reflecting on the relationship between ‘Postcolonialism and business history: Edward Said and Frederick Cooper’, a contribution to debates about the development of business history ‘beyond’ Chandler.

There are also three ‘New Research’ articles. Aashish Velkar, the winner of the 2010 Colman Prize, contributes a piece exploring ‘Measurement Standards in 19th Century British Economy: Mensuration vs. Metrology’. Albane Forestier, whose thesis was short-listed for the 2010 Colman prize, contributes an article on ‘Commercial Organization in the Late Eighteenth Century Atlantic World: A Comparative Analysis of the British and French West Indian Trades’ and Kevin Tennent, whose thesis was long-listed for the prize, writes on ‘Owned, monitored, but not always controlled: Understanding the success and failure of Scottish Free-Standing Companies, 1862-1910’.

This newsletter also includes reports of a guest lecture by Mira Wilkins and of a workshop on ‘Marketing Im/Mobility’, as well as a number of special offers and other announcements.

Last, but certainly not least, this newsletter includes the programme of the 2011 ABH conference, which this year will take place at the University of Reading: registration is now open.

The ABH’s web-address is: http://www.abh-net.org/

If you have any news you would like to have uploaded on the ABH website to share with the membership, please e-mail the webmaster - Teresa da Silva Lopes (tl528@york.ac.uk).

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FEATURES

Stephanie Decker, Aston Business School

‘Postcolonialism and business history: Edward Said and Frederick Cooper’

The work of Alfred Chandler famously defined business history as a subject (esp. Chandler 1962, 1990). In recent years, however, there has been much internal discussion within the subject about “Business History After Chandler” (including an annual meeting of the Association of Business Historians in 2008 of the same title).¹ Yet business history also faces pressures beyond the problematic nature of being a small subject dominated by the intellectual legacy of its ‘founding father’. Anglophone business historians especially are ‘spliced’ by an institutional divide: they are either based at history departments (mostly true for the US, and was the case in the past in the UK), or business and management schools (UK nowadays, and a few major business historians in the US).

Although Chandler was based at Harvard Business School, the intellectual roots of business history are arguably more strongly connected to history. Nevertheless, business subjects that business historians naturally engage with are often strongly influenced by concepts emanating from economic and business history. This is especially true for strategy: Chandler (structure follows strategy), Penrose (resource-based view), and Douglas C North (institutional theory) all did influential historical work (Chandler, 1962; Chandler 1990; North, 1990; Penrose, 1959).

Yet business as well as economic history have been ‘cast out’ by history departments during the ‘cultural turn’ in the humanities. This may or may not have contributed to a certain level of dislike of any postmodern tendencies in these subjects. Economic historians migrated into economics, both subjects being predominantly positivist in nature. Business historians, on the other hand, moved into business and management schools (at least in the UK), where other ‘friendly’ sub-disciplines like international business, organisational behaviour or critical management studies are strongly influenced by postmodern discursive traditions. Clearly, as a small subject business history needs to make connections with other fields in order to be able to join the larger ‘conversations’. Hence business history as a field is looking for new intellectual avenues to make contributions in a new institutional setting (Fridenson, 2007; Jones & Khanna, 2006; Jones & Zeitlin, 2007). This is now discussed frequently in the major business history journals, see for example Eric Godelier’s challenge in Enterprise & Society and the responses from other business historians (Godelier, 2009a, 2009b; Kobrak, 2009; Popp, 2009; Tiffany, 2009), work on the impact and citation of business history papers (Eloranta, Ojala, & Valtonen, 2008; Eloranta, Valtonen, & Ojala, 2010), and by

¹ As well as the workshop at Queen Mary University, London, entitled “Beyond Chandler – Intellectual Impulses for Business and Management History Tomorrow” (26 June 2009) for which this piece was originally written. Thanks go to Stefan Schwarzkopf for inviting me to this event.
organisational studies scholars with an interest in business history or vice versa (Kipping & Behlul, 2007; Rowlinson & Delahaye, 2009).

In other historical disciplines, the cultural turn had a more significant impact, such as postcolonialism in African studies, posing similar questions for the work of economic and social historians. A good example here is Frederick Cooper, who reinterpreted the economic and social history of labour, decolonisation and development studies in two books: *Decolonization and African Society* (1996) and *International Development and the Social Sciences* (1997), the latter co-edited with Randall Packard. These two influential volumes show an adaptation of critical approaches by scholars thoroughly grounded in their discipline.

Thus in discussing the potential of postcolonial analysis for business history, I chose the Edward Said/Fred Cooper combination rather than just Said because I think that Cooper’s work is firstly a good example of a fruitful use of Said’s cultural discourse analysis to social and economic topics and secondly because it opened up a new interpretation of my own work on business in Africa. Cooper’s use of concepts popularised by Said helped me frame the role of foreign business in Africa as simultaneously being co-producers of an imperial discourse in the 1950s and before, as well as falling victims to a radicalised discourse on development in the 1970s (Decker, 2006). As such it is useful in framing present-day dynamics of institutional shocks in emerging economies (Peng, 2003).

I. Postcolonialism

There is clearly a canon of early works that are usually portrayed as foundational to postcolonialism (Young 2003), among them Frantz Fanon’s *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961) and Kwame Nkrumah’s *Neocolonialism* (1965). Although Nkrumah’s work was especially relevant to the work I did for my PhD thesis, I strongly disagreed with the organiser’s suggestion to put him on as one of the ‘great thinkers’ – mostly because he did not in all likelihood write the book himself. Rather it was probably written by a number of close collaborators, among them Ghanaian party members and at least two Britons – hence in itself a very postmodern piece. The founding work in academic rather than political terms was clearly Edward Said’s *Orientalism* (1991).

Said’s literary analysis unearthed the systematic nature of creating an image of the ‘other’ (the orient) on the basis of the positive identification of the creator with certain values (the occident), and then inverting all positive connotations into negatives in order to create the other, who is necessarily darker in order to offset the superiority of the creator of the discourse. This clearly tied in with work on subalterns, on the silences that occur in a history that is written by winners (Spivak, 1988). While this became highly influential in literary studies, it did create the tendency to sometimes overlook the social and economic realities that underpinned the discourse. Interestingly however, some major pieces of work by authors who would not claim an intellectual legacy to postcolonialism, for example Ken Pomeranz’s *Great Divergence* (Pomeranz, 2000), seem to address some of the core issues of postcolonial theory and Said’s Orientalism with a different methodological mindset. It is hard to imagine that asking the very question of why it was the West that developed but not the East would have been possible before the rise of postcolonial theory.

Young’s (2003, pp. 5, 7) interpretation of postcolonialism is helpful because he debates whether there is a “single entity called ‘postcolonial theory’”, and instead
argues that postcolonial analysis uncovers non-Westerns views that were previously marginalised. It is this new view that Cooper (1996) and Cooper & Packard (1997) brought to their respective analyses of decolonisation and development in Africa.

II. Postcolonial economic & social history: Cooper (1996) and Cooper & Packard (1997)
While African studies naturally embraced postcolonial approaches, the bias of its origin in literary and cultural studies remained and meant that it was mostly cultural and social issues that became central. In contrast to this, Fred Cooper began to apply it to labour history. It was the issue of modernity and modernism, which came under scrutiny in many disciplines, and criticised for its belief in a singular, unbending scientific truth (Cooper & Randall 1997, p. 5; Scott 1998; Deutsch et al.; McCloskey 1985). A postmodern or postcolonial interpretation, however, opens up perspectives on different views and arguments that interact, gain ascendancy or become taboo, conflict or merge. By analysing the modernisation and development drive in Africa, which originally had a singular and scientific mindset, in the context of decolonisation and shifting political agendas, Frederick Cooper and others opened up a range of new perspectives in African studies.

Frederick Cooper’s Decolonization and African Society (1996) analyses how the global discourse on economic development in the 1940s and 1950s framed imperial labour questions and eventually facilitated the decolonisation of the French and British Empires in Africa. He argues that governments wanted to create a bounded working class with whom they could negotiate through an essentially metropolitan system of industrial relations. This was essential, especially after World War II, to ensure the steady output of tropical commodities and rising productivity that was needed for Britain’s post-war reconstruction. Labour, however, turned these development theories into a basis for entitlements, and the increase of strikes, consumer protests, riots and nationalist agitation gave rise to fear of losing control. Subsequently, social issues were subsumed by the ‘nationalist struggle’, as colonial governments could now conveniently deflect demands for universal entitlements, while the nationalist politicians, who took over government step by step, showed greater ability to contain conflict, at least until independence (Cooper 1996, pp. 468-470).

In their introduction to the edited volume on International Development and the Social Sciences, Cooper & Randall (1997) emphasise how the notion of development reverberated in local contexts, giving peripheral groups a sense of entitlement and a place in the global economy from which they could make demands based on a moral and political right – that of development. Their conception of development as an ideological framework allows for the existence of social struggles, alliances of different groupings and the participation of several conflicting interests in the same discourse, none of whom were fully in control of the contents and the boundaries of the debate. This was important to my own research, which considered African policies towards foreign investment as informed by contemporary development thinking, of which business was aware. Hence, the corporate responses became similarly informed by ‘development’, especially measures of political and public representation, but commercial decisions were also deeply influenced by adapting to the dominant ideology.
III. Cooper, postcolonialism and business
In my thesis I used Cooper’s and Cooper & Packard’s work extensively in order to better understand the relationship between British business, political transition and economic development in West Africa. British business was strongly embedded in the British imperial order, and as financially and politically extremely influential actors, companies co-created part of the imperial discourse within the realm of commerce and industry (see also Johnson 2007). With decolonisation and institutional transitions the role of business and its actual influence on decision-making at the Colonial Office became the subject of controversy (Butler, 2000; Milburn, 1977; Stockwell, 2000; White, 2000). But the question that was more important was the actual influence wielded with the emerging African elites (White 2000, Decker 2006), which was a much more volatile set of stakeholders.

Yet in a volatile institutional environment that experienced economic and political shocks, foreign business began to lose influence and became a target of populist nationalist sentiment (Guillen, 2000; Lipson, 1985). From the 1950s to the 1970s, business experienced a fall from discursive power. This was tied to the dominant ideology of development economics. As the radical approaches lost out in favour of a neo-liberal consensus in the 1980s, the threat of expropriation receded. Where companies are threatened by expropriation today (mostly in Venezuela and Russia), similar discourses are evident, which highlights that these are indicative of the levels of risk that foreign investors face. In the 1970s, the radicalisation of development economics opened up policy options like expropriations to states that were less powerful than today’s Venezuela or Russia.

IV. Conclusion
Cooper’s work is an example of using a postcolonial analysis within a specific research context. In the long run, however, I think that Cooper and Cooper & Packard’s work on development shows the introspection of a discipline as well as its interpretation of its research subject. With business history engaged in the search for new intellectual stimulus beyond Chandler’s contribution, it may be time to analyse the trends and discourses within business history over time. From its inception it has straddled the fields of history and business studies. Its orientation and receptivity to various trends over the years certainly tell a story about the institutional location of the field as well as allowing a ‘marginalised’ perspective on the larger disciplines it forms a part of.

Bibliography


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‘Measurement Standards in 19th Century British Economy: Mensuration vs. Metrology’

Introduction
This article is based on my doctoral dissertation which explored the issue of measurements and measurement standards in historical markets. It investigated the transactional problems that business groups – firms, merchants, entrepreneurs, etc. – historically faced due to unreliable measurements. It explores why such measurement problems were historically significant and economically fundamental, why business groups sought solutions to such problems and what those solutions were.

Existing historiography on this subject generally equates unreliability of measurements with the existence of multiple measurement units. Historians argue that the lack of uniformity in weights and measures (hereafter ‘measures’) is evidence of a local or regional economy. Multiplicity and non-uniformity of ‘measures’ – signifying an absence of a measurement system – tended to disrupt internal trade by creating uncertainty, imperfect competition and promoting local anomalies. Multiplicity of ‘measures’, according to this view, had a detrimental impact on transactions, market exchanges, and ultimately on market integration.2

The confusing array of multiple ‘measures’ was tidied up during the nineteenth century, especially through two major legislative reforms in the 1820s and 1870s. The Imperial system of weights and measures that was introduced by the 1824 legislation was the culmination of scientific, administrative and legislative efforts of scientists, MPs, civil servants and instrument makers throughout the latter part of the eighteenth century and the early years of the nineteenth century. This reform of Britain’s ‘measures’, and the subsequent one of 1878, eventually rid the statute books of duplicative and arcane acts, introduced a simplified and hierarchical system of measurement units, and instituted a well-defined organisational structure to enforce this system nationally.

In many respects, this was a significant political change. Britain finally had a uniform system of ‘measures’, a political quest that was periodically attempted by successive monarchs since the Magna Charta. With this, Britain was one of the few nations in Europe to have a unified system of ‘measures’ in the first half of the nineteenth century. The other major European powers would not achieve this until

later: France (c1840), Germany (c1870), Italy (c1860), Russia (1920s). Most nations adopted the Metric system that was developed in revolutionary France in the 1790s and swept across the globe between 1850 and 1875; a system that Britain narrowly rejected in 1871, voting to retain the Imperial measures as the basis of its national measurement system.³

Notwithstanding its political significance, what was the economic impact of this institutional change? How did this change affect internal trade? Did it help to bring about the integration of local and regional markets? And did the introduction of uniform ‘measures’ help business groups to overcome the measurement problems that contributed to internal barriers, trade disruption and limiting market exchange?

The existing historical view implies that it did. Such an implication rests on a major assumption: that there exists a direct correspondence between ‘measures’, i.e. the system of weights and measures units, and ‘measurements’, i.e. the information that the act of measuring captures. This direct correspondence is why multiplicity, non-uniformity, or incoherency of ‘measures’ translated into multiplicity, non-uniformity, or incoherency of ‘measurements’, which in turn had the disruptive impact on trade and market exchange. The corollary to this being that the introduction of uniform and invariable ‘measures’ – a modern system – eliminated unreliability in measurements, simplified economic transactions, and helped to integrate markets.

There is little distinction in most historical accounts between standardizing ‘measures’ and standardizing ‘measurements’, and the former is expected to have translated into the latter. Ken Alder alluded to this distinction when he wrote that the scientifically motivated thrust of the French metric reforms of the 1790s was to replace an older economic system with a newer one.⁴ Sidney Pollard captured the essence of this distinction when he remarked that the objectives of businessmen are not to attain perfection [of ‘measures’], but to keep down costs and increase efficiency through reliable measurements.⁵ On the whole, however, most historical accounts fail to clearly emphasize the difference between the abstract systems of ‘measures’ and the practical issues of making ‘measurements’, and why standardizing the former helped to manage the latter.

My research refrained from making prima facie assumptions about the relationship between ‘measures’ and ‘measurements’. In fact, historical evidence shows that historical markets actually faced two measurement problems. The first was undoubtedly the multiplicity of ‘measures’ - the proliferation of local or regional


measurement units, and the presence a confusing array of weights and measures, which allegedly disrupted trade and economic exchange. The second was an institutional problem stemming from the economic aspects surrounding measurements: markets encounter transactional difficulties as delineating complete information about any economic good is fundamentally costly. Information is normally based upon measurements of multiple attributes or criteria. This forces the selection of a smaller (more manageable) set of criteria to measure. The selection, in turn, creates a potential for information asymmetry – a classic principal-agent problem.\(^6\)

My research highlighted the difference between metrology, i.e. the system of weights and measures, and mensuration, i.e. the act of measuring.\(^7\) This is an important distinction in terms of understanding how businesses managed measurements in economic transactions. The major focus of the research was on mensuration, i.e. the activity through which particular information is captured. The act of measuring – mensuration – is (and historically has been) broadly comprised of three elements: observing and recording relevant information, comparing these observations to standards, and eventually contextualizing the comparisons. Several processes, tools, instruments, standards and protocols (i.e. rules, norms or conventions) are essential in conducting this activity. ‘Measurement’ i.e. the information gathered from this act, is the end result of this activity. The research analysed how business groups (merchants, firms, etc.) conducted this activity within different economic contexts, the distinct groups that shaped this process, the various measurement issues that were encountered, and how they were managed.

**Main Arguments**

Three main arguments emerged from this research project. First, metrological standardization solved the historical problem of multiple, potentially confusing measurement units, but was incapable of solving the institutional problems of measuring multiple attributes. Markets, businesses and firms had to develop particular mensuration practices within micro-contexts, which incorporated available metrological standards, governance mechanisms, and other institutional rules to address this ‘other’ measurement problem.

Second, development of mensuration practices involved making various ex-ante selections or choices. These included selecting the property or attribute of an object that was to be measured, choosing an appropriate measurement method, selecting the metrological standard, specifying the measuring instruments to be


\(^7\) The Oxford English Dictionary defines the two terms as follows: metrology, *(n.)* 1. A system of measures, esp. one used by a particular nation, culture, etc., 2. The study of systems of measurement; the science of measurement; the branch of technology that deals with accurate measurement; mensuration, *(n.)* 1. The action, process, or art of measuring; measurement, 2. The branch of geometry that deals with the measurement of lengths, areas, and volumes; the process of measuring the lengths, areas, and volumes of geometrical figures.
used, and seeking agreement regarding measurement protocols. These choices were shaped by the nature of the information that was required, the groups who required the information, their motivations, and the purpose for which the measurements were required. Thus, institutions continued to play a crucially important role in managing measurement problems despite metrological standardization.

Finally, standardization of mensuration practices was a historically distinct process: distinct from metrological standardization. Metrological standards, i.e. the measurement units, emphasised traceability and invariability; the number of ‘states’ or ‘values’ the measurement unit existed in was limited and fixed. Mensuration practices, however, valued flexibility and incorporated several standards and artefacts to render measurements reliable in given contexts. The choice of a particular legal, metrological unit in a given context was determined by the interplay of economic, political and social forces and varied across different contexts. Measurement reliability was not limited to providing public goods in the form of fixed, legal and standardised metrological units. It was an institutional process embedded within the micro-context of economic relationships between markets, businesses and firms, and the state.

Case studies in measurement standardisation

My study of mensuration practices involved the study of how people actually made measurements within different economic contexts and the methods that were developed to ensure their reliability. Three such economic contexts formed the basis of the case study method used for this research, each case dealing with a different measurement issue. The case of the London coal trade analysed the problem of reliability of quantity measurements: how to make reliable measurements such that the physical amount of product delivered/received is actually the amount contracted for? The case of uniform wire sizes analysed the problem of reliability of measurements used as product or design specifications: how to ensure that heterogeneous producers and buyers used uniform wire sizes in the sale and purchase of metal wires? Finally, the case of standardising wheat grades analysed the problem of reliable quality measurements: how to ensure that quality measurements captured the compositional, conditional and functional aspects of a heterogeneous commodity?

These measurement issues were explored in the context of rapid expansion and internationalization of commodity value-chains during the nineteenth-century. This meant that firms had to exercise greater control over products and commodities (product specifications), method of manufacture (design specifications), delivery and contract terms (quality & quantity), traded quantities and price, etc. But growth by itself did not guarantee standardization in the sense of systematizing practices, and neither did technological development. Business practices were shaped by a complex interplay of social, political, and economic factors, which redefined existing, market relationships. Many of these relationships required different kinds of measurements for decision-making, monitoring and control of economic activity.

\[ \text{Daunton, } \text{Progress and poverty, } \text{p. 279.} \]
For instance, the management and control of product quality required dynamic methods of assessing and measuring select product attributes. Such measurements greatly depended upon how the selected attributes were affected by controllable and uncontrollable factors. Further, heterogeneity of many of the products traded was juxtaposed with problems of asymmetric information, leading firms to make decisions with only partial access to information. The complexity of information was not limited to primary commodities but also to manufactured products; information about the composition, condition and functionality of metal products (something that could not be assessed by visual inspection methods alone) was crucial in several industrial applications. Businesses had to develop complex and sophisticated mensuration practices to manage such increasing complexity of transactional requirements.

Even relatively straightforward issues such as the quantity of products being exchanged turned out to be anything but straightforward. Several trades had their own methods of measuring quantity: dry goods were sometimes measured according to their weight and sometimes by volume. Many markets in the nineteenth-century continued to measure coal, wheat, fish, etc. by volume as was traditionally done. At times, the product would be measured for quantity according to one method at one end of the value chain, and by another method at the other end: e.g. both coal and grain had such multiple measurement conventions. Added to this was the increasing complexity in the structure of value chains, which involved several merchants or manufacturing groups, each specializing in a particular aspect of value addition and with particular access to information. Reliable measurements of quantities traded, needed to ascertain both price per unit and revenue, was of major concern and on which a lot of effort was expended. Developing mensuration practices to make estimates of quantities reliable involved intense negotiations between different groups each facing a different incentive structure. At times, achieving reliability involved a radical change in the mensuration practices as when measurements by volume were replaced with measurements by weight.

Measurements also occupied centre stage during attempts to standardize products or grades. Product standards that emphasized a great degree of homogeneity or exactitude in terms of specifications, such as engineering products, required a greater degree of measurement standardization. This is also true when products had to be sorted into different grades. However, standardization in such cases was not only a matter of achieving technical precision of individual repeatable measurements, but had to take into account the motivations of the different groups that used these standards (both product as well as measurement standards). There rarely was one set of ‘ideal’ measurements that could be used to construct a given product standard, and at times measurement reliability was a product of compromise and negotiation rather than achieving precision. Competition, differentiation and coordination strategies helped to shape mensuration practices.

**Measurements in the context of British Economy of the 19th Century**

The historical context within which this research was placed is rich and varied. The rapid growth in the British economy of the nineteenth century, the changing
structure and organisation of businesses and industries, the political economy of contractual liability, the relationship between science, state and businesses, etc. form the dynamic environment within which business groups reformed measurement practices or developed new ones. In turn, this research contributes to important themes that historians and other scholars continue to explore about this period of rapid economic change.

**Industrial Organisation, Structure and Co-ordination**

Business organizations in the nineteenth century were confronted with several issues, such as the organization and management of expanding commodity chains, technological convergence and interdependence, the ability to generate competitive advantages, management and control of information, etc. Economic growth and the increasing sophistication of industrial activity in the nineteenth-century made the organization and management of complex value chains an important issue for British businesses. Specialization and agglomeration meant sorting out how the interdependent relationships between various firms along the value chains were to be organized. The question of which economic activities (production, distribution, retailing, etc.) to integrate and which ones to disintegrate became relevant.\(^9\) These considerations were particularly important in the case of heterogeneous industrial commodities, such as cotton, coal or wheat, but also in the manufacture and trade of manufactures such as wire products and textiles. Merchant-manufacturers were faced with decisions involving the organization of production, storage and transportation, quality testing and assurance, enforcement of contracts, distribution of products to dealer-merchants, etc. The patterns of interactions between firms, suppliers and customers, and across firms in an industry, lead to the creation of formal and informal organizations. Often, such organizations co-evolved alongside industry structures. Trade associations, exchanges, technical societies and institutes, etc. helped to give an industry its form, lobby power, and protection from outside competition.\(^10\) Industries evolved distinct ‘architectures’, with each industry developing one or a number of distinct architectures, i.e. different ways in which roles were distributed between interdependent firms.\(^11\)

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Expanding industrial activity was also intimately connected with technical changes and the introduction and maturing of new technologies. Although different organizational architectures emerged within industries, a convergence of technologies can be identified during the nineteenth century. Technologies employed along vertical dimensions in different productive activities converged towards similar skills, techniques and facilities in a process of ‘technological convergence’. This was especially apparent in metalworking and machinery industries, which involved the cutting of metal into precise shapes and forms using a relatively small number of operations: turning, boring, drilling, grinding, etc. Technological convergence is discernible in other industrial and commercial sectors.

Such convergence had two implications. First, they created complementarities and interdependencies between different firms, particularly in industries with higher degrees of specialization. This made the governance issues especially important as organizational interdependencies had to be managed alongside technological ones. Second, technological convergence reinforced the need for a given firm to develop new knowledge, new skills and new firm capabilities synchronous to other firms. Many of these new skills and capabilities developed alongside traditional or artisanal skills and shaped the manner and extent to which technologies matured. Industry architectures both influenced, and were in turn influenced, by maturing technologies, through a combination of market processes, collective bodies, governmental policies and political action. This co-evolution of technology, organizations and institutions was a complex process requiring coordinated actions at various levels and between different groups.

Economic and industrial growth, coupled with dynamic organisations and industrial structure, presented information and coordination problems for firms and business groups. Standardisation was one of the strategies that firms adopted to manage these issues. For manufactured products there was a gradual, but definite, move towards interchangeability that involved ‘making things the same’. The techniques of interchangeable manufacturing that originated in the state armouries of eighteenth-century France were similar to those adopted by engineers and businesses in Britain in the early nineteenth century. Such techniques were further refined and become known as the American system of manufacturing. Interchangeability depended upon standardised design and specification in

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15 Nelson, 'Industry structure'.

addition to standardised machining techniques and tools. This is what gave the products the ‘sameness’ quality.\textsuperscript{16}

While such convergence helped firms to address a host of information and coordination problems, this was but one of the forms of standardisation that dotted the nineteenth-century landscape. Apart from ‘sameness’, businesses depended upon ‘making things consistent’. This was particularly apparent in situations where a range of products and commodities were exchanged. Businesses had to make distinctions between products whilst ensuring individual products retained their sameness – after all, no business sold or purchased a single product! In the railways sector, for instance, the tension between distinctiveness and sameness is amply manifest. The Railway Clearing House, which introduced a standardised system of fares and charges across various railway companies grappled with the unenviable task of distinguishing between different goods and passengers. The Railway Clearing House General Classification of Goods described thousands of separate items within various classes and filled a 129-page book.\textsuperscript{17} Similar ‘clearing house’ solutions to the sameness-distinctiveness tensions are evident in the quality grading systems that developed within international commodities such as wheat or cotton.\textsuperscript{18}

The sameness-distinctiveness tensions were not only evident for tangible products and commodities. Intangible substances, such as gas and electro-magnetism, which were increasingly commodified in this period, generated a different set of standardisation issues. How to standardise, measure and thereby monetise utilities based upon electrical resistance, e.g. telegraphy and electricity?\textsuperscript{19} What was the illuminating power of gas? How to measure the passage of one cubic foot of gas, and thereby charge the consumer appropriately?\textsuperscript{20} Such issues of quantification and standardised measurements brought together men of science and men of business – and at times even the state. The debates involving such measurements were not dissimilar to those involving accounting measures, such as discounted cash-flow techniques, risk regulated rates of return or insurance risks.\textsuperscript{21} Standardising measurements led to making products tradable and fungible


\textsuperscript{19} B. J. Hunt, ‘The ohm is where the art is: British telegraph engineers and development of electrical standards’, \textit{Osiris} 9 (1994).


through an institutional process: many of these products were not inherently tradable to begin with.

The sameness-distinctiveness-quantification tensions are manifest in the lengthy and heated debates surrounding seemingly mundane questions: e.g. ‘how much coal or wheat does one bushel contain?’ These tensions transcended considerations of compatibility, path-dependency and lock-in. The development of measurement standards needs to be placed in the broader context of contractual liability and the politics of the market.\textsuperscript{22} The changing attitudes and approaches to scientific thinking intersected with standardisation of measurements as an \textit{ex-ante} solution to problems of information and coordination.

\textbf{Dynamics of contractual liability}

The measurement problems and the mensuration practices in economic situations intersected with the dynamics surrounding contractual liability in the nineteenth century. The legal view of liability changed considerably from the principles held in the eighteenth century, where the law was formerly concerned with the fairness in exchange, a principle congruent with traditional morality. The gradual rise of legal formalism in the nineteenth century implied that the ‘protective, regulative and paternalistic’ conception of law gave way to the expressions of individualistic desires, and the economic and political organisation.\textsuperscript{23} This is evident in the increasing application of the doctrine of \textit{caveat emptor} by the courts from the early nineteenth century. The legal view resting upon this doctrine was that the consequence of a bad bargain rested solely upon the buyer. \textit{Caveat emptor} in contracts for sale of goods did not require full disclosure by the seller, unlike insurance contracts. The mercantilist Joshua Child remarked in \textit{A New Discourse on Trade} (c1868) that ‘no man can be cheated except it be with his own consent; and we commonly say \textit{caveat emptor}…’\textsuperscript{24}

While this doctrine moved away from providing legal protection against a bad bargain, it nevertheless intersected with the principle of protection against deliberate fraud or misrepresentation. Although this view potentially interfered with the right of freedom to contract, embodied in part within \textit{caveat emptor}, protection against fraud was not to be equated with protection against poor quality. The statutes would provide protection against fraud, but not other means of opportunistic behaviour. Thus, the weights and measures legislation, in addition to establishing the metrological standards, was meant to prevent behaviour that


\textsuperscript{24} J. Child, \textit{A new discourse on trade} (Glasgow, 1751), p. 98.
facilitated fraud. In this regard, this legislation tended to be similar in principle to laws legislating adulteration of food and drink, hallmarking and assaying, general merchandise marking, licensing of doctors, protection of passengers in carriages and railways, etc. It did not, and could not, solve all problems of asymmetric information.

The solutions that emerged to the measurement problems, including the mensuration practices that were developed, should be considered in the context of the socio-political tensions between caveat emptor and prevention of fraud. Legislation making it compulsory to sell dry goods by weight, and an offence to sell them by volume, need to be considered in terms of the contractual freedom they limited, the protection against false measurements they provided, and the extent to which it left other contractual issues (e.g. condition of the goods) to the due diligence by the buyer. Similarly, the legal but non-obligatory standard wire gauge must be considered in this perspective between asymmetric information and the intent to defraud.

Another dynamic that shaped contractual liability was the movement away from litigation to arbitration in commercial disputes, particularly those involving trading and other business enterprises. Evidence suggests that after c1850, businesses and commercial concerns began to by-pass the courts, as a trial forum, and relied instead upon adjudication by commercial institutions, such as trade associations, exchanges and chambers of commerce. This form of adjudication depended upon the arbitration systems and machinery developed by the commercial institutions and was seen by the community as a quicker and less capricious method of settling disputes. Both the economic (the relative costs involved in arbitration as opposed to litigation) as well as the political factors (primarily concerning whether juries without the commercial acumen and experience could understand the evidence) appear to have shaped this dynamic.

In conjunction with the dynamics around the freedom to contract, this move towards more non-forensic methods of limiting or ensuring contractual liabilities shaped the solutions to measurement issues. Centralisation and standardisation of measurement practices is an example of how commercial institutions developed arbitration systems and mechanisms. This provided the institutions not only with efficient dispute-resolution systems, but also helped to standardise commercial practices that prevented disputes in the first place. This resulted in yet another socio-economic boundary between the state and the market.

**Politics of the market**

Solutions to transactional and contractual issues, whether through standardisation, legislation or adjudication, were steeped in the wider politics of the market. While standardisation and legislation were ex ante solutions, aimed at preventing opportunistic behaviour, adjudication was an ex post remedy. They were shaped by how different groups conceived the market and the transactions within it. Paul Johnson argues that contemporary economists saw the market as

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a multitude of buyers and sellers all freely and frenetically competing [whereas] lawyers saw interactions between principals and agents, complex forms of contract, and overlapping and conflicting duties and liabilities.26

Not all Victorians considered markets to be a ‘neutral arena for competitive exchange’ where market principles operated untrammelled by authority. Indeed, the tensions between morality, equity, liberty (of exchange), and protection (against exploitation) were quite legitimate in creating and maintaining market relationships. This is not to imply that forces of demand and supply did not discipline market behaviour, but rather to emphasise that the market was as much a legal and ideological construct, shaped by value judgements, promoting some interests and not others. This may seem inconceivable to many observers today – it did so to free market theorists then. Geoffrey Searle writes that several Victorian thinkers and writers questioned whether market forces were compatible with ‘moral values’, whether the two could be reconciled if they clashed, and just how dangerous it was to promote market forces without having some ‘authority’ adjudicate when they did.27

The question was not if intervention in the market was legitimate, but the circumstances under which it was legitimate to do so – a balancing mechanism if the market failed. Thus, it was legitimate to intervene in order to set professional standards for doctors, lawyers, etc., to protect the general public against exploitation by monopolies, fraudsters, etc., to provide public goods, or to protect against harmful externalities.28 It was also considered legitimate to control competition when it was seen as excessive or ‘misapplied’, or where its redistributive effects had undesirable social and political consequences.29 The issues at stake here were the prevention of exploitative, fraudulent and opportunistic behaviour, the establishment of the ‘facts’ when such behaviour occurred, and the remedies for market failure, however it could be defined.

Proponents of protectionist and interventionist disciplining of the market from without for social, political and economic cohesion were nevertheless challenged by those who sought to establish an alternative political economy. The opponents were encouraged by the seemingly resilient and responsive markets, both during

periods of exceptional crises and during less anxious and desperate periods.\(^{30}\) Arguably, the market was a socio-political construct, rather than a natural phenomenon. Market relationships were shaped by opposing or divergent political views regarding fairness, morality, liberty and authority. The harsh discipline of the market was balanced by the authority of the politicians, bureaucrats or even the Church. These forces shaped the material politics of commodities and consumption. They defined relations between consumers and producers, between large and small businesses, between businesses and its stake-holders, and between the different classes of consumers.\(^{31}\)

The protectionist-interventionist discourse also shaped the boundaries between the state and business concerns. Timothy Alborn defines modern companies as an institution that proactively employs a balance of political and economic means to achieve economic ends.\(^{32}\) In fact, this view extends easily beyond the joint-stock company generally to firms and businesses. The historical cases I analysed provide evidence on how merchants, firms, entrepreneurs, etc. were able to command political resources to solve their particular economic and business issues. The cases show why and how businesses could successfully move parliament to propose legislation, lobby state departments to intervene, and even attempt to keep the state **out** if required. Conversely, the state occasionally considered its role to intervene in the market, if not to regulate then to adjudicate or arbitrate. T. H. Farrer, the permanent secretary of the Board of Trade, suggested that the Board felt itself bound to act fairly as arbitrators between consumers and companies, as in the case of gas meters or wire sizes.\(^{33}\)

This clash of principles, ideologies and interests meant that similar problems had different solutions in different sectors born out of socio-political processes, rather than the problem-solving, decision-making processes of a visible (or invisible) hand. Even when the state and business interests turned to men of science to help regulate or adjudicate, we discern the rhetoric of objectivity and presence of personal values shaping ‘expert’ validation.

**Science, state & metrology**

Ted Porter argues that ‘the culture of quantification [and measurement] has changed radically in the last three centuries, and this has involved the intrusion of scientists as well as bureaucrats’.\(^{34}\) Thus measurement procedures were established (and continue to do so) in scientific laboratories, trade association offices, and public bureaus. He reckons this change to be part of establishing ‘technologies of trust’, a triumph of the rhetoric of objectivity, impersonality and


\(^{31}\) Daunton, ‘Politics of natural monopoly’.


\(^{33}\) PP 1876 Vol. VI, *Report from Select Committee on the Metropolis Gas*, p. 12

reproducibility.\textsuperscript{35} Such a rhetoric suited the nineteenth-century state very well, particularly as measurements had historically been mired in the micropolitics of feudal rents, traditional measurement practices, measurement artefacts such as baskets and wagons, etc.\textsuperscript{36} Ashworth has shown the lengths to which the state could go to standardise measurements and methods so that revenue extraction could become visible, calculable and predictable, or at least appear to become so.\textsuperscript{37} Objectivity – as quantification – lent stability and predictability to the process of measurement, whereas objectivity in the form of impersonality made measurements more legible and defensible.\textsuperscript{38}

Nevertheless, measurement objectivity remained a rhetoric precisely because it was shaped by the social and political context, as much as it was steered by intellectual thought. The objectivity, reified in precision for example, was a socially constructed value because it registered something that distinct groups considered valuable and agreed that it was so.\textsuperscript{39} The nineteenth-century transition from visual to photoelectric methods of measuring different colours of the spectrum depended upon the reconciliation between the ‘physicalist’ interpretation valued by physicists and engineers, as well as the ‘physiological’ interpretation that psychologists and physiologists valued.\textsuperscript{40} The construction of values is also reflected in the debates, and the eventual alliance, between physicists, telegraph engineers and the cable industry regarding electrical measurements.\textsuperscript{41} Temperature, too, had to be ‘invented’, as Hasok Chang argues, by reaching ‘accuracy through iteration’; ‘real’ values came into being as a result of successful operationalisation.\textsuperscript{42} Given that philosophers and historians of science normally distinguish between precision and accuracy, the rhetoric of objectivity revolved not only around how close or further


\textsuperscript{38} Daunton, ‘Politics of natural monopoly’, for how gas meters became a method of validation and verification of consumption, Ashworth, \textit{Customs and excise}, for the hydrometer and the excise on spirits; Scott, \textit{Seeing like a state}, for the ‘universal measure of length’ and scientific forestry

\textsuperscript{39} See Wise, ed. \textit{Values of precision}, for various historical case studies

\textsuperscript{40} S. F. Johnston, ‘From eye to machine: shifting authority in color measurement’, in \textit{Theories, Technologies and Instrumentalities of Colour}, B. Saunders and J. Van Brakel. eds. (University Press of America, 2002).

\textsuperscript{41} Hunt, ‘Electrical standards’.

away quantified measurements were from the ‘real’ values, but what these ‘real’ values were to begin with.\textsuperscript{43}

The nineteenth-century attempts to decontextualize metrological units – a move towards objectivity – must necessarily be placed in the broader perspective of the uneasy combination of de-personalising customary measurement practices while defending the traditional rights and moral values. The reformers of British metrology had in fact recognized the difficulty of replacing local measurement units early on. In 1824, the new Imperial units of weights and measures, did not immediately replace the local units. The reformers sought to overcome the relative non-uniformity of local units by connecting them to the primary standards of the Imperial system. The use of local units was not expressly forbidden for nearly fifty years thereafter, and many markets continued to use the older measurement units. An additional layer of legal and ‘traceable’ measurement units was added over the existing layer of local and customary units. This situation changed in 1878 when the Imperial measures were made the only legally recognized measurement units in Britain. Thus for most of the nineteenth-century British businesses and firms continued to operate under a relatively non-coercionary metrological regime. This was unlike elsewhere in Europe, where the progressive metrification resulted not only in radical change of the standardized units, but also a rapid and forced redefinition of existing economic relationships.\textsuperscript{44} The British state did not or could not coerce markets to use particular metrological standards.

If British metrology can be interpreted as an invention of tradition, as Schaffer suggests, then it depended not only upon the degree to which trust was transferred from the hand or the eye to the machine, but also upon the extent to which the principal could trust the agent.\textsuperscript{45} Such tensions are clearly evident in the cases presented in my dissertation: who should measure – the buyer or seller, what measurement instruments should be used, to what extent can the state supervise and regulate measurement methods, etc. They emphasize how British metrology became decontextualized, but mensuration practices remained embedded within the micro-contexts in which they emerged.

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In the eighteenth century, the West Indies appeared to contemporaries as one of the wealthiest regions in the world, and a source of ‘prodigious riches’ for European countries (Burnard, 2001, p. 506). These islands were of particular importance for the commercial fate of two nations, France and Britain, the two largest trading nations in the late eighteenth-century Atlantic. Although the question of these islands’ profitability and their role in European economic development is still being debated (Solow, 1985; O’Brien, 1982; Inikori, 2002; Ryden, 2009), it is undeniable that the West Indian trade had a pivotal role in allowing for the growth of the French and British foreign trades (Daudin, 2005, pp. 224-5): it accounted for about 10 per cent of British exports and imports during the first half of the century, share that had risen to 16 per cent by 1815, and to about 29.9 per cent of all French imports and 26.6 per cent of all exports in 1787 (Ward, 1998, p. 415; Tarrade, 1972, p. 752). European commercial activities in the West Indies were wide-ranging. Besides the import into Europe of colonial commodities, such as sugar, coffee, cotton, and indigo, and the export to the West Indies of manufactured goods, raw materials, and foodstuffs, European merchants also organized the supply of enslaved African labourers to the plantations. In the eighteenth century, Britain and France accounted for two-thirds of the slaves transported from Africa to America (Eltis, 2001, p. 43).

Despite the importance of the West Indian trade to the French and British economies, its commercial organization remains understudied. Using a comparative research strategy, this study evaluates the commercial and financial practices of two firms that traded on a commission basis from Bristol (Tobin & Pinney) and Nantes (the Chaurands). Its first purpose is to re-assess the respective role of formal and informal institutions in the Atlantic economy, where different types of coordination mechanisms existed. French and British merchants were faced with comparable institutional environments. Unlike what was taking place in Asia at the same time, state-controlled, privileged trade companies were no longer in charge of the slave and West Indian trades, and had been replaced by private firms that operated within a national framework determined by mercantilist policies (Hancock, 1995). Compared to other network studies in long-distance trade, the originality of the West Indian trade lay in the fact that it was regulated by a common jurisdiction and legal framework, and that British and French merchants had access to a wide range of formal and informal institutions to organize their trade. In spite of this, the organizational model of the West Indian trade is usually simplified to the commission system (Davies, 1952; Nash, 2005). In this model, European merchants of the late eighteenth century dealt directly with West Indian planters. These merchants’ activities consisted in selling the commodities they had received from their clients for a commission fee, and providing planters with a range of services, sending provisions and accepting bills
of exchange. Yet, some of the problems associated with long-distance trade such as information asymmetries, moral hazard and opportunism have been overlooked in the case of the West Indian trade. The commission system model does not reflect the complexity of trading over long distances, with the high risks associated with slow communications and high transportation costs. This model leaves many questions unanswered: how, in practice, did European merchants deal with their clientele of planters and control their remittances? How did they establish and enforce trade agreements? In practice, metropolitan merchants needed one or several intermediaries to represent them in the West Indies, and help them deal with everyday business matters. What kind of relationships did these firms have with their West Indian agents and clients? My research is influenced by the New Institutional Economics paradigm. It looks at the role institutions played in the success of France and Britain in long-distance trade and imperial expansion. A transaction cost approach to exchange argues that the costs of transactions are derived from imperfect information, and that economic actors will seek optimal institutional arrangements and organizational structures in order to reduce these costs (Coase, 1937; Williamson, 1975, North 1990). Based on a wide range of sources including business accounts, correspondences, and court records, this study examines two large sets of issues: first, the advantages and inconveniences of networks as an organizational structure in supporting long-distance trade, and second, the functioning of credit institutions in the Atlantic economy.

The first research perspective concerns the role of networks in the organization of the early modern Atlantic trade, and the ways in which these commercial structures operated in practice. The New Institutional Economics understands networks as an intermediate level between markets and firms, which provide the infrastructure for exchange to develop and help reduce transactions costs, when these are high given the absence of information, or where its reliability is uncertain (Casson & Rose, 1997; North, 1985). Unlike the corporatist and authoritarian model of early modern guilds, commercial transactions within networks are usually seen as based on more egalitarian, long-term relationships between firms. One of the major themes in the literature on long-distance trade is that networks enable trust to emerge between economic actors, because merchants can screen agents and clients. Close association through belonging to the same ethnic group or religious minority was seen as more likely to generate mutual confidence as membership of these networks entailed obeying strong moral obligations and peer monitoring (Landa, 1981; Bosher, 1995, p. 78; Zahedieh, 1998; Richman, 2006). It also provided members with credit and capital, and increased access to reliable information. Historians have conferred the same characteristics on kinship linkages (Castellano and Dedieu, 1998; Mathias, 2002). Yet, networks also brought together businessmen who were not linked by religion, ethnicity or kinship, but could develop trusting long-term relationships, usually based on repeated interaction (Pearson and Richardson, 2001; Stobart, 2005). Yet, mentioning that networks were rooted in families, ethnic and religious groups, or close-knit communities tells us little about how these networks were formed, maintained and developed over time, or how disputes and conflicts were solved.

In contrast to what is usually stated in the literature, kinship ties were not the predominant mode of organization of the West Indian trade, and not essential to
the operation of the networks studied. Family members were not totally absent from Tobin & Pinney’s and the Chaurands’ networks, but their presence in the network was limited to very specific stages in these firms’ life cycle. In particular, matrimonial alliances were used in the early years of the firm as a market entry mode. Marriage often allowed newcomers to a specific trade to enter and develop a commercial network, when the market was relatively oligopolistic. Over time, the role of kinship ties declined in importance, as merchants did not have systematic recourse to family members in order to operate their business network. In particular, kinship ties were not used as monitoring devices to control the behaviour of the firm’s agents in the commission trade. Once the commercial network was established, merchants generally used other mechanisms to coordinate their activities overseas. Metropolitan merchants employed a wide range of agents recruited from the ranks of planters, local merchants and ship captains, which limited the firms’ reliance on relatives. This multi-agent model, in which agents had complementary and overlapping roles, gave firms access to information, and limited the risk of agent dishonesty. Some metropolitan firms like the Chaurands chose to vertically integrate their overseas operations by setting up branches abroad.

The comparison of these two networks enables us to show that market size determined the strategy adopted in order to solve the principal-agent problem. The need for intermediaries was positively correlated with size, and the level of intervention needed in the colony. Second, product and geographical diversification as in the case of the Chaurands was a key element in the need for permanent colonial agents. Third, the size of each firm and their level of activities determined the configuration of their network. The Chaurands’ pluriactivity, and their involvement in the slave trade necessitated the intervention of a local firm. By contrast, when the level of firm activity remained low, there was less need for a permanent channel of representation, as shown by the example of Tobin & Pinney. The Bristol firm had most of its trade with planters in the Leeward Islands, and more particularly in Nevis. Nevis’s market was small, with an area of about 40 square miles, and its production focused mostly on sugar. Within this market, Tobin & Pinney were in a monopolistic position. Small firms are often prevented from internalizing market transactions and favour cooperative strategies within a community. The size of Tobin & Pinney, a medium-scale firm by Bristol standards which probably could not have sustained an overseas branch, explains why the firm solved its agency problems by using a multi-agent system, in which semi-permanent contracted agents monitored each other. On the other hand, the case of the Chaurands suggests that a different structure is needed, when the firm and the production market are larger. Unlike Tobin & Pinney, the Chaurands chose to vertically integrate their firm in Saint-Domingue, by opening a branch in the capital of the island, Le Cap. In other outports, they relied on more occasional agents, linked to the firm by contracts, in order to run more intermittent activities.

These findings have two important implications. First, as the French case shows, networks were not sufficient for coordinating trade and reducing transaction costs. It also confirms the principle developed by the theory of the firm that ‘vulnerable economic transactions are internalized within hierarchically organized firms’ (Williamson, 1975). Networks as tools for coordinating activities and monitoring
agents are most efficient when the activities of the firm remain small. Second, in both cases, kinship remained optional and was not used for solving agency problems. This observation disproves the notion that early modern business practices were systematically rooted in family relationships and close acquaintances, as opposed to the more impersonal relationships that supposedly characterize modern corporate practices.

The second research perspective developed by this study concerns credit institutions in the French and British plantations economies. It focuses on the relationships between merchants and West Indian planters, rather than on the principal-agent problem. The commission system was ascribed an important financial role, since merchants supplied planters with capital and with the credit necessary to buy slaves. Credit was an important feature of colonial economy, because money was scarce in the islands and because of the challenges that the transport of cash sums over long distances entailed. Because of this, it took years before merchants could gather the entire proceeds of slaves from the planters. Moreover, in the absence of West Indian banks, metropolitan factors often advanced credit to planters, especially via post-dated bills of exchange and loans. It soon became regular for merchants to complain of the increasing debt owed to them by planters, or in the words of R. Pares, ‘that malignant organism, a West Indian debt’ (1956, p. 239). This study sets out to re-examine merchants’ patterns of investment in the West Indies. Why did European commission merchants invest large sums in planters and increase their financial exposure to the West Indian economy, if the colonial economy was damaged by crippling debt? What kind of financial arrangements did they have with their clients? Were these formal contracts backed by the state? Or were these informal agreements rooted in personal reputation and solely recognized by the community of traders? Finally, how were these agreements enforced?

The availability of credit was crucial for the sustainability of long-distance trade, and leads us to speculate as to the exact role of French and British institutions in these nations’ commercial success and in particular, in their ability to secure credit for their colonies. Differences existed between the British and French systems. According to some historians (Price, 1991), the good performance of the British sugar trade was due to the 1732 ‘Act for the more easy recovery of debt in His Majesty’s Plantations and Colonies of America,’ also called the Debt Recovery Act. In this ‘creditor defence model,’ lenders had more guarantees regarding the repayment of the loan they had granted. British creditors could thus have the land, goods, chattel and slaves of their clients seized as payment for a debt, whereas in France, the seizure of plantations following the non-repayments of debts was not available in court as a stand-alone procedure. The view that legal provisions such as the 1732 Debt Recovery Act had an impact on debt repayment is based on the assumption that metropolitan merchants could successfully sue planters in West Indian courts. Some questions remain. First, European merchants may have been impeded by the high costs and time delays that legal procedures entailed, which were increased by the distance between the colonies and the metropole, and by the lack of control metropolitan merchants may have had over colonial elites.
Second, it is possible that disputes over credit and loans in the West Indian trade were solved by reputational mechanisms such as the ones described by A. Greif for the Maghribi trade (1989), with no actual use of the law in the colonies. Although there are almost no studies of credit markets in the West Indies, works on credit in other contexts have shown that credit transactions in early modern markets were often embedded in personal relationships (Muldrew, 1998, Finn, 2003). Colonial loans could similarly have been allocated on the basis of a private ordering system to a network of close friends and family. In this case, legal provisions would have had no effect on credit.

Contrary to other early modern contexts, credit in the West Indies, and more generally commercial transactions, were not strongly rooted in personal relationships. First, metropolitan firms’ clienteles went beyond a close network of friends and relatives. The size and geographical extent of Tobin & Pinney’s and the Chaurands’ networks show that metropolitan merchants were willing to establish new connections with strangers and chose to expand their network, rather than just responding to existing demand. Second, most relationships with planters were regulated by some kind of contracting, that usually entailed tying a planter’s remittances to a metropolitan factor. These agreements usually took the form of formal agreements and written contracts. Third, the attribution of loans and credit was usually based on financial criteria, and was also framed by contracts. Before granting a loan to a potential client, merchants sought information about the productive capacity and management style of his or her estates, and the financial situation of the owner. Merchants also used formal credit instruments in the form of bonds, judgments and mortgages to guarantee debt repayment. One of the advantages of mortgages was the almost automatic procedure for enforcement in Chancery courts. Mortgages, by offering collateral security for the repayment of the sums borrowed, usually the estate of the borrower, gave merchants primacy of claims over the estates of their debtors and allowed for simplified legal actions in case of disagreement.

When disputes arose, merchants had recourse to a mix of conciliatory mechanisms based on customary mercantile practices and legal solutions, and used courts to settle disputes only as a last resort mechanism. Because the recourse to legal solution was costly, arbitration was always sought first. Two main processes of conflict resolution have been identified. When merchants believed that the relationship could be preserved and business between the two parties resumed after the dispute was solved, they tended to favour informal threats and norms as enforcement mechanisms, referring for example to the other party’s reputation, making use of a family responsibility system, or claiming they will not renew their connection with him or her. By contrast, in the situation of an endgame, where the commercial relationship could not be restored and was willingly ended, merchants had recourse to third-party arbitration or legal solutions. Informal enforcement mechanisms were often not enough to solve disputes in case of non-compliance and the non-repayment of debts, unlike what has been noted for other merchant communities (Kessler, 2004). First, the commission trade entailed large financial transactions, which required better securities than smaller book debts. Second, by contrast with other early modern businesses, embedded
in local communities and face-to-face interaction, Atlantic traders had the additional problem of distance they required better protection and relied in almost all cases on formal contracts. The mechanisms used by merchants should be understood as a continuum, ranging from informal to formal, public to private, and representing different degrees of formality.

Institutional differences between the French and British legal systems did not give British traders a strong advantage over their French counterparts in the colonial context. The study of the court in Nevis shows that we need to distinguish between the legal provisions of the Debt Recovery Act and the efficacy of courts in the colonial context. The Debt Recovery Act was not as significant in practice as J. Price argued. In Nevis, court records suggest that the public sales it occasioned were disadvantageous to creditors, who received payment in produce, that commission merchants tried to avoid executing judgments and that it remained more advantageous for both parties to try and settle their disputes outside court.

This study has wider implications for our understanding of plantation economies, and in particular, of the consequences of heavy borrowing from planters on the profitability of the West Indian economy. Planters’ debts are often seen as the result of a structural imbalance between metropolitan merchants and planters, rooted in a speculative bubble. In this view, the increasing indebtedness of planters reflects the worsening of this economic system, in which merchants only reluctantly granted loans to planters, because they were unable to enforce debt repayment. This interpretation of West Indian finance suggests that unpaid colonial debts caused metropolitan merchants to be bankrupted, or forced them to acquire planters’ estates as compensation for these debts (Butel, 1999, p. 162; Meyer, 1999, pp. 241-2; Thésée, 1972, p. 208; Pares, 1950; Price, 1989). Yet, evidence from the correspondences and accounts studied does not support this view. As exposed in the previous section, mortgages and formal credit instruments provided a credible protection for merchants, who could use courts in case of dispute. Merchants invested in West Indian colonies and in their planters, because they thought it was to some extent possible to recover debts. Metropolitan merchants, although aware of the risks posed by planters’ borrowers, often chose to grant large financial advances at the onset of relationships with clients. In lending large sums to their clients, merchants clearly indicated their belief that the growth of the West Indian economy was sustainable, if risky, and could be supported by a never-ending trade boom. In most cases, levels of debt were reasonable set against returns in this trade. These findings help us revisit the assumption that the West Indian economy was in decline at the end of the eighteenth century.

Both French and British traders, presented with a multiplicity of institutional and governance structures, used a similar combination of formal and informal mechanisms. The availability of formal institutions in the form of a legal and regulatory framework at the national level was crucial in enabling French and British merchants to trade over long distance. It compensated for the limitations of kinship and social ties in providing adequate monitoring of agents. It served to secure credit relationships and financial markets in the Atlantic, and made debt recovery safer and easier. Merchants’ access to this formal system also had wider
implications for merchants’ use of networks and private ordering systems. Although networks and the personal relationships that constituted them were a key element for successfully establishing and developing a business, these social ties were not sufficient for maintaining networks. This study of the different institutional responses to the problem of contract enforcement and exchange over long distance argues that instead of opposing formal enforcement mechanisms and private ordering systems, the complementarities of both formal and informal solutions should be highlighted. In this sense, the overarching state system that regulated trade in the British and French West Indies and organized the delivery of justice was important in supporting agreements and contracts, and in enforcing formal deeds and property rights.

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Colman Prize long-listed

‘Owned, monitored, but not always controlled: Understanding the success and failure of Scottish Free-Standing Companies, 1862-1910’

Introduction
This article will provide an overview of my 2009 PhD thesis, and is intended to provide a taster of the thesis to provoke interest, and to encourage those with an interest in the field of international business history to have a look at the full text. I came to business history via a circuitous route; having studied history, mostly with an emphasis on the political and social as an undergraduate at the University of Dundee, I started to become aware of Scotland’s changing relationship with international business. During the twentieth century Scotland had enjoyed considerable success in attracting foreign direct investment. More curiously, in the nineteenth, Scotland had been a net exporter of capital. Much of the emphasis of existing business history work on the 19th century Scottish economy had been on either industrial or financial history. Relatively little was known about many of Scotland’s foreign investments in this period, or how they were managed; much of what had been written approached the issue from a financial perspective. The main exception was W. Turrentine Jackson’s The Enterprising Scot, which did look at specific companies investing in the US, three of which I would investigate further in my thesis. Schmitz’s (1997) survey of Scottish foreign investment further helped to point the way, confirming further my suspicion that much foreign direct investment was not undertaken by existing firms, but by quite separate companies set up for the express purpose of FDI. It was in the process of reading around the topic more generally that I became aware of the ideas of Mira Wilkins and others on the subject of British FDI before World War I more generally, and thought an application of the Wilkins model to the Scottish foreign investing firms might have potential.

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46 K D Tennent, "Owned, Monitored but Not Always Controlled: Understanding the Success and Failure of Scottish Free-Standing Companies, 1862-1910" (LSE, 2009).
Wilkins identified the free-standing company as a concept in the late 1980s. Borrowing from Nicholas’ idea of ‘brass plate’ capitalism,\(^{50}\) and noting the Turrentine Jackson work, she found that UK based foreign investment often did not fit the convenient template of the US multinational. Instead of starting with a business model in its home country, finding it successful, filling up the home market and then expanding the same model abroad, these British companies were formed with the express intention of operating assets abroad without any UK operations.\(^{51}\) They were new legal entities, apparently unconnected with any already existing UK business, which is why Wilkins considered them ‘free-standing’.\(^{52}\) Wilkins contended that most free-standing companies failed because they did not have an opportunity to create Porterian competitive advantage before having to export it. Yet Wilkins did concede, in her original 1987 article, that free-standing companies were often part of wider clusters, organised by networks of promoters, and that they were frequently primary sector firms in sectors such as non-ferrous metals and plantation agriculture.\(^{53}\) This meant that they were often speculative short term enterprises, established to exploit a specific resource opportunity, which might have uncertain potential. Wilkins’ incredulity at the high failure rate perhaps also seems surprising in light of the fact that most new start-ups in any sector fail.\(^{54}\) By the time of her 1997 edited collection \textit{The Free Standing Company in the World Economy} scholars more familiar with the British economy, such as Casson and Corley had forced Wilkins to accept that free-standing companies were often tied to wider interests which arguably used the limited liability system to ring-fence risk.\(^{55}\) Arguably, free-standing companies were not very free standing. Much of this body of work really concerned London based firms, but Wilkins had already identified that free-standing companies existed in Scotland.\(^{56}\)

My interest was in looking at these companies in more detail. Who were they, and what could they tell us about the development of international business more

\(^{50}\) For the origin of this term, see S. Nicholas, "British Multinational Investment before 1939," \textit{Journal of European Economic History} XI (1982).


\(^{52}\) Ibid.: 262.

\(^{53}\) Ibid.: 265-270.


generally? Were they simply investment vehicles controlled by investing elites, or did they develop complex managerial structures inside the firm? Indeed, was there potential for free standing companies to do so, or were they always doomed to failure as Wilkins had suggested? Schmitz’s 1997 study of Scottish foreign investment had already involved a survey of 784 limited liability companies registered in Edinburgh, ‘identified as being formed substantially or wholly for foreign activities’. Classification did not consider the free-standing company (FSC) to be a useful framework, claiming that it had ‘further complicated matters’ as Wilkins, along with Charles Jones, had seen managerial control in what had previously been seen as portfolio investments. To be fair to Schmitz, his main interest was in portfolio investment ‘by individuals who have little desire or ability to exercise direct managerial control over the enterprises concerned’. This may be true of the small shareholders in a company formed wholly for foreign activities, but someone still had to take responsibility for the optimal allocation of the capital contributed by shareholders, and that meant someone had to exercise managerial control. It seemed likely to me that somewhere in Schmitz’s 784 that there probably were some companies that were intended to directly exercise managerial control from Scotland. At the micro level, my research aimed to contribute to this debate by looking at where these companies originated from, and how far managerial control was practised directly from Scotland – and did this help free-standing companies to perform better?

**Initial Survey**

In terms of research I started by retracing Schmitz’s steps, examining the BT2 collection of Companies House records for companies dissolved before 1980 at the National Archives of Scotland. Working with time constraints, I was able to find 116 company files running from 1862 into the mid-1880s, in which a company had stated in its Memorandum of Association that its primary purpose was to operate outside of the UK, with the host country usually specified. This suggests that the free-standing type of company was commonly headquartered in Scotland in the late nineteenth century. Thanks to Turrentine Jackson’s pioneering work of 1968, much of the focus of Scottish historians on this subject has been on those companies that invested in the US. In Chapter 3 I noted that while the US was the most popular host country for Scottish FSCs, it was not the only country in which the enterprising Scot aimed to gain returns. In fact the US hosted only 37% of the FSCs examined, still the most important host country, but leaving 63% unaccounted for. Canada and India were also important fields of endeavour, although companies investing in Canada were distinctly less successful than those investing in the US. Australasia, in the late nineteenth century considered more of a single field of activity than today, was not as important in terms of the absolute numbers of company formations but was certainly important in terms of the value of capital invested. As table 1 below shows, one of the surprising outcomes was

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the ‘long tail’ of destination countries targeted by only one company such as Japan, Norway and Peru, although few of these companies were successful enough to last for any length of time. Strikingly, with only 2 exceptions, virtually all of these companies had targeted only one host economy. These firms were not following a multinational strategy as such.

Table 1 Scottish FSC Host Countries, 1862 - 1885

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burma</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceylon</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Guiana</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persia</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>116</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The country an FSC stated it intended to operate in in its Memorandum of Association, National Archives of Scotland, BT2 collection.

The US, Canada, India and Australasia were all English-speaking, to an extent relevant to elites, at least, and so might be expected to interest Scottish promoters, investors and entrepreneurs, since the transaction costs of investing in them were lower given the common language. Table 1 highlights the fact that a number of Scottish FSCs were promoted to enter non-English speaking countries: as many as 21 in continental Europe and six in Latin America. Few of these companies were successful in the long run, and some were undoubtedly unique enterprises, but this evidence still suggests that Scottish capitalists were not deterred by the lack of a common language when they became aware of business opportunities in non-English speaking countries. Scotland’s close historical ties
with the continent and Scotland’s continued use of Roman law may partly account for this, although those looking for continued evidence of ‘auld alliance’ ties with France in FSC activity will be disappointed, with the Scots managing to set up only one FSC in that country. Extractive and commercial linkages and opportunities, particularly in copper and sulphur mining in Italy, Portugal and Spain had more of a role to play than any cultural ties. One such linkage was the chemist William Henderson’s sponsorship of the Seville Sulphur and Copper Company to provide supplies for his own factories.\footnote{Henderson owned almost 89% of this company – see NAS BT2/507.} Instead of vertically integrating his existing alkali processing business, Henderson could use the limited liability system to contain the risk inherent in his Spanish venture, while retaining some managerial control. Meanwhile, in Latin America opportunities were presented by countries undergoing rapid expansion of settlement, although Scottish capitalists seem to have done little in Latin America before 1885 at least. However, the occasional interest shown by Scottish capitalists in promoting FSCs hosted in these regions goes some way to providing evidence that interest continued in non-English speaking countries after 1870, despite the long held claim that British foreign investment in general focused more on the Empire and the US after this date.\footnote{Cairncross showed that all categories of British foreign investment on the European continent declined after 1870, with most new capital being directed towards the Empire or the US. Particularly big gainers were India, Australasia, Canada and the US. A. K. Cairncross, \textit{Home and Foreign Investment, 1870-1913} (Cambridge: 1953), pp. 182-186.}

Having spent the best part of a year collecting the registration details of free-standing companies, I was now in a position to identify free-standing companies with more detailed records. This would allow me to focus more specifically on making a useful contribution on the issue of managerial control. After identifying five different FSCs with more detailed records to study, I was able to identify three different types of FSC, noting how the degree of control from Scotland and the degree of internalisation varied between them. It was also possible to go a little deeper and identify different levels of knowledge transfer, closely tied to this central issue of control. Generally I have argued in favour of Wilkins rather than Schmitz in clearly separating the investment trust-type company from the FSC in relation to enterprises that were intended by their promoters to operate outside Scotland.\footnote{Wilkins, “The Free-Standing Company, 1870 - 1914: An Important Type of British Foreign Direct Investment,” p. 263. Schmitz, “The Nature and Dimensions of Scottish Foreign Investment.”} However, I have argued that free-standing companies were able to transfer knowledge further than Wilkins supposes.

I left out investment trusts as they represented a form of portfolio investment. They bought securities in companies based abroad, in the Scottish case mostly in the US, but did not intervene to any great extent in the internal affairs of these companies.\footnote{See G. Glasgow, \textit{The Scottish Investment Trust Companies} (London: 1932). and J. C. Gilbert, \textit{A History of Investment Trusts in Dundee 1873 - 1938} (London: 1939). for two excellent, detailed volumes on Scottish investment trusts. Given the current interest in the
entirely with their head offices in Edinburgh or Dundee, which were their main site of operation. The main function of a trust company was to manage its portfolio – the companies held within the portfolio were responsible for their own operations. Many of these companies were portfolio investors, though in some cases they kept a network of agents in host countries, particularly in the US to monitor the firms in which they had invested. Free-Standing Companies are always direct investors in the sense that they purchase or invest in operating assets abroad, and incorporate these directly into the firm, although they need not be single project companies. The key issue that I evaluated in the central part of my thesis was how far these companies established control over the use of their resources, although there is no question that all of the Free-Standing Companies examined here attempted to control the use of their assets more closely than did mere investment trusts. In terms of control, the three main types of free-standing company I identified were: a) companies where a high degree of control was exercised from Head Office; b) companies with supervision from Head Office but not control; and c) companies with very little control or supervision from Head Office.

Company Case Studies
Of the companies I studied in detail, the Canterbury and Otago Association (C&O), and the New Zealand and Australian Land Company (NZALC), two inter-related agricultural and land companies who concentrated initially on sheep farming in Australasia, established in 1866 and 1867 respectively, fit best into type a). These two companies had a control structure that became well established from Head Office in Edinburgh right down to their employees on the ground in Australia and New Zealand. These companies, which were merged by their common shareholders in 1877, were the most entrepreneurial in the Schumpeterian sense in that they actively created new combinations; the C&O and to a greater extent the NZALC were directly led by their Head Offices in setting up new sources of supply of wool, tallow, mutton and lamb, beef, dairy products and even frozen rabbits and their skins for the growing UK market. They also helped to settle new activities of hedge funds and other forms of investment company, it is surprising that these trusts have not attracted a better study since the 1930s.

65 Kerr, *Scottish Capital on the American Credit Frontier.*

66 Comprehensive records for both the C&O and NZALC were deposited with the National Archives for Scotland when the NZALC’s eventual parent company, Dalgety, was broken up in 1999. The very compilation of these records in Scotland, with great care and attention, shows how concerned the Scottish boards and management teams of these two companies were with overseeing the operation of their assets on the other side of the world. See NAS’s GD435 collection. The copyright status of these documents is uncertain but it is hoped that no infringement is caused by citing them.

67 Schumpeter argued that an entrepreneur did not have to be an inventor, but some form of innovator, someone that actively created new combinations. The NZALC’s export of frozen and refrigerated produce from New Zealand from the early 1880s onwards was one such new combination. William Soltau Davidson, NZALC’s General Manager from 1879-1916 would be, as Schumpeter would put it ‘the man who gets new things done.” J. A. Schumpeter, "Economic Theory and Entrepreneurial History," in *On Entrepreneurs, Innovations, Business Cycles, and the Evolution of Capitalism,* ed. R. V. Clemence (London: 1949), pp. 263-268.
areas of their host countries and to build infrastructure there, as well as clearing unproductive scrub and bush land to transform it to pasture or even land suitable for arable farming. Most notably the NZALC helped to transform New Zealand’s economy by organising the first shipment of frozen mutton and lamb carcasses from New Zealand to the UK. In the late 1880s and 1890s it transferred dairy technology and know-how to New Zealand, including the recruitment of a dairy expert from Denmark who went on to work for the New Zealand government as a dairy advisor. These innovations were supported by a properly established institutional system which facilitated control; the C&O and the NZALC had a command structure of trusted managers almost from the beginning.

The NZALC’s managers were given a reasonable degree of freedom in the way that they operated their individual farming properties, but were expected to report back to Head Office regularly and to keep within budgetary constraints. By the mid-1870s it was expected that all major expenditure decisions were to be referred to Head Office. By the mid-1880s the General Manager of the NZALC, William Soltau Davidson, had organised a regular reporting system across the company, including a centralized agricultural plan to be set annually for New Zealand. This allowed the company to try to set production targets to meet market demand, although obviously this was constrained to some degree by droughts and other bad weather. Davidson was assisted by a centralised secretariat at Head Office in Edinburgh which collated the data sent and supplied it to the board for their examination. The NZALC was, then, a highly integrated organisation with a well developed hierarchical system yet in essence it remained a Free-Standing Company, with none of its operations except its Head Office activities being carried out in Scotland. Wilkins had argued that knowledge transfer was difficult for FSCs, meaning that FSCs could not be innovators, citing the fact that there was no FSC in the car industry, and that Eastman Kodak was originally registered in the UK until it had to move for tax reasons. While, as I will examine below, this might be true of those FSCs hosted in the US, it was less true of those hosted in Australasia, an area of more recent European settlement where it was easier for incoming firms to impose their entrepreneurial will onto the economy. Further, Wilkins and subsequent writers such as Geoffrey Jones mostly considered London based FSCs – in this thesis we have seen that while some Scottish FSCs did engage in speculative practices, they were capable of practising a form of managerial capitalism, and arguably became early prototypes for the multinational structures that followed them.

One of the reasons that the NZALC’s management in Scotland seemed able to enforce their will as principals over their distant agents appears to have been that many of the company’s farm managers and other supervisors were recruited directly in Scotland. These men often entered the company’s service as cadets at

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68 W. S. Davidson, William Soltau Davidson, 1846 - 1924 (Edinburgh: Privately Published, 1930), 32.
70 For Geoffrey Jones’ best work on the topic, see G. Jones, Merchants to Multinationals: British Trading Companies in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries (Oxford: 2000).
a young age, spending time working on the farms and learning about animal husbandry before being promoted to management level if deemed useful enough. From the 1880s onwards, the NZALC also started to lease and mortgage its New Zealand lands to settlers that it recruited in Scotland. It was clear then, that the C&O and NZALC played at least some role in facilitating Scottish emigration to both Australia and New Zealand. The historiography of Scottish emigration to Australia and New Zealand, notably the works by Donaldson, Brooking and Richards, and Prentis in both his 1983 and 2008 versions, has much to offer on the cultural impact of the Scots. 71 In addition these accounts have investigated some of their involvement as settlers in the agricultural and banking sectors on both sides of the Tasman Sea, but most of this writing undervalues or ignores the contributions of Scottish FSCs to economic development in both Australia and New Zealand. In my thesis I showed that Scottish FSCs did have a role to play in economic development in these two countries, helping to open up the interior of both and make their economies more viable. That these writers have ignored the important role played by FSCs, with the exception of Brooking who briefly looks at the New Zealand and Australian Land Company, is puzzling, because other FSCs may also have helped to facilitate immigration into Australasia and had a cultural impact in donating land for schools and Presbyterian churches. More research would be useful on this subject, although the main problem is that it has not been possible to provide concrete numbers on the volume of emigrants that the NZALC was directly responsible for; perhaps these numbers are still tucked away somewhere in the files in Edinburgh.

By way of contrast, I turned to Scottish FSCs which invested in the US. The Arizona Copper Company (ACC), established in Edinburgh in 1882, and the California Redwood Company (CRC), established in the same city a year later. 72 Both the ACC and CRC would fit into my type c) – they had very loose structures of control and it is not clear that their Head Offices in Edinburgh intended to control the companies centrally. Instead of actively setting up an operational system based around the posting of trusted personnel and regular communication, the ACC and CRC relied to a greater degree on their agents in the host country than did the C&O and the NZALC. In both cases agents were inherited from the previous owners of the assets being managed and were expected by the Edinburgh boards to allocate resources to maximise production, despite their limited stakeholding in the new ownership arrangement.

I found the ACC particularly interesting as it was a rare example of mining FSC that had left behind some records; it was also short lived in its initial incarnation.

72 The archives for these two companies were preserved by their Edinburgh solicitors, Messers Davidson & Syme W.S., and can be found in the NAS GD282/13 collection. Access was kindly granted by Davidson & Syme’s successor firm Dundas & Wilson.
Within two years of its registration the ACC’s directors were forced to wind up the company and transfer the assets to a new company, also registered in Scotland with the same name, since the original company had run out of funds, most of which the Edinburgh board alleged had been misallocated by their managers in Arizona. However, as there is little surviving evidence of principal-agent communication, and as the Edinburgh board did not have much access to expertise relating to the copper industry, this misunderstanding could be blamed at least as much on the Edinburgh board’s incompetence as on that of their agents. The same problem became clear with the CRC which also ran out of funds; its directors lacked expertise relating to the timber industry, particularly the part of it relating to the cultivation of redwood trees. The Scottish component of these companies was restricted to a simple board of directors, intended to represent the company to its Scottish shareholders, and these boards did not have much to offer their agents in the US. As a result the ACC and CRC agents in the US were not motivated to any great extent to operate on behalf of the boards. It was not simply that these companies failed to establish a managerial system that could operate across the Atlantic (as Wilkins speculated was a problem for many FSCs); they did not even attempt to do so. Although they tried to adopt an organisational structure, it was assumed that all management functions could be retained in the US. The Edinburgh head offices in these cases was restricted to a ‘brass plate’ presence; it is notable that the reconstituted ACC appointed George Auldjo Jamieson, previously the liquidator of the City of Glasgow Bank, as Chairman, who then supervised operations in Arizona much more closely than his predecessors. Notably, he was assisted in this by Scottish expatriate James Colquhoun, who was appointed General Manager in 1892, but appears to have been trusted more than others at the company’s Clifton, Arizona site by the directors because of his country of birth.

The final company that I was able to examine records from in detail was the Matador Land and Cattle Company, which was one of three ranching companies registered in Dundee in the early 1880s. The company was registered in 1882, and claimed ranching rights to about 400,000 acres of land around the settlement of Matador, in the Texas panhandle. It was part of a wider ‘ranching craze’ in Edinburgh and Dundee, which saw at least £3million invested in fifteen US hosted ranching FSCs between 1880 and 1886. The Matador was by far the most successful, remaining in business until 1951. The Matador was a halfway house between types a) and c), with supervision from Head Office rather than control, based on the fact that the directors lacked expertise in cattle ranching. In this model responsibility for the allocation of resources remained firmly on the US side of the company, but US agents were made aware of their accountability to their principals for their productive allocation. The management in Texas was not initially appointed by the Dundee board, but the assistant manager and after 1885 the manager were appointed centrally. In addition the Dundee board closely monitored the activities of the agents in the US, setting limits on capital expenditure and generally approving the decisions made by the US management team. The Dundee board took few executive decisions and the size of the Head

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73 Wilkins, "The Free-Standing Company, 1870 - 1914: An Important Type of British Foreign Direct Investment."
Office there was never expanded beyond sharing premises with the secretary, Andrew Mackay’s accounting practice. There was no purchase of a dedicated headquarters building as there was with the NZALC in 1880, nor was a sophisticated bureaucracy associated with the company. The Matador’s headquarters did not have any role in decision making regarding the purchase of raw materials, marketing, research and development, nor much of a role in sourcing new personnel. All of these activities were delegated to agents in Texas. This system was workable for the Matador because more of these linkages were possible in the US than were attractive or possible for the NZALC in either Australia or New Zealand. In this sense the Matador was able to become more of a self-contained unit in its host country, and its long term survival suggests that FSCs which were relatively lightly managed from the host country did not necessarily fail.

By looking at these case studies I have shown that a high level of internalisation, as with the NZALC, can help to make the Free-Standing model work more effectively in the longer term. The NZALC moved beyond the level of a mere extractive property-based investment, entering refining and even manufacturing in what were at the time newly emerging, and technologically driven industries. This defies the supposition that Free-Standing Companies were necessarily always speculative. Anyone reading the board minutes of the NZALC and the C&O would be left in no doubt as to the long-term strategy of the two companies. Although returns were expected, allowance was made for a lead time before the best results were procured, and it was realised that the Edinburgh Head Office had a vital role to play in supporting the operational side of the business in this. Similarly the Dundee board of the Matador were also prepared to take a long term approach with regard to the company’s affairs; although profits were squeezed to a large extent by 1887, there was no thought of winding the company up. Arguably the ACC was also a long-term concern to some degree, particularly in terms of its investments in transport infrastructure, but in the company’s first life the communication between principal and agent in that firm quickly veered into irritation at the lack of returns from the company’s operations. A similar situation manifested itself within the CRC, with annoyance at the lack of mass scale production which was inhibiting returns.

As well as demonstrating that the free-standing company could work, I was able to examine the organisational culture within Free-Standing Companies. For the firms looked at here, organisational culture was shaped by the culture of the home nation, Scotland, by the choice of host nation and culture there, and also by the dynamics of the industry within which these firms operated. The C&O and NZALC

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74 Indeed, here I am indebted to Claire Swan, a former MA student at the University of Dundee, who made me aware of the body of Matador material copied from The South West Collection, held at Texas Tech University Archives, Lubbock, Texas, which she had deposited with the University of Dundee Archives Services upon completion of her MA dissertation on the social history of the Matador. This was published as C. E. Swan, *Scottish Cowboys and the Dundee Investors* (Dundee: 2004). The only records of the Matador surviving in Dundee are the company’s annual reports and accounts, some of which survive in the Lamb Collection at the Dundee City Library.
were forced to intervene in the market by setting up their own trading network which relied on linkages back to the home country. This was necessary because the economies of Australia and New Zealand were not yet developed enough to support a substantial enough domestic market in agricultural produce to make either company's undertakings viable. All of the three US hosted companies were involved in areas of recent settlement, or in areas where settlement was being opened up, but the US east coast market was their target. Therefore the Scottish origins of the C&O and NZALC remained important in a way that it did not for the ACC, CRC and for the Matador, although both the ACC and Matador latterly relied upon Scottish emigrants in management. The ACC and Matador did not, however, set out to recruit Scottish emigrants in quite as direct a fashion as the NZALC did, as neither company sent people directly to the US, instead recruiting emigrants that were already there. The NZALC was able to take full advantage of its strong remaining link with the Head Office to recruit young emigrants into the company and then create a sense of organisational permanence that meant recruits would feel secure enough in the company's employment to commit to it in the long term. The NZALC was not a purely speculative concern; purchasing its own Head Office in Edinburgh and with its dedicated management team it was far from a mere 'brass plate'.

Conclusion
By the end of four years' study, writing and re-writing, I felt that I had contributed to the debates around FSCs and Scottish foreign investment, as well as to the economic histories of Australia, New Zealand and the US. In terms of the FSC debate I was able to show that the existence of domestic competitive advantage did not impair the process of investing directly in assets abroad. This could be facilitated if the FSC in question had access to the relevant tacit knowledge and skills of individuals on the home board, or if it could be purchased, perhaps in the host country, as with the Matador. This has implications for the way we do business today; knowledge is today easier to transfer than ever before, and more fluid markets exist, and indeed free-standing companies continue to come into being, particularly in extractive sectors. In terms of Scottish, and to some extent British foreign investment as a whole, I was able to assess the way that these FSCs were operated as organisations, not just as financial institutions. FSCs did link together very specific locations, often on opposite sides of the globe, but this was not a disadvantage. They were able to play a useful role in taking the excess profits of industrial Scotland and redeploying them in places where the capital was required, and often did so profitably. This relationship was often beneficial for the host country in the long run; NZALC in particular played an important role in founding the Australasian protein export industry, while the Matador and its competitors fed the expansion of the US's industrial heartlands. The free-standing company was an important contributor to the global economy of the nineteenth century, and continues to influence the structure of today's global economy.

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**The author:**
Kevin Tennent completed his PhD in Economic History at LSE in 2009, and has recently submitted an article on the New Zealand and Australian Land Company's
role in the British World to a special edition of the *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*. He has also worked with Dr Terry Gourvish on the business history of British popular music, publishing *Peterson and Berger revisited: Changing market dominance in the British popular music industry, c. 1950-80* in the April 2010 edition of *Business History*. Since April 2010 he has been Lecturer in Strategy at the Open University Business School, and is presently working on British free-standing companies in Egypt, as well as a series of further papers on distribution in the British popular music industry.

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REPORTS

Guest Lecture by Mira Wilkins, CEGBI, University of York

On November 24th 2010, Professor Mira Wilkins presented a guest lecture at the Centre for Evolution of Global Business and Institutions at the University of York, and managed to return to sunny Florida just before York was snowed out the following day. It was based on six MNEs - Singer sewing machines, General Electric, Standard Oil of New Jersey, Western Electric, Ford Motor and IBM - to examine how MNEs changed and succeeded, as well as addressing the convergence and divergence of global operations. The six MNEs were selected as ones that made a critical difference in world economic growth. One recurring theme emphasized by Professor Wilkins was the ‘package’, consisting of product, marketing structure, knowledge transfer and management, which was the essence of MNEs’ expansion.

Through this package, MNEs’ exerted their impacts by means of knowledge flow during direct investment into national economies and reverse flow of knowledge into MNEs through the adaptation of management and operations at local levels. Hence, the use of comparative historical cases illustrates, in part, how some host countries absorbed the MNEs’ package, and some did not, causing economic development differences between countries and the emergence of divergence and convergence concepts.

The presentation closed with a provocative Q&A session; linking MNEs and their global expansion to areas of current study, including entrepreneurial contributions, government policies such as anti-trust law, and the capital market and its role in MNEs. One interesting question raised was that historical knowledge of America’s period of economic ascent occurred in tandem with the British empire’s decline, giving rise, a member of the audience suggested, to a new question of how long it will be before a similar event takes place between the American MNEs’ decline and the rise of Chinese and Indian MNEs in Asia.
The lecture was attended by a lively audience which included business historians such as Teresa da Silva Lopes (the host), Mark Casson, Stephanie Decker, Rory Miller, Robin Pearson, Steve Tolliday, and Steve Toms.

Mary Quek,

*University of Hertfordshire*

Mira Wilkins (on right) with Teresa da Silva Lopes
Workshop Report: ‘Marketing Im/mobility’, 17-19 November 2010

The first of a series of three consecutive workshops of UK Transport History and Policy Network was hosted jointly by the Institute of Railway Studies & Transport History and York Management School, University of York. The inaugural workshop set marketing and branding in the transport industry as the overarching theme in its initial attempt to establish a constructive dialogue between transport/business history, transport studies, industry consultancy, and transport journalism. The objective was to enhance the relevancy of historical perspective – ‘usable past’ – to current and future transport policy. The aim of the network is informed by the acute recognition of the need for a sustainable transport system on both a national and international scale.

Thanks to the active involvement of both industry practitioners and academics, the workshop proved to be a hotbed of imaginative suggestions and well-informed insights without losing a sense of practicality and focus on the path-depending nature of the transport industry. The workshop was attended by business and transport historians – Mark Casson, Colin Divall, Teresa da Silva Lopes, Roy Edwards, Ian Gray, Margaret Grieco, Terry Gourvish, Michael Heller, Julian Hyne, Peter Lyth, Chris Nash, Bruce Seely, Bert Toussant, Maggie Walsh among others – and also by industry consultants and journalists such as Jim Steer, Christian Wolmar, Nicky Forsdike, Martin Higginson, Jonathan Tyler, Alan Whitehouse.

The participants have agreed that the history of transport marketing, with proper focal point(s), is a substantial source of inspiration for the industry and policy makers as well as for academics, as it urges the supplier oriented transport business to incorporate more fully the customer and ecological perspectives in its short- and long-term policy making. The current trend of modal-shift also requires us to explore and utilise the potential of soft factors such as branding, an area historians can play a vital role. The next workshop will be held at University of Ulster, Northern Ireland in June 2011, the theme of which is social justice and mobility.

Hiroki Shin
University of York
Since the successful launch of Accounting, Business & Financial History (ABFH) in 1990 there has been a considerable expansion of accounting history research. The refocusing of the journal reflects the emergence of accounting history as a discipline in its own right, the high accounting history content of ABFH and the extent to which researchers in the field increasingly engage with a wide range of disciplines in addition to business and financial history.

Now edited by Stephen Walker at Cardiff University, and under its new title of Accounting History Review is an international forum for the publication of scholarly articles on the history of accounting in diverse periods and places.

Submissions are invited which investigate:

- continuities and changes in accounting theories, practices and institutions;
- the technological, economic, organisational, ideological, social, political and cultural contexts in which accounting has emerged and operated;
- the impacts of accounting in these multiple arenas.

More

23rd Accounting History Conference
The journal launch event will take place at the 23rd Accounting History Conference, hosted by Cardiff Business School, 12-13th September 2011. For more information on this event, visit the conference website.

For more information on the re-focus of Accounting History Review and details on how to subscribe or submit your article, visit the journal website.
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VISUAL MECHANIC KNOWLEDGE

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Memoirs of the American Philosophical Society, volume 263

David J. Jeremy and Polly C. Darnell

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New book:


This important new book tells the story of the early years of Swiss Re, now one of the world’s largest re-insurers. The book focuses on the company’s ‘birth pains’ and follows the development of the company up to one of its largest loss cases: the famous earthquake and fire of San Francisco in 1906.

In 1861 the Swiss town of Glarus was destroyed by fire. The conflagration was the direct spur for the creation of Swiss Re, which has now become one of the world’s largest re-insurers.

Today, the company has left the struggles of its founding years far behind. The book focuses on these ‘birth pains’ and follows the development of the company up to one of its largest loss cases: the earthquake and fire of San Francisco in 1906.

For a long time, the success of Swiss Re depended on the fortunes of its largest branch, fire reinsurance. This study shows how the company handled the changing risk of fire and focuses, in particular, on climate as a factor that was capable of outplaying the company’s geographical distribution of reinsured units. It is rooted in business as well as in environmental history, thus contributing to a field which may be called environmental business history. The book’s findings are meaningful in the context of the current debate on the insurance industry’s role in the adaptation to climate change.

Eleonora Rohland concluded her MA studies in economic, social, and environmental history at the University of Bern, Switzerland in February 2009. She is currently working on her Ph.D. thesis on the memory and perception of hurricane disasters in New Orleans (1722–2005) at the Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities, Essen (KWI), Germany. In November 2010 Eleonora’s thesis was awarded the young researchers award of the Research Group for Critical Business History (AKKU), Bochum, Germany.
Business History
Complexities and Comparisons
By Franco Amatori, Andrea Colli

This major new textbook on business history brings together the expertise of two internationally renowned authors to provide a thorough overview of the developments in business over the last two centuries.

Business History is global in scope and looks at both the major players – Europe, the US and Japan – as well as emerging economies, such as China and South America. Focusing mainly on ‘big business’, Amatori and Colli critically analyze ‘the firm’ and its interaction with the evolution of economic, technological and political systems at the micro and macro levels.

This outstanding textbook is an exceptional resource for students on economic and business history courses, as well as for practitioners interested in broadening their understanding of business.

Table of Contents


Author Biography

Franco Amatori is Professor of Business History at the Institute of Economic History at Bocconi University, Italy.

Andrea Colli is Associate Professor of Economic History at Bocconi University, Italy.


To receive your 20% discount on the above prices visit: www.routledge.com/9780415423977 and enter the code BHABH2011 at checkout!

Valid until August 2011
INFORMATION AND NEWS

Management History Research Group

2011 Workshop (19-20 July)

Edinburgh University

Hosted by Martin Chick, the fee for this workshop is £110 (or, £70 for doctoral students). Anybody wishing to attend should contact Martin.Chick@ed.ac.uk or john.wilson@liv.ac.uk

Programme

Tuesday 19th July

9.30-11.00

John Wilson and Mitch Larson
Management in Banking: Barclays Bank 1973-2009

Ann-Christine Frandsen
Money Reloaded: Openness and Transparency in Bank Architecture

11-11.30 Coffee

11.30-13.00

Anindita Banerjee
Behind the Scenes at the Ahmedabad Calico Mills: an alternative analysis of Rice’s Ahmedabad Experiment

Antonio Weiss
Management consultancy and the changing nature of state power in the UK, 1964-2005

13:00- 14:30 Lunch

14:30-16:00

Trevor Boyns
The development of managerial control in British firms, c.1880-c.1940

Roy Edwards
The origins of routines and the emergence of systematic management in Britain c1920-c.1940

16:00-16:30 Tea

16:30-18:00

Sjoerd Keulen
Roland Kroeze
Leading a multinational is history in practice

John Quail
Originality and antecedents: Chandler in the context of writings of US business organisation before Strategy and Structure

19:30 Dinner

Wednesday 20 July

9:30-11:00

Peter Starbuck
Peter Drucker: Managing in the Next Society

James Wilson
Reconsidering Ford’s Highland Park Assembly Line: New Data vs. Old Ideas

11-11.30 Coffee

11:30-13:00

Andrew MacLaren
Mairi Maclean

Conrad Hilton: Personal Ethics and the Pursuit of Competitive Advantage

Chris Carter
Alan McKinlay

Developmental paper: Producer Choice at the BBC: Strategy, History and Politics
The Third Annual Conference of AAHANZBS
Academic Association of Historians in Australian and New Zealand Business Schools

Change and Control: Perspectives from Business and Labour History
CALL FOR PAPERS
8-9 December 2011, AUT University, Auckland, New Zealand

Keynote speaker
We are pleased to announce Professor Howard Cox (University of Worcester, UK) as the keynote speaker for 2011. Professor Cox has published significant research in Business History. Professor Cox, with Dr Simon Mowatt is currently writing a history of the UK magazine publishing industry for Oxford University Press.

Hosted by the Business and Labour History Group
B&LHG focuses on the following main approaches to business and labour history:

- Historical case studies of organisation development and innovation, including studies of technological and industrial change
- Labour history concerning employment relations, working class culture, trade unions, gender and ethnicity in the workplace and the labour process, non-union employee representation, political parties of labour and international comparative studies in all of these areas
- Historical analysis of public policy development in employment relations, labour law, occupational health and safety, gender and diversity.
- Historical research in business-based disciplines including marketing, management, accountancy and other areas.

The Business and Labour History Group (BLH&G) is a specialist research group of the New Zealand Work and Labour Market Institute at AUT University.

Call for papers and session proposals
Full papers will be blind refereed by two referees and must be submitted by 15 August. Non-refereed abstracts must be submitted by 10 October.

In addition to the theme of ‘Change and Control’ the conference also considers:
1. The role of historical research in developing theoretical perspectives in business and management
2. How historical research aids our understanding of contemporary issues in business and management
3. Teaching history in business and management schools

Papers, abstracts and proposals for discussion panels or themed sessions should be sent to the conference organiser Dr Simon Mowatt at simon.mowatt@aut.ac.nz. The proceedings will be published electronically.

For conference updates please visit: http://www.nzwalmi.aut.ac.nz/ nzwalmi@aut.ac.nz | www.nzwalmi@aut.ac.nz
THE BUSINESS ARCHIVES COUNCIL BURSARY FOR BUSINESS HISTORY RESEARCH

As a result of the generosity of Sir Peter Thompson, former Chairman of the National Freight Corporation, and the Wellcome Foundation, the BAC has instituted a trust fund, the income from which is used to offer annually a bursary to help an individual to further his/her research into business history through the study of specific business archives. In 2011 the value of the award will be up to £1000.

Eligibility

Applicants must be engaged in business history research using British-based business archives, normally at least of postgraduate level, with a view to publication of an article or book. Professional scholars and amateur researchers are equally welcome, but preference may be given to scholars at the beginning of their careers who are less able to call on other institutions for funding. Applicants studying for a research degree should identify a specific project based on identifiable archive resources, rather than merely seeking a grant-in-aid of their overall research programme.

Undergraduates, those researching commissioned histories and the members of the BAC’s Executive Committee are not eligible. Family historians and those wishing to work on records or archives not generated by business organisations, even to contextualise business history research, will not be eligible.

It is expected that the successful applicant will submit an short article based on the research to the Council’s journal, Business Archives. This will not preclude publishing elsewhere.

Applications

Candidates should indicate: the objectives of their research, which will need to be within the broad field of business history; the nature and location of the specific set of business records they wish to study; a detailed breakdown of costs; the proposed methods of dissemination of the results of their work.

All applications should be received by 31st May at the following address:

Business Archives Council
c/o Karen Sampson
Lloyds TSB Group Archives
5th floor, Princess House,
1 Suffolk Lane,
London EC4R 0AX

There is no application form. Candidates should include a brief curriculum vitae as well as the information indicated above. All applications must be typewritten or word-processed and should not exceed five sides of A4.
Award
The decision of the BAC is final. The successful applicant will be informed in writing by the end of May 2011. The prize will be awarded at the Annual Meeting of the Association of Business Historians Conference, 1-2 July 2011, University of Reading.
For further information and registration details, please contact the organisers:
Peter Miskell. E-mail: p.m.miskell@henley.reading.ac.uk
or
Hanna Rutherford. E-mail: h.rutherford@henley.reading.ac.uk

FRIDAY 1ST JULY
09.30 - 11.00 - Arrival and registration (tea / coffee) [HBS foyer]
11.00 - 12.30 - Keynote address [ICMA tbc]
12.30 - 13.30 - Lunch [HBS foyer]
13.30 - 15.00 – Parrell Sessions (I) [HBS: G10, G15, 108, 208]

Trademarks and branding
Chair: Laura Ugolini (University of Wolverhampton)
Teresa da Silva Lopes (University of York), ‘Globalisation and the evolution of fair-trade branding’.
Peter Scott (Henley Business School, University of Reading), ‘The determinants of competitive success in the inter-war British radio industry’
Bernardita Escobar (Universidad Diego Portales), ‘International economic integration and trademark registration activity: a comparative analysis of Chilean experience of the 1876-1906 and 1990-2008 periods’

Sustaining business networks in the eighteenth century British-Atlantic world
Chair: Mark Billings (University of Nottingham)
Emily Buchnea (University of Nottingham), ‘Persistent Commerce: The Continuity of Trade in the Liverpool-New York Commercial Network, 1763-1833’
John Haggerty (University of Salford), ‘Sustaining Business Networks during Uncertain Times: A Case Study of a Liverpool Trade Association, 1750-1810’
Sheryllynn Haggerty (University of Nottingham), ‘The importance of Trust in Sustaining Business in the Atlantic, 1750-1815’

Management systems
Chair: TBC
Daniele Pozzi (Bocconi University), ‘A rubber band managerial revolution: family, managers and M-form at Pirelli, 1943-1965’
John Wilson (University of Liverpool), Tony Webster (Liverpool John Moores) and Rachel Vorberg-Rugh (University of Liverpool), ‘Management and organisation of the Co-operative Wholesale Society, 1863-2010: training and professionalism’
Alberto Rinaldi (University of Modena) and Michelangelo Vasta (University of Sienna), ‘The Italian Corporate Network, 1913-2001’

Research and innovation
Chair: TBC
John Howells (Aarhus University), ‘Inventing around Edison’s incandescent lamp patent: evidence of the role of patents in stimulating downstream development’
Niall MacKenzie (University of Wales), ‘Business R&D and path dependence: explaining Finland and Sweden’s performance, 1981-present’
Federico Barbiellini Amidei (Banca d’Italia), John Cantwell (Rutgers University) and Anna Spadavecchia (Henley Business School, University of Reading), ‘Innovation and Foreign Technology in Italy, 1861-2011’

Automobile industry (part 1)
Chair: James Walker (Henley Business School, University of Reading)
Sigfrido M. Ramírez Pérez (Università Bocconi Milan, GERPIA-ENS Paris), ‘The European automobile industry between economic crisis and European integration (1973-1981)’
Valentina Fava (University of Helsinki), ‘Automobile multinationals, transfer of technology and East-West relations: The Fiat investments in the Soviet Union in 1960s and 70s: from politics to business’
Giuliano Maielli (Queen Mary University of London), ‘Fiat’s takeover of Lancia and new product development: Synergies, brand differentiation and decision-making routines in the crisis and decline of an iconic brand’
Jean-François Grevet (University of Artois), ‘The French automobile industry confronting the social, economic and environmental crisis of the 1970s (1968-1981)’

15.00 - 15.30 - Tea / Coffee [HBS foyer]

15.30 - 17.00 – Parrell Sessions (II) [HBS: G10, G15, 108, 208]

Publishing and advertising
Chair: TBC
Howard Cox and Simon Mowatt (University of Worcester and Auckland University of Technology), ‘John Bull spawns the dominant Woman: the emergence and sustained rise of Odhams Press, 1906-1939.’
Jonathan Silberstein-Loeb (University of Oxford), ‘Puff pieces and circulation scams: how British newspapers and advertisers learned to cooperate in the twentieth century.’
Stefan Schwarzkopf (Copenhagen Business School), ‘Finding a sustainable business model: from ad-hoc surveys to syndicated market research, omnibus surveys and continuous consumer panels, 1920-1960.’
The flow of business: rivers and maritime trade – networks, connections and power
Chair: TBC
Richard Coopey (Aberystwyth University), ‘Business, enlightenment and regional rivalry along the Severn, 1750-1900’
Peter Lyth (Nottingham University), ‘Navigating the economics rapids: business development on the Rhine and the Trent’
Jacqueline McGlade (College of St Elizabeth), ‘The de-nationalisation of maritime business: COCOM and the post 1945 re-arrangement of Sea Power and Commerce’

Managers and shareholders
Chair: TBC
David Green (Kings College London) and Janette Rutterford (Open University), ‘Spreading the net: distance, shareholding and the geography of risk in England and Wales 1870 to 1935’
Karen Ward Mahar (Siena College), ‘Gender and the American executive at mid-century’
Malcolm Pearse (Macquarie University), ‘Early modernisation in Australian business: the rise of the salaried manager, 1851-1900’

Planning and the built environment
Chair: Peter Byrne (Henley Business School, University of Reading)
Joe Doak (Henley Business School, University of Reading), ‘Five hundred years of nonlinear history: a complex adaptive meshworks approach to the property-environment relationship (in the Lower Kennet Valley)’
Ian Martin (Open University), ‘Where eagles blare: Barclays, branding and the built environment of Poole’
Stephen Sambrook and Ray Stokes (University of Glasgow), ‘Cleansing the cities and despoiling the countryside? Conflicts and tensions in British municipal refuse management, from the late 1940s to the 1990s’

Automobile industry (part 2)
Chair: Sigfrido M. Ramírez Pérez (Università Bocconi Milan, GERPISA-ENS Paris)
James T. Walker (Henley Business School, University of Reading), ‘Voluntary Export Restraints between Britain and Japan: the Case of the UK Car Market (1971-2002)’
Thomas Fetzer (Central European University Budapest), ‘Reversing gear: Trade union responses to economic crises at Opel (1974-1985)’
Tommaso Pardi (EHESS, CSU, GERPISA-ENS, Paris), ‘An alternative explanation of the impact of the 1970s crisis on the decline of British Leyland: industrial policy, Japanese investments and the role of British suppliers’
Tomás Fernández de Sevilla (University of Barcelona), ‘Between France and Spain: the strategy of FASA-RENAULT during the 1970s’

17.00 - 18.00 - Coleman Prize presentations [HBS G15]
19.00 - 20.00 - Reception
20.00 - 22.00 - Conference dinner
Saturday 2 July (provisional schedule)

09.00 - 10.30 - Parallel sessions (III) [HBS: G10, G15, 108, 208]

Manufacturers responses to changing markets
Chair: Steve Tolliday (University of Leeds)
Susan Townsend (University of Nottingham), ‘The “miracle” of personal car ownership in Japan’s era of high growth, 1955-1973’
Duncan Connors (University of Cambridge), ‘The failure of management to arrest the decline of British shipbuilding, 1960-1980’
Eric Golson (London School of Economics), ‘Swedish ball bearings in the Second World War: organisation ensures business continuity amidst war’

Merchants and traders
Chair: Andrew Popp (University of Liverpool)
Katie McDade (University of Nottingham), ‘Mobilisation of Bristol and Liverpool slave trade merchant networks and their relationship to the state.’
Manuel Llorca-Jana (University of Chile), ‘John Wylie: the tenacity of a Scottish merchant in Latin America, c. 1807-1835.’
Shakila Yacob (University of Malaya), ‘The Behn Meyer Story (1840-2000): a phoenix rises twice.’

Financial sustainability
Chair: TBC
Bonnie Buchanan (Seattle University), ‘The way we live now? The benefits, costs and sustainability of securitization in the global economy’
Christopher Colvin (London School of Economics), ‘Endogenous liability choice and bank survival: the great middenstandsbank experiment’
Fabio Lavista (Bocconi University) and Giandomenico Piluso (University of Sienna), ‘Getting unsustainable: debts, investments and losses of Italian state-owned enterprises from the golden age to privatisations’

International business
Chair: Howard Cox (University of Worcester)
Stephen Salmon (Library and Archives Canada), “...foretelling what might happen”: Canadian life insurance companies in China, 1920-1941’
Hirohiko Shimpo (Osaka Sangyo University), ‘Foreign direct investement in the inter-war period and Japanese investment in China: the competition between Japanese companies and Chinese companies’
Marina Nicoli (Bocconi University), ‘Innovativeness between protectionism and liberalism: policy-making in creative industry. The case of the international movie industry during the 20th century’
10.30 - 11.00 - Tea / Coffee [HBS foyer]

11.00 - 12.30 - Parallel sessions (IV) HBS: G10, G15, 108, 208

**Sustaining creativity**
*Chair*: Richard Coopey (Aberystwyth University)
Kevin Tennent (Open University), ‘Sustaining customer choice at the right price: multiple and discount music, video and computer games retailing in the UK, c. 1950-2000’
Peter Miskell (Henley Business School, University of Reading), ‘Sustaining creativity: what can the film industry teach us about the management of creative resources’
Anna Dempster (Birkbeck College, University of London), ‘Understanding Diversity in the Creative Industries’

**Entrepreneurship: cases and theory**
*Chair*: TBC
Stephen James (Teesside University), ‘Revival of the entrepreneurial spirit in Cleveland’s steel industry: the growth of Dorman Long, 1889-1914’
Bethan Lloyd Jones (Glyndwr University), ‘Henry Robertson: the man who did for Wrexham what Captain Brown did for Cranford’
Haiming Hang (Henley Business School, University of Reading), ‘Entrepreneurial orientation and market orientation implementation’

**Finance and the political / regulatory environment**
*Chair*: Paolo Di Martino (University of Manchester)
Eoin McLaughlin (University of Edinburgh), ‘Capture and sustainability: Irish loan fund societies, 1860-1914’
Andrew Smith (Coventry University), ‘Sustaining trust despite rumours of war: the impact of the American Civil War on credit reporting in Canada, 1860-1865’

**Subsidiary evolution in the UK since 1900: evidence and theory**
*Chair*: Alan Rugman (Henley Business School, University of Reading)
Stephen Young (University of Glasgow), ‘Hood and Young revisited: reinterpreting subsidiary change in the UK in the 1970s and 1980s.’
Robert Pearce and Marina Papanastassiou (University of Reading and Copenhagen Business School), ‘Subsidiary level evolution and diversity and the strategic development of multinationals: from multidomestic hierarchy to heterarchy.’
Andrew Godley, Robert Pearce and Marina Papanastassiou (University of Reading and Copenhagen Business School), ‘Competence creating mandates – are they really new? Re-examining the evolution of subsidiary R&D creativity in UK pharmaceuticals in the twentieth century.’

12.30 - 13.30 - Lunch [HBS foyer] and ABH AGM [HBS G15]
13.30 - 15.00 - Parallel sessions (V) [HBS: G10, G15, 108, 208]

Business and the environment
Chair: Terry Gourvish (London School of Economics)
Ludovic Cailluet (University of Toulouse), ‘Incorporating the environment, a case in pharmaceuticals and cosmetics: Pierre Fabre laboratories 1962-2010’
Fanny Darbus (EHESS, Paris) ‘The settling of solidary economy as a public policy’
Simon Mowatt (Auckland University of Technology), ‘The business of sustainability: the development of organic and environmental certification agencies in New Zealand’
David Higgins and Geoffrey Tweedale (University of York and Manchester Metropolitan University), ‘Profit before health: bladder cancer in British industry during the twentieth century’

Entrepreneurship: long run perspectives
Chair: TBC
Mark Casson (University of Reading), ‘The evolution of entrepreneurship in long-run perspective: England, 1000-2000’
Tony Corley (University of Reading), ‘How to ensure sustainability: Beecham’s survival 1848-2000’
Rosa Reicher (University of Heidelberg), ‘Dublin Jewry: a sustainable community in Ireland of the 19th and 20th centuries’

Management Education
Chair: Christopher McKenna (University of Oxford)
Mary Rose (Lancaster University), Sarah Robinson (Open University), Sarah Jack (Lancaster University) and Nigel Lockett (University of Leeds), ‘Opportunities, contradictions and attitudes: the paradox of entrepreneurial education and university-business engagement since 1960.’
Anna Varaksa (Novosibirsk State University of Economics and Management), ‘Sustainable development and higher education in Western Siberia.’
John Quail (University of York), ‘Urwick at Rowntree & Co.’

Conceptualising projects as business history
Chair: Lucy Newton (Henley Business School, University of Reading)
Roy Edwards (University of Southampton), ‘Engineering consultancy: evidence of project management.’
Martin Giraudreau (London School of Economics), ‘How to make firms with plans? Learning entrepreneurship through business planning guidebooks (1940-2010).’
Philip Scranton (Rutgers University), ‘Conceptualising projects as business history: prospects and challenges.’

15.00 - 15.30 - Tea / Coffee [HBS foyer]
15.30 - 17.00 - Parallel sessions (VI) [HBS: G10, G15, 108, 208]

Business networks
Chair: Andrew Popp (University of Liverpool)
Simon Mowatt (Auckland University of Technology), ‘Business sustainability through networks: the “rocky road” of AS Paterson and Modern Plastics’
Francesca Carnevali (University of Birmingham) and Lucy Newton (University of Reading), ‘Family firms and their longevity: piano production and retailing, 1851-1914’
Michael Best (University of Massachusetts, Lowell), ‘From the Visible Hand to high-tech business systems: how America’s post-war Development State countered Schumpeter’s entrepreneurial pessimism’

Natural resources
Chair: Rory Miller (University of Liverpool)
Juan Diego Perez Cebada (University of Huelva), ‘Sustainability and non-ferrous mining companies before the “ecological era”’
Xavier Duran and Julio Zuluage (Universidad de Los Andes), ‘Families, roads, social clubs and cartels: investment and the coordination in the production of sugar in Colombia, 1900-2000’
Peter Sims (London School of Economics), ‘Crisis, recovery and overproduction: British entrepreneurs and rural production in Uruguay, 1852-65’

Management of organisations: theory and practice
Chair: Ludovic Cailluet (University of Toulouse)
Chris Nyland (Monash University) and Kyle Bruce (Macquarie University), ‘Scientific management, corporate social responsibility and globalisation: content, carriers and context’
Mitchell Larson (University of Central Lancashire) and John Wilson (University of Liverpool), ‘Management in banking: Barclays Bank 1973-2007’
Stephanie Decker (Aston University), ‘Narrative strategies for organisational legitimacy: British Imperial business in decolonising West Africa, 1945-1965’

The evolution of comparative food systems, 1940-1980
Chair: Bridget Salmon
Shane Hamilton (University of Georgia), ‘The evolution of the US food system.’
Alessandra Tessari (University of Lecce), ‘The emergence of the modern poultry industry in Italy.’
Andrew Godley (Henley Business School, University of Reading), ‘Vertical marketing systems and supermarket intermediation in the evolution of the UK food system.’

17.00 Close and depart