

Further purchases were made in January and February 1795, so that by 16 February Hannah's shop debt had risen to 14s.1d. On 7 March a settlement was made with 5d. 'left to pay'. Fresh items were then bought and there was another settlement on 22 May, this time leaving 10d. 'to pay'.¹¹

A similar policy was followed over subsequent months with regard to Hannah's transactions. It also applied to other customers, such as Mrs Chaundy, who began making purchases on 28 April 1795 and whose bill seems to have run on until 23 September, when it was crossed through, doubtless indicating it had been settled. As well as buying sugar, tea, worsted, buttons, tape, and thread and needles for repairing clothes, Mrs Chaundy purchased vinegar, oil, hops, spice and half a peck of salt, this last costing the substantial sum of 1s.6½d.¹² Then there was Mary Smith who made tiny purchases, such as tea by the ounce, butter by the quarter pound, and candles singly or in pairs. However, she also made regular purchases of half an ounce of snuff for 1¼d. She seems to have made an effort to pay at least part of her bill monthly but was rarely able to meet all of it. Usually the sums left were modest, varying from around 6d. to 1s.6d., but in January 1795, 3s.9½d. was owing. Not until 19 October in that year had the bill been reduced to a manageable 1¼d.

Other customers bought stockings, lengths of cloth, handkerchiefs and even hats, with 'long pay' again the norm. Some, like Elizabeth Smith, purchased no groceries, only wearing apparel. This included 2s.4d. for a hat, 1s.10d. for an apron and strings, 2s.9d. for 'Ribband', and several handkerchiefs., doubtless worn at the neck and costing between 9½d. and 1s.5d. each. All of these purchases were made in 1791. Another purchaser of clothing and lengths of cloth was Mary Sheperd [sic] who in 1792 spent the substantial sum of 6s.0d. on a petticoat, 1s.9d. on a pair of stockings and 4s.7d. for a comb and a pair of buckles, as well as acquiring more mundane articles, such as handkerchiefs and an apron.¹³

Trade credit and the settlement of debt were perennial worries for shopkeepers, as the diary of Thomas Turner at East Hoathley, Sussex,

¹¹ See entries in B.118/F/1 (fn. 10).

¹² The salt was purchased on 15 May 1795, the same day that Mrs Chaundy bought half an ounce of 'peper' and the hops. Entry in B.118/F/1 (fn.10).

¹³ William Shepard was a customer at the shop, too, spending 10½d. on a pair of buckles, 2s.6d. on a pair of stockings, and 5s.3½d. on 'Cloth & making', during 1792. See B.118/F/1 (fn. 10).