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Change Is Brewing: The Industrialization of the London Beer-Brewing Trade, 1400-1750

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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

CHANGE IS BREWING:
THE INDUSTRIALIZATION OF THE LONDON
BEER-BREWING TRADE, 1400-1750

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

PROGRAM IN HISTORY

BY

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For my Wife and Parents

PREFACE

I began this work as an attempt to answer how the brewing trade in London developed in the seventeenth century. Judith Bennett's *Ale, Beer and Brewsters* has examined the medieval English brewing trade from the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries; whereas, Peter Mathias' masterful treatment of the English brewing trade examined it in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and was followed by T.R. Gourvish and R.G. Wilson's examination of the English brewing industry in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. When I started this work I sought to answer why the seventeenth century had been neglected in the historiography on English brewing. What I discovered by examining the London brewing trade in that century was not an industry lying dormant, ready to be awakened by the call for industrialization. Instead what I have found is an industry that was shaped by its medieval forebears and would in turn shape the trade as it became one of Britain's greatest examples of industrialization in the eighteenth century.

I have limited this work to London and its environs. London was hardly representative of England as a whole in the early modern period and I do not claim that brewing trade of London was representative of England's brewing industry at that time. However, throughout the early modern period London's brewers proved to be remarkably adept at adapting to change within the industry and were always among the first-movers in the English brewing trade. Their ability to adapt and change was not limited to the

seventeenth century. Instead London's brewers were in a state of nearly constant flux as they adapted to the whims of the Crown, the City, the guild, and their patrons.

I have limited the scope of this project from 1400 to 1750 precisely because most of the important changes within the early modern trade occurred between those dates. Before 1400 London's brewing trade was much like other towns within England. After 1400 the introduction of hops and beer-brewing immigrants to London and the City's desire to ensure that the trade was regulated according to its wishes helped to shape the industry into something different than its nearest competitors in size and population. This project ends in 1750 because the latter half of the eighteenth century saw the transformation of the trade in London into one dominated by industrialized firms quite different than their sixteenth- and seventeenth-century predecessors. The main difference between those firms was one of scale; however, the firms that came to dominate the industrialized trade of the eighteenth century were built upon solid foundations laid by their seventeenth-century forebears.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BL	British Library, London
GL	Guildhall Library, London
NA	National Archives, Kew
PROB	Probate Wills of the Archdiocese of Canterbury

ABSTRACT

London's early modern brewing trade was a dynamic one that was constantly in flux throughout the fifteenth, sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. This dissertation seeks to better understand how issues of gender, ethnicity, and class changed and shaped London's early modern brewing industry. Women played a vital role in the production and marketing of ale in London's medieval brewing trade. They were displaced from that position of prominence through the introduction of hops by foreign immigrants, known to strangers to their hosts, and the desire of the City of London to more closely regulate the trade in ale and beer. Those forces combined to marginalize women in the trade as they were replaced by male strangers brewing beer.

Those strangers came to control the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century brewing trade. Their product, beer, was superior to English ale in durability and cost less to produce. As London began to transition from an ale-drinking community to a beer-drinking one, the community of beer-brewing strangers came under attack on several fronts. Their guild, the Beer Brewers chartered in 1493, was consolidated within Ale Brewers' Guild in 1556 and in 1573 the now native-dominated guild issued an order banning strangers from the guild for ten years. Following shortly on the heels of that order, the City of London banned strangers from becoming members of London's guilds and, by extension, from joining London's leadership. Together the Brewers' Company

and the City limited opportunities for strangers, which would lead to the trade becoming dominated by natives by 1600.

Native brewers had cut out many of their competitors by 1600, but were vulnerable to other threats. The greatest threat to their existence across the seventeenth and early eighteenth century was taxation by the English state. Although an attempt to tax the industry failed in 1637, an excise tax on beer was introduced in 1643 and became the backbone of government excise revenues throughout the next two centuries. London brewers were forced to adapt to the excise. Some became quite successful, expanding their breweries and influence in local and national politics. Most, however, found that the extra burden of the excise made investing in the expansion of their breweries impossible. This situation became acute following the revolution of 1688-89 as the English state demanded ever more through the excise. Those demands exacerbated already existing tensions between smaller and larger brewers in the London community, which came to a head in the early eighteenth century as many smaller brewers were forced from the trade and their share of the market gobbled up by their larger competitors. Following the introduction of porter, a beer suited to industrialized production, to London around 1720, the last piece of the puzzle for the rise of the great industrial brewers, such as the Calverts and Thrales, was in place. What had been a trade that was once dominated by marginalized populations in the form of women and strangers was now controlled by an industrialized elite.

INTRODUCTION

BEER AND BRITANNIA

“What two ideas are more inseparable than Beer and Britannia?”¹ So commented the Reverend Sidney Smith in 1823 on the erection of the first brewhouse in the colony of Van Diemen’s Land, which was to become the Australian state of Tasmania. For Smith the erection of the first brewhouse in the new colony represented a mismanagement of the colony’s leadership because Governor Lachlan Macquarie had left its construction for far too long. For a colony of British settlers, who were almost entirely convicts transported against their will, there could be nothing of higher priority, at least in Smith’s mind, than assuring a steady supply of beer. Yet, beer and Britannia were, in essence, a fairly new pairing. Great Britain had only been legally forged in 1707 with the union between England and Scotland. While Britain might have been considered to be new even to Smith, beer was unquestionably British. What would have surprised Smith, and the modern British consumer, was that beer was not an English institution dating back into the mists of prehistory, but instead a Continental introduction of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. A further shock would be that the Smith’s English ancestors would likely have been horrified to find their descendant declaring a beverage fit only for the mouths of foreigners and soldiers to be incontrovertibly English. Yet, that is precisely what had occurred. This is a study of how the London brewing trade was shaped by the

¹ Sidney Smith, *The Works of Rev. Sidney Smith: Including His Contributions to the Edinburgh Review*, Volume II (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, and Roberts, 1859), 13.

introduction of beer and, in turn, how the brewing trade of London was to shape not only London, but also political, social, and economic issues of the nation.

Why do We Study Beer?

When a historian of beer mentions what they study, they are inevitably met with a laugh, a grin, or occasionally a frown. Beer is not often viewed as a subject of study worthy of a professional historian. This is a result of what Richard Unger has called a “historical myopia” that is caused by “an inability of many people at the beginning of the twenty-first century to conceive of a world different from their own.”² Today beer is associated with slick commercial campaigns, sporting events, and the antics of collegiate fraternities and sororities. The drinking of beer is, at best, a leisure pursuit that might enhance conviviality and, at worst, be an enabler of actions that could be detrimental to the imbiber and those around them. This view of beer is not new. It dates back at least as far as the nineteenth century and is linked to the crusade to prohibit alcoholic beverages of all kinds. It may have taken longer for beer to be lumped with Demon Rum and Madam Geneva, but it was eventually lumped there nonetheless.³ This crusade was undertaken for what could be considered the most wholesome of reasons; however, it sought to outlaw what had been, for at least four millennia, a necessary part of human life. The actual or attempted prohibition of alcohol in much of the Western world still

² Richard Unger, *Beer in the Middle Ages and Renaissance* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), xiii.

³ Brian Howard Harrison, *Drink and the Victorians: The Temperance Question in England, 1815-1872* (Staffordshire: Keele University Press, 1994). James Gregory, *Reformers, Patrons, and Philanthropists: The Cowper-Temples and High Politics in Victorian England* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2009). David W. Gutzke, *Protecting the Pub: Brewers and Publicans Against Temperance* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1989). W.J. Rorabaugh, *The Alcoholic Republic: An American Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979). Lillian Lewis Shiman, *Crusade Against Drink in Victorian England* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1988).

lays a shadow over the serious study of alcohol in the pre-modern and early modern periods. That laugh, snicker, or frown is a result of the modern prejudice of a world where alcoholic beverages are not a necessity. Letting that shadow cloud the study of the pre-modern and early modern world, however, leaves a vital element of everyday life unexplored to the detriment of the understanding of our forebears.

Beer and other alcoholic beverages like wine, cider, and ale were not a luxury or a mere pastime in the early modern world, they were a necessity. They were not only a social lubricant to be enjoyed with friends and family over dinner or after work at the local public house. They did take that form, but they were also food, drink, and even medicine wrapped into one.⁴ The calorific intake represented by ale and beer usually ranked second only to bread throughout the medieval and much of the early modern period. Those two pillars of nutrition were so important that when the government of Henry III instituted a national assize in 1266, it saw fit to regulate only two commodities—bread and ale.

Beer, wine, ale, and other alcoholic beverages were vital because the, often small, amounts of alcohol contained in them made them virtually the only safe choice to quench one's thirst. Before the advent of competitors like tea and coffee, which were heated to extract their essences and thus made safe to drink, or spirits, whose consumption did not explode until the eighteenth century, the consumption of alcoholic beverages in the form of wine or beer was ubiquitous. Beer was drunk by young and old, male and female, rich

⁴ For the use of beer, wine, and other beverages as medicine in a seventeenth-century context see: Louise Hill Curth and Tanya M. Cassidy, "Health, Strength and Happiness': Medical Constructions of Wine and Beer in Early Modern England" in *A Pleasing Sinne: Drink and Conviviality in Seventeenth-century England*, ed. Adam Smyth (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2004), 143-160.

and poor. It was drunk with every meal and every time in between. Benjamin Franklin commented on this custom when describing his co-worker at an English press in 1724. He said “My companion at the press drank every day a pint before breakfast, a pint at breakfast with his bread and cheese, a pint between breakfast and dinner, a pint at dinner, a pint in the afternoon about six o’clock, and another when he had done his day’s work.”⁵ Franklin was disapproving of the habits of his co-worker because “it was necessary, he supposed, to drink *strong* beer that he might be *strong* to labor.”⁶ Franklin’s disapproval of his co-worker’s habits earned him the sobriquet the “Water-American” because of his abstemiousness. Franklin’s heartily disapproved of his companions at the press, describing them as “great guzzlers of beer”, but it was his behavior in drinking water that was abnormal rather than the habits of his companions.⁷

Beer’s ubiquity meant that its consumption reached astonishingly high levels in comparison to today. Around the turn of the sixteenth century Londoners were likely drinking 1.1 liters of beer and ale each day.⁸ Women and children tended to drink weaker small or table beer and less of it than working men, but all drank beer. That consumption remained largely steady throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Gregory King suggested that each English person quaffed a quart of beer each day in the 1690s. His estimates on grain usage in the kingdom indicate that 11,350,000 bushels of malt were turned into beer and ale in 1695, which would give a per capita consumption figure

⁵ Benjamin Franklin, *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin* (Bedford, MA: Applewood Books, 2008), 67.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid, 66.

⁸ Unger, *Beer in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, 127.

for that year of 278 liters per person.⁹ The daily consumption figure of 0.7 quarts per day is not terribly far from his anecdotal quart per day. That figure is slightly less than 300-350 liters estimated by Richard Unger for northern Europeans in the seventeenth century; however, King's estimate is in turn based upon estimates of strong and small beer missed by the excise, which were probably greater than he allowed for. Unger's estimate also requires some nuance as certain areas appear to have drunk much less in the seventeenth century than before, largely due to excise taxation, whereas other areas drank more, with Dutch sailors downing 650 liters per year—far more than their counterparts on land.¹⁰ Another estimate based upon the experiences of the English in the North American colonies puts the consumption of late-seventeenth century England at 832 imperial pints, about 473 liters per year.¹¹ Estimates for the per capita consumption in the United Kingdom today are approximately one-quarter to one-third of those figures, about 75 to 100 liters per person in a year.¹²

Beer was not an occasional treat to be enjoyed from time to time for early modern Europeans, instead it was an everyday part of their life. At its most basic it was necessity that quenched one's thirst. Yet, it was also a vital foodstuff needed by many to sustain life. It was also part of ritual, from informal gatherings of friends to formal gatherings like the great dinners held by London's Worshipful Company of Brewers to semi-religious gatherings like bride- and church-ales that sold ale and beer to raise money for

⁹ George Chalmers, *An Estimate of the Comparative Strength of Great Britain... To which is now annexed, Gregory King's Celebrated State of England* (London: 1804), 43-55.

¹⁰ Unger, *Beer in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, 130.

¹¹ Sarah Hand Meacham, *Every Home a Distillery: Alcohol, Gender, and Technology in the Colonial Chesapeake* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 8.

¹² Jan Lichota (ed.), *Beer Statistics: 2012 Edition* (Brussels: The Brewers of Europe, 2012), 8.

parishioners. Beer was also what one turned to when one was in pain or sickness. Spiced beers, spiked with herbs, not only carried traditional remedies, but also dulled minor pains that would be alleviated by the host of medicines available to the modern consumer. In the early modern world, however, one had beer. To understand the everyday life of those living in the early modern world it is necessary to appreciate beer's role within it. Far from a silly sideline of history best left to amateur historians, the study of beer is vital to understanding the history of the early modern individual and the communities where they lived.

Overview

This study will examine the brewing trade of London from the fifteenth century, when the trade was a household one with little formal organization, to the eighteenth century, when the trade was on the cusp of industrialization. The study will begin with an introduction to the art of brewing, walking the reader through the main steps of the process and explaining, on a basic level, how beer and ale were brewed. This introductory tutorial will explain how the trade was structured around the ingredients, procedures, and people within the industry at the start of the fifteenth century. The rest of chapter one will be devoted to introducing two forces that would change the industry to its core: hops and coal. The use of hops and coal would transform the industry from one that was based within the home to one that was centered on larger, purpose-built breweries called brewhouses. The use of hops would also transition the industry away from the traditionally English beverage, ale, to a new and foreign one, beer.

Chapter two will more closely examine the transition from ale to beer in the context of London. The addition of hops, which made the malt beverage being produced

beer rather than ale, was an important advance in that hops have preservative properties that allowed beer to be kept for longer periods of time. Hops, however, imparted bitterness to the beer, which many English consumers found to be unusual, especially in comparison to ale's sweetness. Thus, at first, beer remained primarily a beverage brewed by foreigners, known as strangers to their English hosts, for themselves and, because of its stability, for English soldiers.

Stranger beer brewers found the Crown to be an ally throughout the fifteenth century because of their ability to supply beer to the military. Yet, they were also challenged by London's ale brewers, who had organized into a guild in 1437. The Ale Brewers' Guild included both male and female members and regulated the market for ale in London in conjunction with city authorities. That relationship was problematic, however. A particular problem was the role of hucksters, ale sellers who were predominantly women who sold ale on London's streets for brewers. In the eyes of the City hucksters were parasites that sold ale for above the price set by it and caused a host of legal issues that clogged London's courts. For London's brewers, however, they were a necessity as they sold much of the ale brewers produced and were nominally under the protection of the guild. Hucksters were also a bone of contention between the Ale Brewers and the City throughout the fifteenth century, which would eventually result in the City turning to stranger beer brewers as a competition to the Ale Brewers. Riding high on an invitation from the City to sell beer freely in London in 1477 and the official chartering of a Beer Brewers' Guild in 1493, stranger beer brewers became a serious threat to their native competitors. In order to extricate themselves from this situation the Ale Brewers would eventually abandon the hucksters they had spent so much time

throughout the fifteenth century protecting. That abandonment, which was shaped by the threat of strangers and the desires of the City, would cause the transition of the trade in London away from being a female-dominated one to a male-dominated one.

Chapter three will survey London's brewing industry during the sixteenth century. At the turn of the sixteenth century, London, unlike every other city in England, was dominated by two rival guilds producing two different types of malt beverages—beer and ale. The Ale Brewers' Guild was the elder of the two and was dominated by natives, who were producing ale using the age-old recipes of their ancestors. The Beer Brewers' Guild was dominated by strangers, or more precisely strangers who had become denizens (a type of limited citizenship granted by the Crown), who were producing beer in what were increasingly becoming larger brewhouses. The advantages of beer, its ability to be preserved by the use of hops and its generally lower cost to produce, were becoming ever more apparent to a larger segment of the population in the early sixteenth century. The two beverages would exist side-by-side throughout the sixteenth century; however, the general trend was for beer consumption to rise and ale consumption to fall. As stranger beer brewers became an increasing threat to the Ale Brewers, they decided to work more and more closely with the City of London, who found the large influx of strangers into the capital during the sixteenth century to be disconcerting. Together they helped to bring stranger beer brewers under the control of the City, with the subsuming of the suburb of Southwark in 1550, and the Ale Brewers' Guild, with the incorporation of the Beer Brewers' within the Ale Brewers' Guild in 1556.

The new Worshipful Company of Brewers, under the leadership of men like Richard Platt—a successful English brewer who switched to beer brewing, would

spearhead an attack on stranger beer brewers by banning them within the company and helping to engineer an Act of Common Council in 1574 that limited citizenship in London to natives. Through this policy not only strangers, but also their English-born children and grandchildren would be accounted as aliens. By helping to limit citizenship in London native brewers were able to gain complete control of the company and expand their operations immensely. By 1600, Platt and some of his contemporaries, had largely eliminated their competition and would grow their breweries to what was considered to be an immense size. The company, and its chief members had arrived, but at the same time the wealth that they accumulated from being the sole providers of London's favorite beverage placed a target squarely on their back.

Chapter four will examine the effects of this growth on the industry in London from the beginning of the seventeenth century to eve of the revolution of 1688-89. The industry was shaped by calamity and catastrophe throughout the century, which included civil war, the Great Fire, and the first comprehensive attempts to tax the industry. No one event shaped the trajectory of the brewing industry in London more than the adoption of the Excise Ordinance in 1643. Yet, even before this watershed moment, there were attempts to tax the industry. The most developed of these taxation schemes was the plan of Captain James Duppa to tax common brewers and maltsters (malt merchants) across the kingdom between 1637 and 1639. This tax was enacted as part of the personal rule of Charles I and, while it can only be judged to have been fiasco, it did debut taxation of the industry on a national stage.

Although London was exempt from Duppa's plan because of protections contained in the charter of the Brewers' Company, it was the greatest market for beer in

the land and thus a prime target for taxation and investment. Whereas the Brewers had been able to fend off the threat of strangers in the sixteenth century, competition from investors like James Duppa, his father Jeffrey Duppa, Sir Isaac Pennington, and others could not be easily resisted. The Duppas and Pennington had powerful Court and City connections and, although they were often described as brewers, they were investors in the trade that never dipped their hands into a sack of malt. Their investments helped to expand the size of breweries, while at the same time it became increasingly hard for men trained in the Brewers' Company to rise to own their own businesses. The trade became increasingly divided between the "haves", who had the wealth to buy a brewery and enjoy the wealth that came from it, and the "have nots", who owned small breweries that were often unprofitable or were simply the employees of the larger brewers.

That dichotomy was exacerbated throughout the seventeenth century by the effects of excise taxation, which was borne by all brewers but hit small brewers the hardest, and the calamities of disruptions in trade due to the English Civil War and the Great Fire of London. By the time of the loss of the Brewers' Hall in the Great Fire the company was in decline. It was increasingly dominated by large brewers, some of whom translated into the company and had no formal training as brewers, who could afford to be quite generous in the rebuilding of the hall because they had breweries large enough to be profitable and access to money-making ventures in London and at Court. Most brewers within the company, however, were increasingly falling behind. They could not afford the costs of maintaining a brewhouse, paying the excise, and improving their brewery except during very good times. The civic, religious, and social unrest of the capital during the middle of the seventeenth century simply did not offer such conditions.

Chapter five begins with the tensions that caused the revolution of 1688-89. Most of the great brewers of the previous generation had been associated with strong support for the monarchy and, to a lesser extent, support for the Anglican Church. James II's reign was problematic for many of these men because they were forced to choose between continuing to support the monarchy or to acquiesce to the revolution of 1688-89. Most acquiesced.

The increasing excise taxation that was enacted following the revolution was to cause a tremendous upheaval in the London brewing industry. Taxation on the industry more than doubled with the doubling of the beer excise, the introduction of the malt duty in 1697, and the taxation of hops in 1710. This increasing taxation was problematic not only for brewers, but also for the excise branch. During the 1690s the excise branch was in absolute chaos and would not reach the stability that it was known for later in the eighteenth century until 1720. More than ten percent of England's excise officers were to be purged for political reasons in the 1690s and in 1695 more than thirty excise officers quit en masse, a quarter of the force in London at the time, in response to their working conditions. Although the chaos of the 1690s would not be replicated again and stability in the department would return, the damage had been done. Brewers throughout the country, but especially in London, would begin to brew new beers, known as stout, three-threads, and double-beer, that were brewed to extreme strength to avoid most of the taxation that fell on each barrel of beer. This reaction caused a precipitous decline in the excise revenues in the mid-1690s, which would in turn result in the government beefing up the numbers of the excise branch and introducing the malt duty in 1697. Those two introductions would help to curb the brewing of stout, to the detriment of smaller

brewers. Larger breweries, such as the ones owned by Sir Jonathan Raymond and later his nephew John, the Calverts, and the Thrales, were in a perfect position to expand their operations. They had the wealth to not only pay the excises on beer, malt, and hops, but also more than enough to continue to improve their breweries via industrialized methods. Smaller brewers simply did not. When porter, a beer that replicated the taste of stout but was brewed to a lesser, and cheaper, strength, became popular in the 1720s the last piece of the puzzle for industrialization was in place.

Porter was perfectly suited for industrialized production and the Raymonds, Calverts, and Thrales took full advantage of that suitability. Yet, these brewers were principally the same large brewers of a generation earlier. The explosive growth of the brewing industry in the eighteenth century did not start from a point of null, as Peter Mathias postulated in his *The Brewing Industry in England, 1700-1830*, where nothing of major importance happened between the growing importance of hops in the sixteenth century and the advent of porter in the eighteenth.¹³ Tremendous growth did occur in the twelve largest brewing firms in the eighteenth century; however, this growth was not as impressive as Mathias believed and came largely at the expense of smaller brewers, leaving the overall production of beer in London stagnant or falling throughout the eighteenth century. The largest firms of the 1740s, such as the Calverts and Thrales, produced more than the previous generation. However, their scale of production was two or three times larger rather than the previous generation, rather than the five- to ten-fold

¹³ Peter Mathias, *The Brewing Industry in England, 1700-1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 6, 38.

increase hypothesized by Mathias.¹⁴ The growth Mathias identified was therefore more the result of organic growth within the industry and the combined forces of excise taxation and industrialized methods pushing out smaller competitors. Instead of starting from null, these brewers were building upon the firm foundations of their forebears.

The brewing industry in 1750 was very different from the brewing industry of the late medieval period. Rather than a trade dominated by marginalized populations, women and strangers, the new, industrializing industry was run by an elite of native, male brewers with important connections on both the local and national scale. That transition, however, was not fated to occur. It was the result of a constant re-shaping of the industry throughout the early modern period. Instead of a process that began in the early eighteenth century, the industrialization of the industry was the result of technology from the fifteenth century in the form of hops and coal for firing furnaces, regulation of the trade from the sixteenth century, and the creation of large and efficient firms in the seventeenth century. The modern industry identified by Mathias was not built by a few “heroic” captains of industry, but instead through the efforts of thousands of individuals, some quite readily apparent and others unfortunately nameless, who had worked within the trade during this formative period. Those individuals were just as “heroic”, and in many cases just as villainous, as those responsible for bringing the production of beer into a new epoch in the eighteenth century. This is their story.

¹⁴ Mathias, *The Brewing Industry in England*, 38.

CHAPTER ONE

COAL, HOPS, AND IMMIGRANTS: THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE LONDON BREWING TRADE, 1400-1650

The introduction of the hop to brewing was the single greatest change in brewing before the advent of pasteurization and refrigeration in the nineteenth century. Following closely upon the advent of hops in terms of importance to the London brewing trade was the introduction of coal as a fuel, at first for heating the vessels in which wort was produced and later for the drying and roasting of the malt that was to be used by London's brewers. Coal and hops were to significantly alter the brewing not just in London, but throughout the whole of the country. London, however, was to see the changes wrought by these two materials faster than anywhere else in the kingdom. Those changes would alter not only the product from ale to beer, but would change the faces of the brewer's of London in a dramatic fashion.

The Ingredients: Water, Malt, Yeast, and Gruit

The production of ale in the medieval period could vary greatly depending on the experience and taste of each individual brewer. Although the product could change dramatically in its flavor depending on the locally available ingredients and each brewer's technique, the process of brewing was, by and large, the same whether one was in London, Cornwall, or Yorkshire. The production of ale was reliant on four main ingredients—water, malted grains, yeast, and brewing adjuncts like *gruit*, a mixture of

herbs, which could add flavor and in some cases preservative properties. Good brewing water could often be readily found in most areas of England during the medieval period, even in London. In the sixteenth century it was still common practice for Southwark brewers to collect brewing water from the Thames by crossing over the lands of Bishop Winchester and the Priory of St. Mary Overies.¹ Some breweries, like those that clustered around Burton upon Trent, had inherent advantages in their brewing water, which, in the case of Burton upon Trent, was the high concentration of minerals like gypsum and magnesium that impart desirable characteristics to the beer. These inherent advantages could make these ales quite desirable in trade. Still, in most cases the local water flavored the local ale because most ale was produced and drunk locally due to the high transportation costs and ale's short shelf-life.

Apart from the various assortments of herbs and spices that flavored beer, malt was the most diverse of all the ingredients used in brewing. Malt could take the form of malted barley, which is the predominant malt used in modern brewing, but could also consist of malted oats, wheat, mixtures of different malts, and even beans according to the taste of the local brewer or the availability of grains. Evidence from both medieval England and the Low Countries suggests that ale or beer more often than not contained a mixture of different grains. In many, if not most, cases the predominant grain in medieval brewing was not barley, but was instead oats or a combination of oats and barley called dredge.² Barley, wheat, and oats would all have to be malted by soaking the grains in

¹ The London County Council, *Survey of London, Volume XXII: Bankside*, Sir Howard Roberts and Walter H. Godfrey (eds) (London: The London County Council, 1950), 78.

² Judith Bennett, *Ale, Beer, and Brewsters in Medieval England: Women's Work in a Changing World, 1300-1600* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 17. Richard Unger, *A History of Brewing in Holland, 900-1900: Economy, Technology, and the State* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 93, 118.

water, allowing the soaked grain to germinate on a couch, a table or even a floor, and finally the germination process would be stopped by the addition of a low, slow heat in a kiln. The low, slow heat would not only stop the germination process, but, if taken even further, could impart roasted flavors into the grain that would flavor and color the ale. Many ale producers, especially in towns where the necessary space to couch a large amount of malt was lacking, often bought their malt from specialist maltsters or malt merchants. Yet, the kiln was the only specialized tool in the malting process and so many alewives had the ability to produce malt at home.³

The process of malting, while time-consuming, was a necessary one as the malting process allows for the production of enzymes in the malted grain which would be activated when the malted grain was brought together with hot water, called liquor, in the process known as mashing. The mashing process, which when properly done would combine the malted grain and liquor at the optimum temperature, between 150° and 155° Fahrenheit (65.6° to 68.3° Celsius), for conversion of the starches found in the malt into sugars that could be converted by yeast into alcohol and carbon dioxide. The enzymes of the malting process are most active in converting indigestible starches into digestible sugars at that temperature range. Until the late eighteenth century the mashing process was judged by unscientific means, which varied according to the brewer. Some brewers boiled this mixture and waited for it to cool to the sufficient temperature. Others heated water until the surface became still and mirror-like. Still others used the tactile “feel” of the water, which was judged by dipping an elbow or thumb into the liquor to gauge the

³ Bennett, *Ale, Beer, and Brewsters in England*, 17.

temperature.⁴ Even with these unscientific means most medieval brewers were able to get to the proper mashing temperature, plus or minus a few degrees, to convert their malted grain into wort—the sweet, unfermented liquid that was the result of the mashing process.

With the production of wort the brewer had completed most of the process that was to eventually result in ale or beer. Ale could be produced simply with the addition of yeast once the wort had cooled to room temperature. Nevertheless, many brewers took the additional step of boiling their wort for two separate reasons. The first was to infuse the boiled wort with adjuncts that could flavor the beer. The second reason was that boiling the wort can also help aid in clarifying the beer by separating vegetable matter from the liquid, which would produce a clearer and “brighter” ale. Unbeknownst to the brewers that boiled their wort, the process of boiling also lessened the chances of the batch of ale being infected by either wild strains of yeast or bacteria that would cause the beer to develop off-flavors or become “ropey”, a particular type of bacterial infection often caused by *Acetobacter* bacteria that causes ale to develop slimy strands or ropes that make the ale unpalatable. Boiled worts certainly could develop these infections, and often did, but the infection would have to come from infected tools or fermenting vessels used in the process rather than from within the wort itself.

The boiling of wort with spices and herbs was a practice with a long history stretching back far into the medieval period. Examples of the use of *gruit*, a mixture of herbs that usually contained sweet gale (*Myrica gale*) which was also called bog myrtle,

⁴ James Sumner, “Early Heat Determination in the Brewery,” *Brewery History* 121 (Winter 2005): 66-80.

can be found in ninth century records relating to the regulation and taxation of *gruit* in monastic houses.⁵ *Gruit*, however, was a malleable substance and other flavorings were often used to flavor ale. Other additives like broom, wild rosemary, laurel, marjoram, mint, sage, juniper, yarrow, heather, wormwood, spruce tips, ground ivy (also known as ale-hoof), mugwort, meadowsweet, and a host of other ingredients have been attested as part of a *gruit* recipe.⁶ It is also probable that before hops became the dominant brewing additive in northern Europe between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries, wild or even cultivated hops were almost certainly a part of different *gruit* recipes across Europe.⁷ These additives were also slow to die away as they could be used as a replacement for hops during years when the hop harvest fell short. The London chronicler John Stow mentions that during the reign of Elizabeth I “Broom, Bay-berries, Ivy-berries, and such like things” were used as a replacement for hops when they were dear.⁸ To make the most of these flavorings it was usually necessary to boil the wort to be able to fully extract the essences contained within the various herbs, spices, and berries that were used. In Norway it was also common for a boiled juniper extract to be poured over the malt, or in other parts of Scandinavia to filter the warm mash through a strainer made from juniper

⁵ Unger, *Beer in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, 30.

⁶ For an even more extensive list of the possibilities for additives in *gruit* see: Unger, *Beer in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, 30-32. See also: Richard Mabey, *Flora Britannica* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1997), 181, 228-229, 370-371.

⁷ Max Nelson, *The Barbarian's Beverage: A History of Beer in Ancient Europe* (London: Routledge, 2005), 110.

⁸ John Stow, *A Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster: Volume II* (London, 1720), 202.

and alder branches, which would act as a filter to remove spent grain particles and add flavor to the ale.⁹

No matter which process was used for adding these herbs, spices, and berries, the main importance of them was to add flavor to the ale, which often took the form of a bittering substance that would work with ale's tendency towards sweetness. Sweet gale appears to have been chosen for this property and other herbs and spices, like heather and meadowsweet, were chosen because of their ability to pair with the sweetness of ale. Other substances, particularly additions like broom and wormwood, if added in large enough quantities could impart mild hallucinogenic properties to an ale. Finally, in many cases herbs were added not to impart flavor, but instead to impart healing properties. Much like an herbal tea today, herbs like meadowsweet were introduced into ales as a curative for many different diseases. In most cases these additions were no better than placebos or at worst harmful, such as in the case of too much broom or wormwood, but at least in the case of meadowsweet there seems to have been good reason for its addition as a curative. One of the first plants to be used to synthesize acetylsalicylic acid, the active ingredient in aspirin, was meadowsweet and Bayer pharmaceuticals named aspirin for the old botanical name of meadowsweet, *Spiraea ulmaria*.¹⁰

Yeast was a necessary component of any brew, but until the nineteenth century was not properly understood as the living organism that would produce the desired

⁹ Odd Nordland, *Brewing and Beer Traditions in Norway: The Social and Anthropological Background of the Brewing Industry* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1969), 98-132. Unger, *Beer in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, 32.

¹⁰ Mabey, *Flora Britannica*, 143. For more on the uses of ale, beer, and wine as medicine in the early-modern period see: Louise Hill Curth and Tanya M. Cassidy, "Health, Strength, and Happiness': Medical Constructions of Wine and Beer in Early Modern England," in *A Pleasing Sinne: Drink and Conviviality in Seventeenth-Century England*, ed. Adam Smyth (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2004), 143-160.

fermentation that would turn the sugars in the wort into alcohol. Broadly speaking, the world of brewer's yeasts divides into two main varieties— top-fermenting ale yeasts and bottom-fermenting lager yeasts. Top-fermenting ale yeasts, members of the species *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, were the predominant strains of yeast employed by medieval brewers. Bottom-fermenting lager yeasts, members of the species *Saccharomyces pastorianus*, which dominate the market today may have been present in medieval Europe; however, lager yeasts ferment at a much cooler temperature (40° to 50° Fahrenheit or 5° to 10° Celsius) than ale yeasts which were often not possible until the advent of refrigeration in the nineteenth century. It appears that *S. pastorianus* is a hybrid of a *S. cerevisiae* and another common yeast species, *Saccharomyces bayanus*, which is common in wine and cider fermentation. Currently there is debate over when this hybridization occurred and thus when lager yeast could have become part of the brewing trade. Yet, what can be said is that in the medieval and early modern context when yeast is mentioned as an ingredient it can be safely assumed that it was almost undoubtedly the top-fermenting *S. cerevisiae* variety.¹¹ Top-fermenting ale yeasts are, in general, more forgiving of temperature fluctuations and are most active in what could be considered room temperature, anywhere between 58° F and 75° F (15°-24° C). Additionally, derivatives of *S. cerevisiae* were far more readily available to the medieval brewer as they could not only be found in previous batches of ale, but could also be obtained from bakers whose choice in yeast was also a species of *S. cerevisiae*.¹² A final advantage that

¹¹ Sandra Rainieri et al., "Pure and Mixed Genetic Lines of *Saccharomyces bayanus* and *Saccharomyces pastorianus* and Their Contribution to the Lager Brewing Strain Genome," *Applied and Environmental Microbiology* 72 (June 2006): 3968.

¹² For the connections between brewing and baking in medieval England see: Bennett, *Ale, Beer, and Brewsters in England*, 47. For the symbiotic relationship in the supply of yeast between brewers, distillers,

S. cerevisiae had over its *S. pastorianus* relative was its ability to produce ale more quickly. The German term that came to denote the style of beer produced by bottom-fermenting yeasts was “*lager*”, which is literally translated as “to store”. Lager-style beers needed more time to mature, often months as opposed to as little as a few days or weeks for an ale, which was a distinct disadvantage in a time before refrigeration. This also explains why the style remained primarily confined to areas where cool caves with steady temperatures were abundant until the nineteenth century.

The Production of Ale in Medieval England

These ingredients—water, malt, yeast, and brewing additives—came together in the brewing process in medieval England to produce ale. Malted grain would be mashed with the heated liquor. This process could be accomplished in several ways. The first was by raising the liquor to the desired mashing temperature of around 155°F (68° C), then adding the malt, then allowing the mash to sit for a period of an hour or more, tapping the wort from the mashing vessel or pouring the wort from the mashing vessel over a strainer to strain the wort. At that point the wort had been produced, and technically with the addition of yeast, ale would be produced given enough time. Should additional flavors be desired it was also possible to strain the mash, place the wort back over heat, boil the wort with *gruit* or other flavorings, and finally allow the flavored wort to cool sufficiently to add the yeast. Another possibility was to boil the liquor with *gruit* or other flavorings first, then pour the hot liquor over the malt to, hopefully, reach the correct mashing temperature, and then strain or tap the finished wort into the fermentation vessel. Both

and bakers in London see: Mathias, *The Brewing Industry in England*, 49-51. For the preservation of yeast to use from one brewing to another see: Nordland, *Brewing and Beer Traditions in Norway*, 249-255.

methods were used by medieval and early modern brewers, but the first method, which became even more prevalent with the introduction of beer brewing into England, eventually became the preferred method because hops required a period of boiling to fully access the desired flavors and the anti-microbial alpha acids contained in hops. Following the removal of the wort from the heat, the wort could be poured into wooden cooling troughs to help cool the wort or, at the most basic level, could be simply left in the vessel to cool to room temperature.

Once the right temperature had been achieved yeast would be added. Within the space of a few days fermentation would generally be achieved, which could take as little as a few days or as long as several weeks depending upon the type of yeast used, how active it was, and the ambient temperature. Technically, once the yeast had completed fermentation the ale was ready for consumption; however, many authors recommended that ale be allowed to sit for a time so that it could become, in the language of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, stale. Stale ale was not ale that had gone bad, but instead ale that had been allowed to mature and mellow. The extra time would allow the yeast to drop out of suspension in the ale, which would make a clearer and more visually pleasant ale, and would allow for a full and complete fermentation of the ale, increasing the alcohol content and mellowing the flavor. Ale could not be stored as long as beer because of the lack of preservative qualities from hops; therefore, only the strongest of ales could be expected to be stored long enough to become stale, a great disadvantage when compared to beer.

The term ale descends from the Anglo-Saxon term *ealu* and until the seventeenth century the term denoted a malt beverage containing no hops. With the arrival of beer in

England, perhaps as early as the thirteenth century, from Germany or the Low Countries the term “beer” was adopted from the Middle Dutch *bier* to denote what equated to a hopped ale. There is some debate as to whether the word “beer” could actually be a native of the English language as the Anglo-Saxons had an alcoholic beverage called *beor*, which was distinct from *ealu*. Undoubtedly the Anglo-Saxon *beor* and the Middle Dutch *bier* and High German *bior* are related cognates. However, it appears that while the Anglo-Saxon *beor* was probably partially malt based, it is also probable that it included honey as a sweetener. The addition of honey, as well as spices, would make it more comparable to a braggot, a beverage made from the mixing of honey, ale, and spices, which was popular throughout medieval England as a celebratory beverage. While it is possible that the Anglo-Saxon *beor* was recycled in the thirteenth century to denote a new style of beer, just as the term ale was to recycled in the latter seventeenth and early eighteenth century to denote a paler, clearer type of beer than the porters that were dominant in the market at the time. It is far more likely that “beer” was adopted as a foreign word that was denoting a foreign drink that was distinct from the native English ale.¹³

When ale was produced in the medieval period it was primarily produced locally and for local consumption. There are instances of long-distance trade in ale to France, the Low Countries, and even further afield, but this trade was primarily confined to the major port cities of the eastern and southern coasts along with London.¹⁴ Because ale was mostly water it was a heavy commodity, which meant it was only suitable for long-

¹³ For an in-depth examination of the etymology of the terms beer and ale see: Ian S. Hornsey, *A History of Beer and Brewing* (Cambridge: Royal Society of Chemistry, 2003), 251-259.

¹⁴ Unger, *Beer in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, 97-99.

distance trade by water. Furthermore, because it tended to deteriorate and go sour in a matter of a few weeks, it was often not worth taking as a commodity in trade unless the trip was a short one.¹⁵ Due to these liabilities ale tended to be produced on the local level and in small batches that would likely be sold within days or weeks. This scale of production was ideally suited to the household. Most of the tools needed to produce ale were readily available in the household, and because batches tended to remain small there was little more to store than what one was able to brew for a week or two of consumption.

Ale and the Household Economy

Judith Bennett has created a framework for describing female brewers during the late-medieval period by dividing them into two rough categories: occasional brewers and by-industrial brewers. Her evidence for many English communities in the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries suggests that approximately one-third of all households in the villages and small market towns of England brewed ale for sale during the period. In larger towns, like Oxford, the percentage was slightly less, one household in every fifteen, which was largely due to increased competition from professional brewers who made brewing their full-time profession.¹⁶ Almost all of the occasional and by-industrial brewers she has identified were women. They brewed as an extension of their household duty to produce ale for the family. Bennett's occasional brewers were precisely that, brewers who sold ale when the opportunity presented itself. More often than not they sold extra ale that they had produced or sold to a neighbor when their batch had soured or otherwise gone bad.

¹⁵ Bennett, *Ale, Beer, and Brewsters in England*, 20.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 18-19.

For example, slightly less than 90% of women surveyed for Brigstock sold ale in this occasional way according to Bennett. The remaining 10%, 38 out of more than 300 women surveyed, brewed as by-industrial brewers who brewed ale frequently and produced more than two-thirds of the ale for the town.¹⁷ This production was still done within the household, but might incorporate specialized tools, such as larger vats for soaking the grain, hand-mills for milling the malt, or extra space attached to the household for storage of raw materials or finished products. Even with these extras, however, most by-industrial brewers did not brew continuously. Instead they would brew when conditions were right—when grain was cheap, when other household duties could be passed on to older children, or when economic necessity dictated it.

England's medieval towns were filled with by-industrial and occasional brewers. However, there were two elements that made life for by-industrial and occasional brewers more difficult, professional brewers and the regulatory powers of guilds and town councils. As towns became large enough to support brewers who brewed continuously, individuals stepped into that role. In many cases these individuals were women, but as the scale of brewing changed so too did some of the disadvantages women faced as professional brewers. When production was kept at a level that could be readily paid for with profits from previous brews or on credit from family, friends, or neighbors there was little need for these brewsters to become involved in contracts. Once production rose above that level and credit was necessary to produce on a by-industrial or professional scale, many women, especially married women, had need of male support. Usually that support took the form of a husband to represent them in signing contracts

¹⁷ Bennett, *Ale, Beer, and Brewsters in England*, 19-20.

and in any legal proceedings that came from any breaches of contract.¹⁸ That disadvantage often meant that the first professional brewers in towns and cities were husband and wife partnerships where the wife would brew and the husband would manage the contracts for supplies. These partnerships could be quite prosperous and married women with access to additional capital through their husband could brew more frequently, brew to a better quality, and could also brew larger quantities than their single counterparts.¹⁹ Larger breweries, however, also required more legal responsibility as costs grew higher with necessities of more labor in the form of servants and the need for larger premises with specialized equipment and storage spaces. With those increasing legal responsibilities came additional legal oversight from municipal governments and guilds, and more possibilities for men to take a larger share of the profession.

Before the fifteenth century legal oversight of the brewing industry came in the form of the Assize of Bread and Ale that was instituted in 1266, during the reign of Henry III. The Assize of Bread and Ale regulated the prices that ale could be sold for and instituted a system of justices of the peace appointing ale-conners or ale-tasters to assess the quality of local ales. Individuals who sold for more than the appointed prices, or whose products were deemed to be sub-standard, could be fined by the local justice of the peace. With the growing production of ale in towns additional forms of oversight began

¹⁸ The literature on the legal status of married women as *feme covert* in medieval and early modern England is well-developed. For a thorough introduction on the many disadvantages that married women faced in English law courts see: Judith Bennett and Amy Froide (eds.), *Singlewomen in the European Past, 1250-1800* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999). Amy Louise Erickson, *Women and Property in Early Modern England* (London: Routledge, 1993). Amy Froide, *Never Married: Singlewomen in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005). Bridget Hill, *Women Alone: Spinsters in England, 1660-1850* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2001). Susan Staves, *Married Women's Separate Property in England, 1660-1833* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990).

¹⁹ Bennett, *Ale, Beer, and Brewsters in England*, 42-43.

to appear. In medieval Oxford the university instituted an inflexible rotational schedule of when brewers were allowed to brew, which created a system where a few select professional brewers brewed the majority of ale by the early sixteenth century.²⁰ Oxford is an extreme case, but the regulatory power of municipalities to regulate and license brewers often resulted in professional brewers, who were better placed to pay fines and license fees, gaining more of the market at the expense of occasional and by-industrial brewers.

Guilds, which were mostly incorporated for the brewing trade in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, also held the power to regulate the number of brewers within a particular locality. Guilds were organizations for full-time members of a profession and their purpose was to protect those members who paid their dues to the guild and practiced their trade according to the rules set down by it. Women were not excluded from this membership, although they faced a tougher uphill battle to gain entrance than men. Women, as Bennett notes, “numbered disproportionately among those excluded from (or avoiding) gild membership.”²¹ Because their trade was often occasional or by-industrial, brewsters found little reason to pay to become part of an organization that would, more often than not, work against their interests. Licensing fees, guild quarterage, and the legal hassles that accompany a growth of plant and premises all worked against female occasional and by-industrial brewers in different ways, with the result that many faced increasing issues with remaining in the industry. Speaking of the brewing trade in Oxford, Bennett sums up the shift succinctly with this passage: “For Oxford brewers in

²⁰ Bennett, *Ale, Beer, and Brewsters in England*, 111-117.

²¹ *Ibid*, 63.

1300, brewing was a home-based by-industry that required little capital, little knowledge of markets and marketing, and little hired labor. For Oxford brewers 200 years later, brewing was a brewhouse-based industry that required capital, marketing strategies, and the employment of large, diversified work forces.”²²

So the story seems to be a simple one that has been seen in many trades across the history of industrialization—as an industry professionalizes it becomes more masculine. Or to put it in the terms of Bennett’s analysis occasional and by-industrial brewing, with little or no formal organization, was female and professionalized brewing, with formally established guilds with regulatory powers, was certainly male. Now to be fair, Bennett’s analysis is not nearly so simple, but at its core that is the transition that is presented. In most respects the argument is sound. As the brewing trade became based upon professional brewers it became almost an exclusively male one by the seventeenth century. However, during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the trade went through a series of changes that were dictated by a change in raw materials, namely the introduction of the hop into brewing and the use of coal as a fuel. Those changes were to dramatically change the industry towards what it would become in the seventeenth century, a male-dominated industry. That change was instigated, at least in the major port cities and towns like London, by immigrants from the Low Countries and Germany who, while mostly male, faced the same or even higher legal barriers within the brewing industry. In the next chapter we will examine how those immigrants were to use their knowledge of the production of beer to revolutionize the brewing trade and become the chief competitors to native male and female brewers alike. Before that story can be told,

²² Bennett, *Ale, Beer, and Brewsters in England*, 59.

however, we must examine the effects of two separate and distinct changes in the brewing trade that created the conditions for immigrants to succeed.

The Introduction of Hops

The first of these changes was the introduction of the hop to the English brewing industry. The history of hops (*Humulus lupulus*) stretches back for millennia. The connection between hops and the brewing trade, however, is surprisingly recent. Wild hops were perhaps mentioned by Pliny the Elder in his *Naturalis Historia* during the first century of the Common Era.²³ Apart from Pliny's passing and unclear reference to what could be a form of wild hops, virtually nothing has been found on the usage of hops, for flavoring beer or otherwise, before the eighth century. Hops reappear in the records of the abbey of St. Denis in France as a gift from Pepin the Short in September of 768, but there is no mention of a connection between the hops mentioned and beer. In fact it is unclear even if the field that was gifted to the monastery where the hop plants are mentioned indicates that they were cultivated there, or whether there were simply wild hop plants in the area.²⁴ The first definitive link between hops and beer in the records of the monastery of St. Peter and St. Stephen in Corbie France, where the statutes of the abbot, Adalhard the Elder, mention the usage of hops by the porter of the monastery in the brewing of his beer. The hops mentioned there were not cultivated, but instead wild hops gathered by the tenants of the monastery as part of their rent.²⁵ Other monasteries in northern France appear to have been brewing beer with hops around the same time and the first recorded

²³ Nelson, *The Barbarian's Beverage*, 107.

²⁴ Nelson, *The Barbarian's Beverage*, 107. Unger, *Beer in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, 53-54.

²⁵ Nelson, *The Barbarian's Beverage*, 107.

instance of cultivated hops is to be found in the records of the monastery of Freisingen in Bavaria. At Freisingen a hop garden is mentioned as early as 859. The hop plants mentioned could have been used in the production of herbal medicines, but the quantities being grown seem to indicate that the hop plants mentioned were being maintained for the production of hopped beer.²⁶

Hops appear to have been, at the very least, traded in England in the tenth century. The evidence for this connection comes in the form of the Graveney boat, a mid-tenth century cargo vessel discovered near Graveney in Kent, which was loaded with a cargo of hops. Whether these hops were destined for England to be used in beer making is unknown as the hops could have had several applications in medicine or industry. The cones could be used to make a yellow dye and the bines could be used to make rope. Nevertheless, it is possible that the hops could have been an import into England for beer brewing.²⁷ The possibility of beer brewing in England in the tenth century has little other evidence and if beer, as opposed to unhopped ale, was being brewed in England it must have been brewed on a scale so small as to miss documentation and taxation. It was not until the late fourteenth century that hops were to make a lasting appearance in England, and that introduction was to come from England's trade with the towns of Hanseatic League.

The cultivation of hops in Germany in the eighth century grew throughout the middle ages, but it was to be the Hanse towns of Bremen, Hamburg, and Wismar that

²⁶ Unger, *Beer in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, 54.

²⁷ D. Gay Wilson, "Plant Remains from the Graveney Boat and the Early History of *Humulus lupulus* L. in W. Europe," *New Phytologist*, Vol. 75, No. 3 (Nov., 1975), 627-648. See also: Unger, *Beer in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, 54

would spread the new hopped beer around northern Europe. The importance of the beer and hops trade to these communities was immense. From the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries they exported their native hopped beer-brewing tradition to areas across northern Europe. By the mid-thirteenth century these towns were centers not only of beer production, but were hubs of trade for the materials of beer production including hops. Wismar had hop gardens by the mid-thirteenth century, but as the trade in hopped beer expanded so too did the net for raw materials. The demand for hops within the Hanse towns could not be met by local production and they began importing hops from both southern and central Germany as well as Sweden by the fifteenth century.²⁸ Grain, for use in the production of malt for beer, was also obtained from the Baltic region and eventually re-exported in the form of beer throughout northern Europe. The key to the success of this hopped beer was its ability to avoid spoilage due to the anti-microbial qualities of the hops added to the beer. The ability to store and transport beer for up to months at a time allowed the German beer-producing towns to export their product, and the hop flavor that went into it, across northern Europe.

One of the main markets for Hanse beer was the Low Countries. Dutch and Flemish brewers had a long history of brewing *gruit* ale, which was similar to English ale in that it did not contain hops. *Gruit* was so valuable an ingredient to beer in the Low Countries that it was regulated and taxed by the Counts of Holland and Flanders and other local governments in what came to be known as *gruitrecht*. When German hopped beer was introduced to the towns of the Low Countries in the early thirteenth century it was resisted by the Count of Holland, amongst others, precisely because it was a

²⁸ Unger, *Beer in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, 57.

competitor that did not require the taxed *gruit* that native ales did.²⁹ Because of this resistance, as well as a lack of desire on the part of Dutch and Flemish brewers to break with their traditions, the German beer-brewing towns were given a window of almost a century in which to influence the beer-brewing style of the Low Countries. When native Dutch and Flemish brewers finally did take up the brewing of beer in the late fourteenth century it was only with great difficulty. Dutch brewers had to learn the techniques and recipes pioneered by their German counterparts. Richard Unger's chronicle of this transition suggests the time spent learning this process was sixty or more years, or roughly two to three generations of brewers, in towns like Bruges and Delft.³⁰ Unger makes a compelling case that it took that amount of time for hopped beer to lose its "foreignness" to the population of the Low Countries, or at least the population of the major towns of the Low Countries which were more ready to adopt the style than the countryside, and for them to consider the beverage not only a wholesome drink, but also to consider it to be native. That resistance was to be paralleled to a remarkable degree within England with the arrival of the hopped-beer tradition arriving on English shores from the Low Countries in late fourteenth century.

The Introduction of Beer into England

The introduction of beer into England was almost certainly the work of Dutch and Flemish traders and immigrants who brought their taste for beer to the English communities where they traded and settled. It was in the port towns of the eastern and southern coasts that were the first to see the new commodity and were, not coincidentally,

²⁹ Unger, *Beer in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, 77-78.

³⁰ *Ibid*, 79.

the foci of Dutch and Flemish trading and settling. As early as 1289 there is the possibility of hopped beer in England when a Norwich man was caught selling “Flanders beer privily.”³¹ Certainly by the fourteenth century beer was being imported as cargo from the Netherlands and Flanders into the port cities of Hull, Newcastle, Yarmouth, Lynn, and London. These cargoes appear to have been largely to supply homesick immigrants and traders as the first mention of beer brewing in England only dates to 1391, when beer brewing was mentioned in the London City Letterbooks.³² The beer brewing mentioned in the account was done “largely for foreigners by foreigners” and, at least in terms of production throughout the fifteenth century, that was to be the mode of operation for the brewers of London.³³

Beer appears to have been most popular in the southern port cities and London throughout the fifteenth century. Still, beer consumption could also be found as far afield as the cities of Newcastle, Hull, and York. Even in Cornwall, which was famous as one of the last places to transition from ale to beer, there was beer production in the household of John Glyn at Morval in 1470. According to one of the close rolls of Edward IV, John Glyn’s household was attacked and raided in 1470 by men under the command of Thomas Clemens, a rival for the post of under-steward of the Duchy of Cornwall. Glyn would later be murdered by men employed by Clemens in 1471.³⁴ In 1470 the attackers managed to take away most everything of value from the estate, which amounted to

³¹ Unger, *Beer in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, 98.

³² *Ibid.*, 99.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Joseph Polsue, *A Complete Parochial History of the County of Cornwall*, Volume III (Truro: William Lake, 1870), 377.

around £200 worth of goods. Glyn's widow Joan brought a petition to the king in October 1472 seeking recompense for the goods. Within the inventory of stolen goods was 4 hogsheads of beer (slightly more than 200 gallons), 300 pounds of hops, 200 bushels of malt, 40 bushels of barley, and 60 bushels of oats in addition to 400 gallons of ale.³⁵ Clearly the Glyn household was brewing for their own use on a rather large scale as is evidenced by quantity of both finished products, beer and ale, and the quantity of raw materials. The amount of hops is particularly instructive as they almost certainly would have only been used in the production of beer, and at this point would have been imported at a fairly substantial cost from the Netherlands or Belgium. An indication of just how costly hops could be is shown by the grant of fees to the new Bailiff of Dover forty years later during the reign of Henry VIII. Thomas Vaughan was granted the office in April of 1512 and was granted 1d. for "every hundred hoppes." Vaughan's trade in hops must have been quite lucrative as the importation of a hundredweight of hops paid him half as much as a mare or a bullock (2d. each), the same as "every barrel" or a hundredweight of tallow (1d. each), and twice as much as every sheep exported (1/2d. each). Vaughan was not alone in this as his grant was modeled off of those to other bailiffs in the southern port cities of Rye, Winchelsea, and Sandwich, which were also some of the earliest sites of beer production in England.³⁶ Clearly the hop had made it to

³⁵ Chris Given-Wilson (general editor); Paul Brand, Seymour Phillips, Mark Ormrod, Geoffrey Martin, Anne Curry, Rosemary Horrox (editors), "Edward IV: October 1472: First Roll," *Parliament Rolls of Medieval England*, British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=116556&strquery=beer> (accessed 30 January 2013).

³⁶ J. S. Brewer (editor), "Henry VIII: April 1512," *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII, Volume 1: 1509-1514*, British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=102660&strquery=hoppes> (accessed 26 February 2013).

England to stay and beer production was beginning to move from being a rarity to becoming an everyday drink for many.

The Cultivation of Hops in England

The Glyn household is evidence of just how far beer production and the taste for beer had come by the closing decades of the fourteenth century. Nevertheless, there is some question as to whether the hop is native to England. Richard Mabey describes the hop plant as “almost certainly a native” of Great Britain and there is quite a bit of evidence to support this.³⁷ Firstly, there is evidence of prehistoric hop pollen found across Britain, which dates as far back as the late Neolithic. This pollen has been found in many different archaeological contexts, which date from the late Neolithic to the medieval period.³⁸ There is also the evidence of the Graveney boat itself, which demonstrates that the hop was at the very least present in England before its intensive use in beer production. Whether the hop cones and fibers that were found in the boat were used for medicine, rope, dyes, or beer is not known; however, it was nearly the whole cargo of the boat and thus valuable enough to be transported in trade. Although the hop appears to be a native of the British Isles it was certainly not grown in the same intensive way there as it was in northern Germany by the thirteenth century and Norway, Sweden, and the Netherlands in the fourteenth century. Instead England appears to have been a relative latecomer to the cultivation of hops, even though the hop-growing areas of Kent, Surrey, Worcestershire, and Herefordshire are some of the best hop-growing lands in the world.

³⁷ Mabey, *Flora Britannica*, 63.

³⁸ Wilson, “Plant Remains from the Graveney Boat and the Early History of *Humulus lupulus* L. in W. Europe,” 634-637.

When the hop began to be cultivated in England is far from certain, with possibilities for native hop cultivation dating back as far back as the fourteenth century. M. Lawrence posits that hop cultivation could have been introduced by Flemish cloth workers into the Cranbrook area of Kent around 1331. This hop cultivation was for the use of the Flemish immigrants to produce the hopped beer that they were used to at home and the hop bines would likely have come from already cultivated varieties found in the Low Countries.³⁹ This theory is possible, but unlikely. The immigrants could have easily obtained the small quantities of hops necessary from Flanders, the Netherlands, or Germany. Hop cultivation on a large scale seems to have been an introduction of the early sixteenth, or perhaps very late fifteenth, century. The well-known couplet “Turkey, Carps, Hops, Pickerel, and Beer/Came in England all in one year” which is usually attributed to Sir Richard Baker is certainly a red herring in pinning down a date as to when the hop was first cultivated in England.⁴⁰ Baker put the date for the introduction of all of those in his chapter on King Henry VIII at “About his fifteenth year”, which would be 1524. Where Baker heard this couplet is unknown, but what is certain is that the dating for all of the introductions is incorrect, and at least in the case of pickerel mistook a native for an introduction. Martyn Cornell has done much to de-bunk Baker’s myth and the further myths that were perpetuated in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries based upon the couplet; however, even he has gone no further than saying that “some time

³⁹ M. Lawrence, *The Encircling Hop*, (Sittingbourne: SAWD Publications, 1990), 1-2. See also: Hornsey, *A History of Beer and Brewing*, 313, 319.

⁴⁰ Sir Richard Baker, *A Chronicle of the Kings of England from the time of the Romans Government, unto the reign of our soveraigne Lord King Charles* (London: 1643), 66. Other forms of the couplet have developed through the years with the other two most common being: “Hops, reformation, bays, and beer/Came into England all in one year” and “Hops, turkeys, carp, and beer/Came to England all in a year”.

around 1520' seems to be a good bet" for when the hop began to be cultivated in England.⁴¹

There is little evidence as to when or where the cultivation of hops in England first took hold. What can be said about hop cultivation was that the practices of hop cultivation were, like the first beer drinkers in England, a foreign import. The setting up of hop poles for the hop vines to cling to had been practiced in continental hop gardens since at least the thirteenth century. Proof that this method of cultivation was foreign to Englishmen is evidenced by importation of Dutch experts like Peter de Wolfe, who was employed by Edward VI in helping to establish hop gardens in England.⁴² Parliament also protected hop grounds in the act titled *An Acte for the maynten'nce and encrease of Tyllage and Corne* in 1551-1552 as "anny lande sett or to be sett with saffrone or with Hoppes" was protected from being developed for the planting of cereal grains.⁴³

Native writers did not begin to write on the subject of cultivation until the 1570s. In 1574 both Thomas Tusser's *Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry* and Reginald Scot's *A Perfitte Platform of a Hoppe Garden* laid out separate plans on how to cultivate the hop. Tusser's *Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry* focused on husbandry in general and provides little more than a few couplets in his section on husbandry in June giving a rough plan for a hop garden. "Where hops wil growe,/here learne to knowe./... hops hats [hates] the land,/where gravel and sand./Dry rotten moold,/for hop is worth goold./The sunne south west,/for hop yard best./Hop plot once found,/now dig the

⁴¹ Martyn Cornell, *Beer: The History of the Pint* (London: Headline Book Publishing, 2003), 73. See also his fine blog on all things beer at <http://zythophile.wordpress.com>.

⁴² Hornsey, *A History of Beer and Brewing*, 339.

⁴³ 5 and 6 Edward VI, c. 5.

ground.”⁴⁴ Those earthy lines certainly lay out the basic guidelines for a hop garden and undoubtedly Tusser’s lines had an effect on the hop industry in England through the subsequent editions of the text that were issued well into the eighteenth century.

However, no text had as great an impact on the early hop industry in England as Reginald Scot’s *A Perfite Platforme of a Hoppe Garden*.

Scot’s aim in writing his text was made clear in his introduction: to do nothing less than cut the Flemish and Dutch out of the English trade in hops. For Scot, the root of much of the trade deficit in hops was due to Englishmen being unwilling to grow hops in their own land. In his own words:

I see the Flemings envy our practice herein who altogether tend their own profit, seeking to impound us in the ignorance of our commodities, to cram us with wares and fruits of their country, and do anything that might put impediment to this purpose, dazzling us with the discommendation of our soil, obscuring and falsifying the order of this mystery, sending us into Flanders as far as Poppering, for that which we may find at home in our own back sides.⁴⁵

Scot’s book, unlike Tusser’s, made a clear appeal to Englishmen to tend their own hop gardens as a way to not only rectify the trade imbalance with the Netherlands, but also as a means to make Englishmen wealthy. To make that vision a reality Scot gave a much more systematic and well-organized plan for the laying out of a profitable hop garden. Scot gave advice on the selection of hop varieties, their propagation through rhizomes

⁴⁴ Thomas Tusser, *Fiue hundreth points of good husbandry vnited to as many of good huswiferie, first deuised, & nowe lately augmented with diuerse approued lessons concerning hopps & gardening, and other needeful matters, together with an abstract before every moneth, conteining the whole effect of the sayd moneth with a table & a preface in the beginning both necessary to be reade, for the better understanding of the booke* (London, 1574), 50.

⁴⁵ Reginald Scot, *A perfite platforme of a hoppe garden and necessarie instructions for the making and mayntenaunce thereof, with notes and rules for reformation of all abuses, commonly practised therein, very necessary and expedient for all men to haue, which in any wise haue to doe with hops* (London, 1574), Introduction.

(the cuttings of rootstock from hop plants), and the selection of the ground on which the hops were to grow. Additionally, Scot described the proper manner of growing and training hop vines on hop poles set into the ground, which was a skill learned in England from Dutch experts like Peter de Wolfe in Edward VI's reign. Perhaps most importantly, Scot detailed several different methods of drying and preserving hops ranging drying the hops in an oast house, which was viewed as the best, to drying hops in a garret, which worked fine if one had the space, to what Scot labeled "the very woorst way of drying Hoppes", leaving them to dry in the sun. Scot's recommendations were taken to heart in the hop industry, especially in his native Kent, which was to become the heartland of hop cultivation in England.

Beer and Beer Brewing in London

A market for native-grown hops was certainly in existence long before the nebulous date of 1520 when hops were supposed to be first planted in England. The market for hops was driven largely by two factors: the growth of beer as a vital military supply and the growth of beer drinking in towns like London. Currently it is assumed that the earliest supplier of beer to English troops was Henry V, who was providing beer to his troops in France by 1418. In the account of supply for the siege of Rouen both beer and ale are mentioned as separately priced commodities being sent to the besieging troops.⁴⁶ Henry V, however, appears to have called for "wyne, ale, or biere" to be

⁴⁶ H. T. Riley (editor), "Memorials: 1418," *Memorials of London and London Life: In the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries*, British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=57755&strquery=beer+rouen> (accessed 13 February 2013). See also: Hornsey, *A History of Beer and Brewing*, 312. Unger, *Beer in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, 99.

gathered for the English expedition to Harfleur two years before in 1416.⁴⁷ It is also possible, but is far from certain, that the Calais garrison was being supplied with beer from the towns of Bawdsey, Falkenham, and Alderton on the Suffolk coast. The close rolls of both Henry IV and Henry V mention the special monopoly these towns held on supplying the Calais garrison with “cervoise”, which is most usually translated as ale; however, the Suffolk coast by this point was already a place of Dutch settlement and the benefits of the more-stable beer would likely have been better suited for military transport.⁴⁸ The growth of the Tudor military state placed further emphasis on maintaining a constant and considerable supply of hops. A survey of Calais in December of 1528 determined that the population of the town would require four pounds of hops per man for his drink, which when tallied equaled 31,180 pounds of hops for the production of beer within the town.⁴⁹ Later in 1545, when the English were supplying a garrison at Boulogne, the London merchant Thomas Malby was contracted to deliver “20,000 hoppes, 300 sacks and 20 barrels of candle for the King’s town of Bullen” for the price of £200.⁵⁰ By the mid-sixteenth century hops had become a vital military

⁴⁷ H. T. Riley (editor), “Memorials: 1416,” *Memorials of London and London Life: In the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries*, British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=57753&strquery=biere> (accessed 13 February 2013).

⁴⁸ The mention of the special relationship between Bawdsey, Falkenham, and Alderton and the supply of ale or beer to Calais can be found in 1401 during the reign of Henry IV. Later the relationship was reaffirmed by Parliament in 1402, 1404, 1406, 1407, 1410, 1411, 1413, and 1414. See: Chris Given-Wilson (general editor); Paul Brand, Seymour Phillips, Mark Ormrod, Geoffrey Martin, Anne Curry, Rosemary Horrox (editors), “Henry IV: January 1401,” *Parliament Rolls of Medieval England*, British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=116508&strquery=bawdsey> (accessed 17 February 2013).

⁴⁹ J. S. Brewer (editor), “Henry VIII: December 1528, 26-31,” *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII, Volume 4: 1524-1530*, British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=91347&strquery=5102.CALAIS> (accessed 17 February 2013).

⁵⁰ James Gairdner and R. H. Brodie (editors), “Henry VIII: September 1545, 21-25,” *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII, Volume 20 Part 2: August-December 1545*, British History

commodity and most of the hops being used by English military forces were being exported from London, which had become a center of the hop trade.

Beer preserved with hops was quickly becoming a military necessity by the fifteenth century, if not earlier. Acceptance of the drink was far from universal, however. Beer drinkers in the port towns and cities where Dutch and Flemish immigrants had settled often found resistance to the introduction of beer by the guilds, who were charged with maintaining the standards for the production of ale. The brewers of London had been able to incorporate into a guild in 1438 during the reign of Henry VI, who gave the Brewer's Guild the ability to regulate liquor made from malt within the city. Henry VI had given the membership of the guild, which was composed of ale brewers, the ability to regulate the production of beer in London. Yet, it appears that he was at the same time a proponent of beer brewing. Just two years earlier he had protected the beer brewers of London when he issued this writ:

Writ to the Sheriffs to make proclamation for all brewers of "Biere" within their bailiwick to continue to exercise their art as hitherto, notwithstanding the malevolent attempts that were being made to prevent natives of Holand and Seland and others who occupied themselves in brewing the drink called "Biere" from continuing their trade, on the ground that such drink was poisonous and not fit to drink, and caused drunkenness, whereas it was a wholesome drink, especially in summer time. Such attacks had already caused many brewers to cease brewing, and would cause greater mischief unless stopped. Witness the King at Westminster, 15 June, 14 Henry VI. [A.D. 1436].⁵¹

Online, [http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=80420&strquery="Victualling of Calais and Boulogne](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=80420&strquery=Victualling%20of%20Calais%20and%20Boulogne) (accessed 18 February 2013).

⁵¹ Reginald R. Sharpe (editor), "Folios 161-170: June 1436 -," *Calendar of letter-books of the city of London: K: Henry VI*, British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=33722&strquery=biere> (accessed 20 February 2013).

Henry VI's successor Edward IV also took an interest in beer brewing, as he brought new regulations to beer brewers in 1464 by ordering them to brew beer from "seasonable malt, hopes, and other greynes" that were "holsome for mannes body" upon pain of forfeiture of any beer that did not meet those standards. In the same ordinance vessels for storing beer were standardized with a beer barrel containing 36 gallons, a firkin 18 gallons, and a kilderkin 9 gallons.⁵² Even with the interest of the Crown sometimes on their side the beer brewers of London often faced restrictive legislation from the City of London and the Worshipful Company of Brewers. Ale brewers were successful in 1484 in having the City of London lay down the ingredients that could be used in ale brewing—"only liquor (heated water), malt, and yeast"—to limit the competition that ale brewers faced from beer brewers.⁵³ In response the beer brewers of London were able to obtain a charter to become their own guild in 1493. The two groups were to remain apart and in direct competition to each other until 1556 when they were merged. Even with this separate status beer brewers often found it worthwhile to avoid the regulatory powers of the City of London and the Brewers' Guild by leaving the city.

The fact that most of the beer brewers in London were immigrants and the hostility that they encountered from the native English ale brewers led them to often settle in Southwark. Until 1550 Southwark was, apart from a small enclave at the

⁵² Reginald R. Sharpe (editor), "Folios 21-31: Oct 1463," *Calendar of letter-books of the city of London: L: Edward IV-Henry VII*, British History Online, [http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=33642&strquery="Ordinacio de Berebruers"](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=33642&strquery=) (accessed 18 February 2013). Barrels, firkins, and kilderkins of beer all contained one ninth more beer than the same vessels that contained ale. A barrel of ale contained 32 gallons, a firkin of ale contained 16 gallons, and a kilderkin of ale 8 gallons.

⁵³ Reginald R. Sharpe (editor), "Folios 193 - 212: Sept 1483 - ," *Calendar of letter-books of the city of London: L: Edward IV-Henry VII*, British History Online, [http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=33658&strquery="Ordinac' Pan doxat"](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=33658&strquery=) (accessed 20 February 2013).

southern end of London Bridge called the Guildable Manor, outside of the jurisdiction of London's municipal government.⁵⁴ Part of that special status was lost in 1550 with the creation of the Ward of Bridge Without. However, even though London regulated law and order in the Ward of Bridge Without, which included keeping tabs on all foreigners living in the area, Southwark was riddled with liberties, mainly former properties of the Catholic Church, which had not been incorporated into the Southwark community, where the lawmen of London did not hold sway. Southwark's unique status of being closely tied to London, only a short trip over London Bridge or across the Thames, yet not governed by the municipal government or the London Brewers' Guild was a great advantage to the brewers who migrated to the London area in the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries. Southwark was not alone in this regard within London as the suburbs of the East End such as East Smithfield, St. Katherine's, and Whitechapel were, like the liberties in Southwark, outside of the jurisdiction of the City and often acted as refuges for ethnic and religious minorities.

Beer brewers in Southwark also held the enviable position of being able to access all the raw materials necessary for beer production. Water was near at hand from the Thames and from wells. In 1509 Southwark brewers were granted a license by the Bishop of Winchester and the Prior of St. Mary Overies to cross their land to fetch water from the Thames for brewing.⁵⁵ Barley, and other grains like wheat and oats, could come in via the Thames and the two ancient Roman roads of Stane and Watling streets that combined at Southwark into the Borough High Street. Finally, Southwark held a unique advantage

⁵⁴ Sir Howard Roberts and Walter H. Godfrey (eds), *Survey of London, Volume XXII: Bankside*, 4.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 78.

of being near the newly established hop-growing grounds of Surrey and Kent, which began to be cultivated intensively in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. The immigrant brewing community of Southwark was to use all of these benefits to their advantage in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries to become a dominant force in the brewing industry.

The Growth of Coal in the London Brewing Trade

In 1661 the noted botanist, natural philosopher, and diarist John Evelyn wrote what is perhaps the most strident environmental tract of the early modern world, *Fumifugium*. In it Evelyn, with unabashed condemnation, took the users of coal throughout London to task stating:

She (London) is to be reliev'd from that which renders her less healthy, really offends her, and which darkens and eclipses all her other Attributes. And what is all this, but that Hellish and dismall Cloud of SEA-COAL? Which is not onely perpetually imminent over her head, . . . her Inhabitants breathe nothing but an impure and this Mist accompanied with a fuliginous and filthy vapour, which renders them obnoxious to a thousand inconveniences, corrupting the Lungs, and disordering the entire habit of their Bodies; so that Catharrs, Phthisicks, Coughs, and Consumptions rage more in this one City than in the whole Earth besides.⁵⁶

Evelyn was clearly passionate about the state of London air and the health of its inhabitants, none more so than his own health and the health of his beloved garden plants and trees. And so Evelyn devoted much of *Fumifugium* to identifying the main culprits in the use of coal in London, with no other industry receiving quite the same vitriol as its brewers. On several occasions he singled out the same industries for the pollution of London's air through the use of sea coal with brewers leading the list, followed by

⁵⁶ John Evelyn, *Fumifugium: or The inconveniencie of the aer and smoak of London dissipated. Together with some remedies humbly proposed by J.E. Esq; to his sacred majestie, and to the Parliament now assembled* (London, 1661), 5.

“Diers, Lime-burners, Salt, and Sope-boylers” who, according to Evelyn, do “manifestly infect the Aer, more, then all the Chimnies of London put together besides.”⁵⁷ Later, brewers are again singled out when Evelyn describes the environmental impacts of coal smoke from brewers on Lord Northumberland’s house and gardens located on the Strand near Charing Cross. The house and gardens would disappear in a thick, billowing cloud of smoke whenever there was a south wind because of “a Brew-house or two contiguous to that noble palace.”⁵⁸ The solution proposed for this problem was to legislate that the offending trades be forced from London via an act of Parliament to areas at least five or six miles downriver from the city, where the prevailing westerly winds would safely blow the noxious smoke out to sea.

Evelyn knew that this proposal would impact brewers the most as they needed a source of clean water to brew with, which was not necessary for the other trades that would be banished. His solution was to give brewers a special dispensation to practice their trade at the far edge of seventeenth-century London, by stating:

Or if it only concern the Brewer, I know no inconveniency, if even some of them were proscrib’d, as far as any fresh-waters are found dissemboguing into the Thames; since the commodiousnesse of the passage may bring up their Wares with so great ease: He that considers what quantities are transported from Danzick, Lubeck, Hamborough, and other remote places in Holland, cannot think this is an unreasonable proposition: But if their fondnesse to be nearer London, procure indulgence for some of them, The Town of Bowe, in regard of its scituation from our continual Winds may serve for the expedient, and a partial Cure: But the rest (Lime-burners, Dyers, Salt- and Soap-boilers) of those banished to the utmost extreme propounded on the River.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ John Evelyn, *Fumifugium*, 6.

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 7.

⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 17.

Evelyn greatly desired the removal of brewers from the capital. Yet, even he could not conveniently conceive of a plan that would banish them more than a few miles from London. Evelyn had hit upon a conundrum that was far from new in the confines of London. Brewers were a necessary evil and with that necessary trade came the problem of coal smoke. Evelyn was not the first, nor would he be the last, Londoner living with the environmental impact of this trade on the landscape of his city.

From at least the time of Henry III, London had been a city supplied with coal as one of its sources of fuel. By 1228 there was a lane called “Sacoles Lane” near Ludgate Circus and there was an industry of porters unloading coal from the northern collieries on the Thames.⁶⁰ This coal was mainly supplied to industries as fuel with many of the producers of London’s coal smoke identified by Evelyn in the seventeenth century being the chief offenders in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. John Hatcher has identified complaints of coal pollution on environmental grounds against lime-burners, dyers, and brewers dating from as early as 1283. In a striking parallel to Evelyn a complaint was lodged in the House of Commons in 1307 against kilns in Southwark, Wapping, and East Smithfield that burned coal. From those kilns the members of the Commons claimed “an intolerable smell diffuses itself throughout the neighboring places and the air is greatly infected to the annoyance of the magnates, citizens and others there dwelling and to the injury of their bodily health.”⁶¹ Brewers were not singled out in this complaint, but were

⁶⁰ John Hatcher, *The History of the British Coal Industry, Volume I: Before 1700; Towards the Age of Coal* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 24-25.

⁶¹ *Ibid*, 25.

almost invariably mentioned as one of the chief offenders.⁶² The long history of complaints and legal action against brewers who used coal would seem to argue against it as a fuel, but by the sixteenth century, if not sooner, brewers in London were wedded to coal. Brewers needed coal, despite all of its disadvantages, principally because it allowed them to brew at a lower cost than wood. Coal's lower cost brought efficiencies to the industry that allowed brewhouses to grow to sizes that had not even been dreamed of in earlier centuries.

Coal Connections: The Growth of the London Coal Trade

Supplying coal to London was a difficult task because the primary source of coal throughout the medieval and early modern period was the coal pits in northern England. These pits were mostly located around Newcastle, but coal was also mined and shipped from around Sunderland and Durham. Even in the best of conditions the trip from the Tyne to London in a slow-moving collier could be a hazardous one. Additionally, there was not much in the way of a fortune to be made in coal transport because, even in the best of times, coal was relatively cheap on the London market. London's water-side location explains how and why the market for coal came to be dominated by the city and its industries. The price of coal could be expected to quadruple from the time it was extracted from the coal pits in the north to its ultimate sale on the London market in the mid-seventeenth century.⁶³ That price certainly fluctuated depending on the number of colliers arriving in the port of London, what season it was (coal was always in greater demand in winter), and other outside factors such as roving privateers during wartime.

⁶²Walter Thornbury, Lower Thames Street, *Old and New London: Volume 2*, in British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=45074&strquery=brewers> (accessed 20 March 2014).

⁶³ Hatcher, *The History of the British Coal Industry*, 13.

Nevertheless, most of the time the price remained relatively close to the average, precisely because of easy access of colliers to London and the constant demand of London for more coal.

Tyneside colliers made London their preferred destination by the sixteenth century, if not earlier, because, quite simply, no other market in England could assure a captain that his coal would be sold for a relatively good sum in a short amount of time. This fact is evidenced by the growing dominance of shipments from the northern collieries to London, which reached nearly sixty percent of all coal shipments from the northeastern coal pits in the first half of the seventeenth century, and reached between seventy and eighty percent in the late seventeenth century.⁶⁴ Other markets with access to water transport could count on receiving coal at a rate near what it was sold in London, but selling coal at the smaller east coast ports was more of a gamble as there was not the same steady need for coal as in London for much of the period. This meant that captains delivering their coal to these ports may not have gotten their desired price if another load of coal just preceded them. Towns without easy sea access had to rely on supplies of wood. Even in the hinterlands of London wood was still the dominant fuel source during most of the early modern period. Hatcher notes that in the last quarter of the seventeenth century Sir Robert Southwell calculated that the transportation of sea-coal by land would cost approximately sixty times the cost of transportation by sea. That revelation helps to explain why as late as the mid-eighteenth century the Swedish botanist Peter Kahn stated

⁶⁴ Hatcher, *The History of the British Coal Industry*, 42.

that wood was still the dominant fuel source no further than 14 miles from the port of London.⁶⁵

Coal and the Brewers of London

The ready availability of coal within London proper explains why brewers shifted to coal as fuel at such an early date. Brewing is a heat-intensive industry, which requires a fuel source that is both inexpensive and provides an even, steady heat. Heating the mash to the proper mashing temperature and then raising the wort that is produced to boiling requires an immense amount of heat. London's brewers were not the first to experience the benefits of coal. Dutch brewers were ahead of the curve in adopting alternative sources of fuel. Wood shortages hit the Netherlands even before England as wood or charcoal for brewing had to be sourced from Germany in the early sixteenth century and after 1550 had to be sourced from as far away as Norway.⁶⁶ Because wood was so scarce in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries Dutch brewers switched to peat as their primary fuel source. Yet, even the boggy Netherlands did not have enough peat to satisfy the needs of Dutch brewers by the mid-sixteenth century, which increasingly led Dutch brewers to shift to coal. What coal offered Dutch brewers, and their English counterparts, was a fuel source that was cheap, efficient, and space-saving when compared to wood or peat. Coal was efficient because it could produce more heat than either wood or peat, with the efficiency over peat being particularly impressive as coal could produce four times the amount of heat by weight that peat could.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Hatcher, *The History of the British Coal Industry*, 13-14.

⁶⁶ Unger, *A History of Brewing in Holland, 900-1900*, 100.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

Because coal offered much more heat by weight than either wood or peat, brewers could also save space in their brewhouses by not having nearly as much fuel on hand. When seven to eight cubic meters of wood could be used as fuel to produce a single batch of beer in Elizabethan London, the savings on fuel space in a brewhouse could be immense.⁶⁸ One chaldron of coal was estimated to yield the same heat as three to four loads of wood in 1700. Depending on the quality of each this could be seen as a reasonable estimate, although it is more likely that coal could replace wood in a one-to-three or one-to-two ratio.⁶⁹ In either case a space savings of 25 to 75% was nothing to sniff at. In a tightly-packed city like London this space saving was of the utmost importance.

Above all-else, however, coal was an inexpensive fuel when compared to the alternatives. John Hatcher's price indices for coal compared to other fuels, like charcoal and firewood bavons, are illustrative of this point. The price index for Westminster College in the latter sixteenth and early seventeenth century helps illuminate just how economically efficient coal was compared to its rivals. The price of firewood bavons more than doubled in the space of the half century from the late 1580s to the early 1640s, while coal rose by about 25% in the same period. Charcoal's calorific content is similar to coal and in terms of space the two were relatively equal; however, coal's cost was only about 60% of the cost of charcoal in the 1580s (13s. compared to 21s.) and by the 1630s charcoal was about twice as expensive as coal.⁷⁰ In 1587 William Harrison placed his

⁶⁸ Unger, *Beer in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, 137.

⁶⁹ Hatcher, *The History of the British Coal Industry*, 38-39.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

expenses for firewood for an average brewing at 4s. out of a total of 20s. in cost for the entire batch.⁷¹ A brewer in London by 1587 could easily convert from firewood to coal and cut their fuel costs by nearly half. Those price differences only became exacerbated throughout the seventeenth century, which is why coal became the dominant fuel of not only the industries of London but also the population at large.

The switch to coal by brewers in fifteenth to seventeenth centuries did not occur without resistance or without occasional troubles, however. John Evelyn represents just one of the many voices that condemned the use of coal by brewers. In December of 1578 a petition on behalf of the Worshipful Company of Brewers was recorded in the State Papers where the brewers voluntarily offered “to burn no more sea coal but wood only in those brewhouses nearest to the Palace of Westminster.”⁷² Without doubt the brewers took the radical step of imposing extra regulations on some of their membership out of deference to Elizabeth I, who according to the petition found “hearselfe greatly greved and anoyed with the taste and smoke of the sea cooles” used in the furnaces of the brewers near the palace.⁷³ The brewers made this sacrifice to curry favor with the Queen, but it is quite clear that this run-in with the monarch did not stop their use of coal in the capital. In the 1630s and 1640s brewers in London were frequently fined by the government of Charles I under the advice of Archbishop William Laud. Despite the lack

⁷¹ Raphael Holinshed, *The First and Second Volumes of Chronicles Comprising 1 The Description and Historie of England, 2 The Description and Historie of Ireland, 3 The Description and Historie of Scotland: First collected and published by Raphaell Holinshed, William Harrison, and others...* (London: 1587), 170.

⁷² Robert Lemon (ed.), *Queen Elizabeth - Volume 127: December 1578, Calendar of State Papers Domestic: Edward, Mary and Elizabeth, 1547-80* (London: 1856), 612.

⁷³ Ibid.

of a parliamentary statute, Laud made the brewers in Westminster pay fines for polluting the air around London with coal smoke. These fines were supposed to be imposed on the brewers to aid in the repairing of St. Paul's Cathedral, which, according to Laud's view, had been damaged by the coal smoke of the brewers. The House of Lords had in 1623 passed an act forbidding the use of sea coal by brewers within one mile of His Majesty's Court and the Court of the Prince of Wales, but this act failed in the Commons. Despite the dubious legality of collecting these fines, which could sometimes amount to several hundred pounds, based partially upon an act that was only passed in the House of Lords, they were still collected by Laud throughout the 1630s and 1640s.⁷⁴

Government regulation, both legal and otherwise, certainly affected the use of coal by brewers; however, throughout the sixteenth and particularly the seventeenth century the main worry for brewers' fuel costs were shortages of coal. Coal was an important cost-saving advance, but only when it was plentiful and cheap. Shortages caused by harsh winters when the Thames froze solid could cause issues for not only brewers, but the population at large. Fuel shortages were a constant problem for Englishmen and women in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, which led to a host of publications praising the virtues of alternative fuel sources that ranged from dried sedges and reeds to the dried roots and stalks of potato plants.⁷⁵ London benefited

⁷⁴ Peter Brimblecombe, *The Big Smoke: A History of Air Pollution in London since Medieval Times* (London: Methuen, 1987), 40-42.

⁷⁵ John Forster, *Englands Happiness Increased, or a sure and easie Remedy against all succeeding Dear Years; by a Plantation of the Roots called Potatoes...* (London: 1664), 13. According to Forster the dried roots and stalks of potatoes would make an excellent "Fuel for brewing, heating of Ovens, or the like uses."

from steady coal supplies throughout most of the sixteenth century, but it did experience several shortages across the seventeenth century.

The most devastating of these was the shortage of coal in the capital during the Civil War when the northern coal ports were under the control of Royalist forces. Fuel of all types was in short supply in London during the war years, but the lack of coal was the most crippling. Coal was needed not only for heating, but was a vital component of industry. It was also one of the most heavily traded commodities in the port of London. The wartime shortage of coal caused desperate Londoners to eventually prospect for coal in Windsor forest.⁷⁶ The coal crisis reached an acute level during 1643-1644 as the price of coal skyrocketed. Parliament tried desperately to replace the lost coal supplies from the Tyneside with coal imported from Wales and Scotland; however, even with supplies flowing from these far-flung areas the crisis continued to spiral out of control in late 1643. It was not until Parliament and its Scots allies were able to take Newcastle in October 1644 that the crisis was alleviated. No fewer than 145 colliers sailed from Newcastle in December alone. The vast majority of them sailed to London to feed the insatiable appetite of the capital for coal to fuel its homes and industries. Despite interruptions like this in the regular supply of coal and government attempts to limit the use of coal by brewers, the brewers of London only continued to increase their use of coal across the seventeenth century.

Towards a New Industry

The brewers of the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries were not the equivalent of their industrialized eighteenth century descendants in using coal for more than the heating

⁷⁶ Hatcher, *The History of the British Coal Industry*, 48.

of their coppers. Yet, they were equally unlike their medieval counterparts. They had invested in the non-organic coal as the fuel that would drive their industry to become one of the leading industries of the capital and one that pushed the boundaries of the trade towards industrialization. The growth of brewing in London between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries was largely due to the adoption of hops as a preservative, allowing beer to be kept for months rather than days, and the cost advantages that could be found in coal. The effects of those twin adoptions were to be felt first in the struggle between the Brewers' Guild, the City of London, and the community of beer brewing immigrants, known as strangers. Those groups would struggle to shape the brewing industry in London according to their needs. That struggle would also center on the traditional hands in the brewing industry, women, and what their role was to be in the modernizing trade.

CHAPTER TWO
BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE: ADAPTING TO CHANGE IN THE
BREWERS' COMPANY

The craft of brewing in London saw tremendous change during the fifteenth century. The trade was changed by the innovation of beer brewed with hops that came with immigrants from the Netherlands, Germany, and Flanders. Brewing technology also changed as brewers began to adopt coal for heating their furnaces, mostly for its cost-effectiveness when compared to wood. London brewers also saw the trade formalized under the aegis of guilds that were chartered by the Crown. Together these advances created changes in the way brewing was done in London. Traditional forms of brewing, and the customary hands in that brewing process, women, were replaced by the methods of foreign men. In so doing, strangers would create divisions within London over whether and how beer and ale were to be brewed.¹ Those divisions were also part of a long-running feud between the Brewers' Company and the City of London that forced the Brewers to choose between tradition and bending to the City's wishes. Caught between

¹ Throughout this work I will be using the term "stranger" to denote an individual who has migrated to England, but was born under the allegiance to a foreign state. Stranger was usually the preferred term of the time to denote individuals who fell into this category and was considered a separate term with a different connotation from either "alien" or "foreigner". "Alien" could and was used to denote a person born under the allegiance to a foreign state, but could also denote, in the context of London, an English person born outside of the City and its environs. "Foreigner", in the early modern context of London, usually indicated an English person born outside of London who had not attained the freedom of the City and thus become a citizen of London. For the usage of the terms see: Ian Archer, *The Pursuit of Stability: Social Relations in Elizabethan London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 131. Jacob Selwood, *Diversity and Difference in Early Modern London* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2010), 1-10.

the increasing popularity of beer and a hostile City, native brewers had to adapt. Those adaptations would see some women become a more important part of the trade in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, while most would be removed from the trade altogether.

The history of women being marginalized as a trade industrializes is a long one.² Parallels to the brewing industry can be found in many crafts and professions. The history is invariably one of women being supplanted or marginalized in a trade by men as it formalized. One remarkable parallel to brewsters in the fifteenth century was cheese-making in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Female dairy maids were considered to be the most vital element of the trade. They were so important that they, not the materials or techniques, were considered to dictate the quality of cheese and butter produced in the mid-eighteenth century.³ Traditionally, these women operated in a division of labor where they, not men, were the masters of the dairy. Yet, with the coming of books published by men who had “scientifically” studied the process of cheese-making in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a revolution occurred in the dairy as women’s tradition and skill was replaced by the hard science of men in a move

² Alice Clark, *Working Life of Women in the Seventeenth Century* (London: Routledge, 1992). Judy Lown, *Women and Industrialization: Gender at Work in Nineteenth-Century England* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990). Chris Middleton, “Women’s Labour and the Transition to Pre-Industrial Capitalism” in *Women and Work in Pre-Industrial England*, ed. Lindsey Charles and Lorna Duffin (Beckenham: Croom Helm Ltd., 1985), 181-206. Pamela Sharpe, “De-industrialisation and the Staple: The Cloth Trade,” in *Adapting to Capitalism: Working Women in the English Economy, 1700-1850* (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1996), 19-37.

³ Deborah Valenze, “The Art of Women and the Business of Men: Women’s Work and the Dairy Industry c. 1740-1840,” *Past and Present* 130 (Feb. 1991): 146-148.

towards profit maximization.⁴ As industrialization occurred women were, invariably, replaced in the field by men and machine. This straightforward process of tradition being replaced by “true” scientific knowledge always leaves women on the outside looking in at a trade that they had once been dominant.

It is more or less this straightforward story that has been presented in the pages of Judith Bennett’s *Ale, Beer, and Brewsters: Women’s Work in a Changing World*, which, at its heart, aims to explain how women were supplanted as brewsters by male brewers during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Bennett’s analysis is thorough and concludes that women were replaced as part-time and by-industrial brewers by professionalized male brewers who had all the advantages of their sex. Bennett’s study is not far from the mark in explaining how women lost their position in brewing in most parts of England. Yet, in London her investigation fails in several crucial aspects. She does not properly take into account which men were chiefly responsible for changing the industry in ways that were adverse to the fortunes of some, but not all, women in fifteenth-century London. The group most responsible for this change was not native male brewers, who admittedly must bear their share of responsibility in the exclusion of women from the trade. Instead it was to be the beer brewers from across northern Europe that came to London to practice their craft, and the men who governed the City of London that were to take the trade from the hands of women and place it in the hands of men.

Stranger beer brewers brought with them the seeds of industrialization for the brewing trade. Their product was a superior one that, because it could be stored for

⁴ Valenze, “The Art of Women and the Business of Men”, 161-168.

longer periods and brewed in larger quantities than native ale, was suited to expanding the size of brewhouses far beyond the scale that was prevalent at the turn of the fifteenth century. As the industry grew so too did the workforce and the capital needed to acquire a brewery, procure raw materials, and pay wages. Bennett implicitly accepts that a stranger's masculinity would allow him to enter into contracts, procure raw materials on credit, and manage a workforce in a foreign land. While the barrier of sex may not have been one that male stranger brewers had to overcome, their status as aliens in a foreign land was often an impediment equal to that of gender in the common law and in the guild structure of London. Nevertheless, male strangers could and did find ways to work in their craft in London and its environs. By doing so they would change both the faces of the trade and its chief product.

Beer and Ale, Native and Foreign

Bennett's description of the fifteenth-century brewing industry in London centers upon a dichotomy between two beverages and two groups. The beverages are beer and ale and the groups are males and females. Bennett does not underestimate the seismic shift in the brewing industry that was caused by the introduction of beer into England, but in order to place London in the overall context of England as a whole she loses some of the fine detail of the transitioning brewing trade. Bennett's dichotomy of beer brewing being a male-dominated trade and ale brewing a female-dominated trade, is a dichotomy that is much clearer in the countryside and the smaller market towns than it ever was in the larger provincial towns and the capital. Bennett's own work on Oxford makes that clear as male ale brewers increasingly garnered a larger and larger share of the Oxford

market in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries before beer even became commonplace in the town.⁵ There, according to Bennett, women were replaced because of increasing regulations, placed upon them by both the Brewers' Guild and the university, and a lack of credit opportunities to expand their operations to compete with male brewers. While the forces of the London Ale Brewers' Guild, the City of London, and the market played prominent roles in replacing women in the field of brewing in the capital, there were features unique to London that cannot be easily compared to regions outside of it.

The replacement of female brewers by male brewers in London is not a clear-cut, dichotomous story in which female ale was replaced by male beer. Instead, in the fifteenth century, the forces that displaced female brewers in other towns in England, namely native male brewers and the guilds that represented their interests, equally found themselves threatened by beer and the strangers that brewed it. As in other areas of England, the ale brewers of London had been able to form a "mystery" or guild in the fourteenth century and had gained a royal charter from Henry VI in 1437.⁶ Yet, the Brewers' guild was not the powerful and dominant force in the fifteenth century that it would become in the sixteenth century. Instead the guild often found itself in a precarious position with the City of London and the Crown, which placed native ale brewers at a competitive disadvantage to their stranger rivals.

Beer brewers in Southwark and St. Katherine's were not under the regulatory authority of the City of London. Neither of those regions was incorporated into London

⁵ Bennett, *Ale, Beer and Brewsters*, Chapter Three "New Markets, Lost Opportunities", 37-59.

⁶ Mia Ball, *The Worshipful Company of Brewers: A Short History* (London: Hutchinson Benham Ltd, 1977), 18-19, 31.

proper in the fifteenth century, and each was riddled with liberties, independent enclaves where local legal authority was vested in a lord or the Church rather than in city authorities. The Crown was also a prominent friend of stranger beer brewers throughout much of the fifteenth century due to its reliance on stranger-brewed beer for military campaigns. When beer brewers were harassed by “malevolent attempts” to stop their brewing of beer in 1436, Henry VI issued a writ to the sheriffs of London to protect the beer brewers and ordered that the beer brewers should be able to return to brewing without any interference.⁷ On the other hand, London ale brewers were under the regulatory power of the Assize of Bread and Ale, which had been in place since the time of Henry III. London ale-tasters were appointed by the City to ensure quality standards, whereas beer brewers were effectively unregulated until King Henry VI appointed two surveyors of beer in 1441.⁸

The unique situation of stranger beer brewers being nearby, yet outside of the regulatory power of the City and the Brewers’ Guild, meant that competition amongst brewers in London was more intense than elsewhere. Brewers in towns like Oxford and Southampton were able to organize to limit competition, and in Oxford the university created a rotational system that kept brewers in a subservient, but financially stable, role.⁹ In London, although native brewers organized, they were not able to limit their

⁷ Reginald R. Sharpe (editor), "Folios 161-170: June 1436 -," *Calendar of letter-books of the city of London: K: Henry VI*, British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=33722&strquery=biere> (accessed 13 February 2013).

⁸ Unger, *Beer in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, 99.

⁹ Bennett, *Ale, Beer and Brewsters in England*, 50, 115.

competition in the fifteenth century. Instead competition from stranger male beer brewers created a tri-partite division in which native men would sometimes work with native women against the interests of the stranger interlopers and sometimes would look out for their own best interests. Far from creating a state where the Brewers' guild "controlled the trade" in London in the early sixteenth century, as had occurred in Oxford and Southampton, the interests of all three groups, along with outside players like the Crown and the City of London, would generate frictions that would delay native male brewers from dominating the field until the end of sixteenth century.¹⁰

The London Ale Brewers' Guild: Competition and Conflict in the Fifteenth Century

The "mystery" that was to become the Worshipful Company of Brewers likely began as a fraternity of brewers in the thirteenth century. The earliest evidence for its existence is an entry in the London City Letterbook in 1292.¹¹ The guild, however, did not gain a royal charter and permanent stability until 1437. Although the guild received the favor of a royal charter at that point, it was far from the most respectable of the London professions and was constantly embroiled in conflict with the City of London. The Brewers were amongst the more troublesome of the London guilds because their product was constantly involved in legal proceedings concerning false measures, poor product quality, the use of public water supplies, and the violation of price controls enacted by the City. Because brewers were so visible to London authorities, and because

¹⁰ Bennett, *Ale, Beer and Brewsters in England*, 50.

¹¹ Ball, *The Worshipful Company of Brewers*, 11.

their trade stood in relatively “bad odor” with them, the guild often found itself at the sharp end of action from city authorities throughout the fifteenth century.

The main bone of contention between the City and the Brewers was their system of distribution. Ale had been sold in London for generations by hucksters, individuals who bought small quantities of goods which were to be re-sold for a profit. Huckstering was a trade practiced by both sexes; however, women were disproportionately represented in the trade. There were several reasons for this predominance. Firstly, huckstering generally employed those of the lowest economic stations and single women, who often found employment as hucksters, were usually among the poorest individuals in medieval London. A second reason for huckstering’s association with women was the association between it and small-scale brewing. The division between being a brewster or huckster was often academic, as the divisions between a brewster, a female brewer, and a huckster were quite permeable. A brewster whose batch had become “foxed” or “ropey” through bacterial infection might resort to regrating (retailing a good in hopes of making a profit) ale from a common (commercial) brewer or a fellow brewster in order to make ends meet. A huckster might also grate ale for a time until she had saved enough to operate as a brewster. Women might also occupy both positions at the same time, which is why hucksters and brewsters, and even brewers, were often conflated, if not as one profession then as a group of interdependent economic actors. This dependency of brewers upon hucksters to market and sell their ale would prove to be an Achilles heel for Brewers’ Company throughout the fifteenth century.

The interconnectedness of hucksters and brewers was a continual problem for the Brewers' Company throughout the fifteenth century because of the City's dim view of huckstering. Huckstering's association with regrating was always problematic because hucksters would attempt to sell the ale they purchased from a brewer for more than the set price, or in quantities not approved by the City. Since 1355 taverners and brewers were ordered to sell ale only by sealed measure and, from 1391, had to present their customers with a hanap, a drinking cup that was built to an exact measure, to measure their ale.¹² Hucksters would purchase their ale using these measures from a brewer or brewster; however, they might sell the ale illegally in smaller measures, mix poorer quality ale or water with the ale purchased from the brewer, or could sell the ale by the quart or gallon for more than the stipulated price. Due to these sharp practices hucksters were condemned by contemporaries as little more than common criminals, even though many hucksters undoubtedly operated according to the laws laid down by the City.

A near contemporary description of just such a huckster can be found in *Piers Plowman* in the character of Rose the Regrater, who is the wife of the personification of Covetousness or Avarice. In the confession of Covetousness he describes his wife as a regrater of both cloth and ale:

My wife was a weaver, and woolen cloth made;
 She spoke to the spinners to spin it well out;
 But the pound that she paid by surpassed by a quarter
 The standard of weight that the steelyard gave!
 I barley-malt bought her, she brewed it to sell,
 Thick ale and thin ale she thoroughly mingled
 For labourers and low folk; this lay by itself.
 The best ale in bower or bed-room we kept;

¹² Ball, *The Worshipful Company of Brewers*, 23-24.

He that tasted thereof was contented to buy it,
 A goate for a gallon; he gave never less;
 Yet she came forth in cups; such craft would she use.
 Rose the Retailer (Regrater) she rightly was named;
 The trade of a huckster is hers, as at first.¹³

Rose the Reqrater is also joined by Beton the Brewster in Langland's work, who is a "sexualized temptress" who "runs an alehouse of ill repute, where all manner of sinful behavior can be found."¹⁴ The low reputation enjoyed by hucksters during the fourteenth and fifteenth century was one of the greatest problems faced by London brewers. There were far fewer taverns, inns, and alehouses in London during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries than in the sixteenth century. Most ale was either purchased directly from the brewer or was purchased from hucksters. Although the brewers of the Brewers' Company were not usually directly involved with the illegal activities of hucksters, being the providers of ale rather than the sellers, they were charged with regulating the behavior of hucksters who sold their product. That charge was to be a heavy burden upon them and would cause tremendous change in the market for drink in London.

The most illustrative example of the Brewers' relations with the City of London is the protracted squabble between the Brewers and the most famous fifteenth-century mayor of London—Richard Whittington. Much is known about this squabble because it was recorded in great detail by the clerk of the Brewers' Company, William Porlond

¹³ Walter W. Skeat, *The Vision of Piers Plowman by William Langland: Done into Modern English* (London: Alexander Moring Ltd, 1905), 75. In the original fourteenth-century text Rose is described as "Rose the Reqrater." "Reqrater" is usually translated as "Retailer" in modern English; however, some of the illegal connotations of reqrating are lost with its translation as "retailing".

¹⁴ Theresa A. Vaughan, "The Alewife: Changing images and bad brews," *Avista Forum Journal* 21: 1/2 (2012): 36.

(Porland). The squabble between the Brewers and Whittington was particularly heated and drawn-out; however, it was based upon the perennial problem between city authorities and the Brewers—hucksters. By 1419 attempts by the City to either better regulate hucksters or eliminate them altogether were decades old. From at least 1368 the City had made a point of attempting to better regulate hucksters. For instance, in 1382 it had ordered that no huckster could buy ale to attempt to resell at a profit. The 1382 ordinance appears to have been precipitated by a grain crisis as in that year the authorities ordered that brewers and bakers were to sell bread and ale by a farthing measure set by the City. Oddly, the mayor and aldermen of London seem to have been worried far more about the dishonesty of brewers than bakers as they ordered farthing measures to be made and marked with an “F” so that customers would not be cheated. Additionally, to ensure that brewers gave correct change, they sent £80 sterling be minted at the Tower into farthing pieces so that “brewers, hostellers, and hucksters” could come to the Guildhall to make change “so that they shall have no excuse on that account.”¹⁵ Even with measures such as this the honesty of brewers and hucksters was especially suspect and helps to explain why Whittington’s attack on them was to be so dangerous.

For some unknown reason Whittington appears to have held a personal vendetta against the Brewers and has been described as “the sworn foe to craft.”¹⁶ During his time in office he attempted to uphold a series of contentious ordinances passed in 1419 that

¹⁵ Reginald R. Sharpe (editor), Folios cxli - cli: March 1381-2 -, *Calendar of letter-books of the city of London: H: 1375-1399*, British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=33469&strquery=huckster> (accessed 09 January 2014).

¹⁶ George Unwin, *The Gilds and Companies of London* (London: Methuen, 1908), 232.

forced brewers to sell a gallon of ale for 1 1/2d. per gallon as opposed to the more usual 2 or more pence per gallon. Not satisfied with the compliance of the Brewers he “harassed them with domiciliary visits in person, selling up in one day by proclamation the stock (12 or 16 casks) of a brewer at Long Entry near the Stocks, and of others at the Swan in Cornhill, the Swan by St. Anthony’s, and the Cock in Finch Lane.”¹⁷ In addition he also apparently felt it a personal affront for the Brewers to have fat swans on the feast of St. Martin, which caused him to order that ale should be sold for only 1d. per gallon all the next day.¹⁸

Porlond’s account of Whittington’s actions against the Brewers’ Company is certainly biased against Whittington’s mayoralty. Nevertheless, it is not atypical of the friction between the company and the City in the fifteenth century. When Whittington chose to attack the Brewers’ Company in 1420 he attacked it in a way that would give him the greatest chance for success: through their gendered supply chain. As Lord Mayor in July 1420¹⁹, he summoned the hucksters of the city to appear at the Guildhall to testify on what brewers they obtained their ale from, at what prices the ale was sold to them, and what prices they then sold the ale at in the city. That data was recorded in the City Chamberlain’s book and was then compared with sworn statements from brewers on the

¹⁷ Unwin, *The Gilds and Companies of London*, 232-233.

¹⁸ Ball, *The Worshipful Company of Brewers*, 34-41.

¹⁹ This account has been incorrectly dated to 1421 in both the index of William Porlond’s Minute Book at the Guildhall Library and in Mia Ball’s *The Worshipful Company of Brewers*. This error comes from the manuscript being dated as occurring in July of 8 Henry V. Henry V’s reign began on March 21, 1413 which would make July 1420 the date of Whittington’s attack. This also conforms to Whittington’s fourth term as Lord Mayor, which lasted from 1419-1420.

same questions taken on the 22nd of August. When the accounts of the hucksters and brewers were found to be in agreement, Whittington declared the hucksters' statements to be false. By invalidating the hucksters' statements Whittington was able to impose a fine of £20 on the Brewers' Company.²⁰ Whittington's scheme to entrap the Brewers by demonstrating that hucksters and the Brewers were conniving to raise the price of ale effectively failed because he could not demonstrate that either group was acting illegally. However, Whittington was no fool: he knew that the honesty of hucksters was always suspect and that he, as Lord Mayor, could invalidate the statements of the hucksters with little suspicion and still punish the Brewers. By attacking hucksters, who were always suspect because of their sex, Whittington was able to chastise a group that he viewed as a thorn in his side.

Although the full £20 appears to never have been collected, the Brewers spent far more than that defending their position while they waited for Whittington's term of office to end. The Brewers spent £31 7s. 6d. in order to mitigate the effects of Whittington's anger, which was spent in this way:

£20 to Robert Whetyngnam, Sheriff: £7 3s. 4d. for 2 pipes of Red Wine to Richard Whityngton's butler: 20s. to John Carpenter the Mayor's Clerk: 32s. for 2 butts of Malmsey wine to Tho. Falconere, Alderman and Recorder: Porterage 6s. 8d.: Writing of the Petition 6d. Spent in collecting the money 6d.: Left for common use 40s. 4d.²¹

The Brewers were eventually able to delay payment of the £20 fine until Whittington left office, whereupon they were able to negotiate with his successor, William Cambrugge, to

²⁰ GL MS 5440, "William Porlond's Minute Book, 1418-1440", Fos. 32-34a.

²¹ GL, MS 5440, "William Porlond's Minute Book, 1418-1440", Fos. 25-27. Ball, *The Worshipful Company of Brewers*, 51.

pay £10 of the fine immediately and to pay the other £10 when it could be collected.

Although the Brewers' Company had been able to delay payment on their fine, they continued to be hounded by Whittington even after he left office as his "crusade" against them continued into "the mayoralty of Robert Chichele three years later."²² Whittington's motivation for focusing his rage against the Brewers for so long is unknown. His pique against the Brewers and the hucksters that they employed was unusual in its ferocity, but was far from unique in what it aimed to accomplish—the regulation of the market for ale to the satisfaction of the City. For Whittington the Brewers were a personal *bête noire*: for the City they were an affront to good order.

The ill-favor that the Brewers' Company tasted during the mayoralty of Dick Whittington was the worst that it would experience in the fifteenth century. But this was not the last time the Brewers would find themselves targeted by the City's anger. Porlond often mentioned gifts or bribes to different officials within the government, which were given in order to ensure friendly treatment for the company. These gifts were often given to mayors when they came to office, such as William Walderne, who was given a boar and an ox worth 20s. and 17s. respectively upon his accession to the mayoralty in 1422.²³ Nor were only mayors treated to such gifts. Porlond recorded a gift of 16d. to the Sergeants of the Mayor for them "to be good friends of the craft", which was later struck

²² Unwin, *The Gilds and Companies of London*, 233.

²³ GL, MS 5440, "William Porlond's Minute Book, 1418-1440", Fo. 72b.

out and replaced with the less-incriminating phrase “for their labor to the profit of the craft.”²⁴

Friction between the City and the Brewers’ Company over the regulation of the market for ale continued to mount during the mid-fifteenth century. The wardens of the Brewers’ Company were fined £50 in the late 1460s for making ordinances within the company that were against the common weal of the City.²⁵ These ordinances were likely an attempt by the Brewers to sell ale for more than the price stipulated by the City. In 1477 Richard Geddeney was committed to Newgate for attempting to incite a violent, armed attack on the Brewers’ Hall while the members were meeting. Geddeney claimed the Brewers had made new ordinances contrary to the regulations placed upon them by the City.²⁶ Shortly thereafter in July 1477, the wardens of the company were committed to the Compter prison for raising the price of ale without the license of the mayor and the aldermen.²⁷ The Brewers had been cited for such infractions before, but after this instance Common Council took drastic and immediate action by allowing foreign sellers of ale into the city to provide competition to the company.²⁸ Foreign sellers of ale in this case were individuals from outside of the jurisdiction of the Brewers’ Company who were located beyond London’s walls, but within easy reach of the London market for beer and

²⁴ GL, MS 5440, “William Porlond’s Minute Book, 1418-1440”, Fo. 100b.

²⁵ City of London (England), *Journals of Common Council, 1416-1609* (London: Micro Methods, 1971), microfilm, Journal 7 Fo. 106.

²⁶ City of London, *Journals of Common Council, 1416-1609*, Journal 8 Fo. 124.

²⁷ City of London, *Journals of Common Council, 1416-1609*, Journal 8 Fo. 172.

²⁸ City of London, *Journals of Common Council, 1416-1609*, Journal 8 Fo. 173.

ale. Common Council's measure had two very important impacts on the London market for ale and beer. The first was an opening of the London market to stranger beer brewers located in Southwark and St. Katherine's, who would, in the eyes of the City, be more willing than the Brewers to follow the regulations on ale and beer set down by the City. The second was a bending of the Brewers' Company to the wishes of the City, which was a direct response to the entrance of strangers into the growing market for ale, and especially beer, in the capital.

The Coming of Stranger Brewers to London

Beer had been imported into London since at least the fourteenth century and could have been imported into England as early as 1289.²⁹ Although beer was available in the capital by 1380, it remained a beverage that was primarily imported by foreigners for their own consumption. Natives brewed and drank the ale that their ancestors had drunk for generations. Beginning around the turn of the fifteenth century, beer began to be brewed in and around London by a community of Dutch, Flemish, and German immigrants who were collectively identified as "Doche" by their hosts. Originally this beer was for consumption of what was becoming a rather large community of immigrants in the capital. As the fifteenth century progressed, however, these immigrants and their product increasingly took a larger and larger share of the market for drink. As that share of the industry grew, so too did both the size and scope of breweries owned by strangers, which caused them to adjust the way they brewed and to develop methods to overcome the handicaps placed upon them as strangers in a foreign land.

²⁹ Unger, *Beer in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, 98.

Stranger brewers developed several ways to overcome the constraints placed upon them by the common law, the City of London, and the London Ale Brewers' Guild. Strangers held one great disadvantage in the common law that women did not—they were not subjects of the monarch. They were in fact almost non-existent in the common law. The position of strangers in the realm was the prerogative of the Crown. It held the right to allow strangers to enter into and work within the realm and it could, and did, order that particular groups of strangers leave from time to time.³⁰ This was true well into the modern period. Lord Chancellor Sir Francis Bacon explained in 1608 that persons could fall into one of four separate categories in regards to the English Crown and common law. Of these four, three, an alien enemy, an alien friend, or a denizen, could describe a stranger as the status of natural-born subject was reserved for those who were born under the allegiance to the English monarch. According to Bacon, an alien enemy could have “no remedy in any of the king’s courts” and for legal action “must complain himself before the king’s privy council... [where] the cause shall be determined by natural equity.”³¹ Alien friends were allowed the use of the king’s law insofar as it pertained to “movable goods and personal actions”, but that use was “transitory” as an alien friend might quickly become an alien enemy.³² For strangers, that was a real threat as evidenced by the treatment of the Hanseatic merchants who found themselves

³⁰ Irene Scouloudi, *Returns of Strangers in the Metropolis 1593, 1627, 1635, 1639: A Study of an Active Minority* (London: Huegenot Society of London, 1985), 6.

³¹ Sir Francis Bacon, *The Works of Francis Bacon: Literary and Professional Works*, ed. Douglas Denon Heath (London: Longmans, 1869), 7:648.

³² Bacon, *The Works of Francis Bacon*, 7:648.

imprisoned and their goods seized in 1468 on the orders of Edward IV. This treatment was calculated saber-rattling on the part of Edward IV in the lead-up to the Anglo-Hanseatic War of 1470-1474. In 1469 the Hanseatic League's fortified base of the Steelyard was attacked and largely destroyed by an anti-stranger mob, which was allowed to work its destruction by the King. Following that attack much of the Hanseatic League's former hold on the trade of London was broken. This example demonstrates just how quickly the protection of the Crown could evaporate, particularly in the fluid politics of the fifteenth century.

For long-term migrants it was this situation that led them to seek the third status that Bacon described—becoming a denizen. Denization granted strangers a partial citizenship. By obtaining a letter of denization a stranger could transform themselves from a person with limited rights within the realm to one who had defined legal rights and duties. Denizens were granted access to the common law and could purchase real property within the realm. This enabled denizens to purchase real property, such as land and buildings like brewhouses, which was something no stranger could legally do. Yet, at the same time denizens were forced to pay higher taxes in the form of the alien's duty, which was often assessed at twice the rate for natives.³³ Additionally, at least in London, higher rates of package, scavage, and bailage, which were duties placed on the trading of foreign goods, were assessed on strangers and denizens alike.³⁴ For a community that still had close ties to the Continent and traded extensively in not only beer, but also in foreign

³³ Martha Carlin, *Medieval Southwark* (London: The Hambledon Press, 1996), 166.

³⁴ Selwood, *Diveristy and Difference in Early Modern London*, 100

commodities like hops, those duties could be onerous. Additionally, male denizens, unlike natural-born male subjects, could not hold any military or civil office and rarely held positions of authority within the livery companies.³⁵ Although male denizens often held more rights in the common law when compared to a married English woman, whose legal status was subsumed in that of their husband, denizens were at a distinct disadvantage when compared to English men. It could also be argued that their status was less than single women or widows who held status in the common law in their own right. Nevertheless, strangers and denizens did succeed in the brewing industry in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. That success was largely due to the close-knit extra-mural communities they developed in and around London.

Stranger brewers tended to congregate in only a few select areas of London and its suburbs. Chief amongst these settlements was the community of “Doche” immigrants that settled in Southwark. Brewers were among the largest employers in the stranger community there and their brewhouses tended to congregate near the Thames in Tooley Street and Horsleydown Lane.³⁶ Stranger brewers also gathered in places like St. Katherine’s in London’s eastern suburbs and in the small intramural liberties like St. Martin le Grand. In St. Katherine’s there was a cluster of large beer brewhouses no later than 1480, which supplied the neighborhood, and perhaps the overseas trade, with beer.³⁷ These areas held several benefits for the brewers that settled there. In the fifteenth

³⁵ William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, ed. Bernard C. Gavit (Washington, D.C.: Washington Law Book Co., 1941), 157.

³⁶ Carlin, *Medieval Southwark*, 53.

³⁷ *Ibid*, 53 n 144.

century, each was outside the jurisdiction of the City of London and the livery companies that regulated training and quality standards. The authority of each did not extend beyond its walls or into the liberties in most cases and, in the case of the Brewers, the City actively encouraged its competitors from outside the city to supply it with beer.

Southwark and St. Katherine's were also ideally located with easy water access to obtain supplies of malt, hops, fuel, and water via the Thames. Finally, because these areas were home to large communities of fellow countrymen, brewers could be assured that they would be able to find employees to work in the labor-intensive brewing process.

Most breweries owned or managed by strangers were often just as small as the many brewhouses operated by the hundreds of small brewers who supplied London with its ale and beer. Some beer breweries, however, began to push the limits of production to a new level in the early fifteenth century. These breweries were based upon Continental models from Germany and the Low Countries, which had realized a new scale of production in the fourteenth century due to beer's ability to be stored for months rather than weeks. When Henry V campaigned in France in 1416 and 1418 he purchased large quantities of beer to supply his troops from brewers in Southwark. Beer was found to be not only a more stable beverage than ale, but also cost only two-thirds as much.³⁸ Beer brewers produced one-and-a-half times as much beer for Henry V in 1418 as the ale brewers did, 300 tuns of beer as compared to 200 tuns of ale. Even with that disparity in

³⁸ Unger, *Beer in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, 99.

quantity the two drinks cost the same to the purveyors of the Crown.³⁹ It appears that, even in 1418, beer brewers were better able to meet the demands of such a large order, which in turn suggests that their breweries were already larger than typical ale breweries at that time. With that growth in size Richard Unger has suggested that the “Doche” brought not only beer “but a larger scale of production and more complex systems of organization” to the brewing trade.⁴⁰ A larger scale of production and greater organization has often been associated with manufacturers who belonged to a guild that protected their interests from the competition of others.⁴¹ Yet, in London it was stranger beer brewers, who were unrepresented by a guild until 1493 when the Beer Brewers’ Guild was granted a royal charter, which brought a whole new scale of production to London.

Stranger beer brewers were able to expand their operations because of some extremely fortunate circumstances. The “Doche” beer brewers that arrived in London in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were the product of several centuries of change in the brewing industry on the Continent. Beer began to be produced in Germany, the Low Countries, and the Baltic between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries. In those centuries beer brewers created a professionalized trade that would spread from northern Germany

³⁹ H. T. Riley (editor), “Memorials: 1418,” *Memorials of London and London Life: In the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries*, British History Online, [http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=57755&strquery=beer rouen](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=57755&strquery=beer+rouen) (accessed 13 February 2013).

⁴⁰ Unger, *Beer in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, 99.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 212-213.

throughout northern Europe.⁴² Beer brewing was such a dominant trade that some towns like Hamburg based much of their economy on the production of beer for export to the rest of northern Europe. Hamburg was able to support no less than 457 brewers in 1374, whereas London a generation later in 1419 supported only about 300.⁴³ Even with such large brewing infrastructure there were still not enough opportunities for German beer brewers in northern Germany. These highly-trained immigrants would transplant the German method of beer brewing to the Low Countries, Scandinavia, and eventually to London.

Beer brewers not only brought a professionalized system of organization, based upon individuals trained in guilds, to London, but they also brought technology. The use of hops is the most obvious of the technologies that would change the brewing industry in London. Much like modern food preservatives, hops were used to inhibit microbial activity that would spoil beer. Yet, beer brewers were vital in popularizing other technologies as well. Beer brewers in the Netherlands ran into the problem of a lack of firewood to fuel their furnaces long before other brewers in Europe did. Their solution was to employ coal, often sourced from English coal pits. As we have seen, coal was not only less expensive than wood, but also offered a higher calorific content than other fuels like wood and peat—meaning less could be used by weight in comparison to other

⁴² For the origins and spread of the beer brewing trade in northern Europe at this time see: Unger, *Beer in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, chapters 4-6.

⁴³ *Ibid*, 122.

fuels.⁴⁴ Still later, it was a Dutchman, Petter Morris (Morrice), who helped to solve the problem of water supply for brewers in sixteenth-century London. In 1582 he completed the London Bridge Waterworks, which would supply London, and the cluster of breweries in eastern London, with water from the Thames for more than a century. Morris brought the technology of pumping water via a river-driven waterwheel pump from Germany, where it had been pioneered in the early part of the sixteenth century.⁴⁵ German, Dutch, and Flemish beer brewers who immigrated to London in fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were certainly limited by the common law and their often nebulous status with the Crown. However, at the same time they held great advantages in training, technology, and organization. Those advantages would eventually give stranger beer brewers a leg up on their native male and female competition in the growing London market of the fifteenth century.

Beer vs. Ale

Beer and ale had existed side by side in London for nearly a century by the middle of the fifteenth century, but the two were primarily serving different markets. Ale brewers supplied most of the native population with their daily whet. On the other hand, beer was primarily a beverage for foreigners and soldiers. Yet, around 1450 beer brewers began to become an ever-larger threat to ale brewers. By that point beer's advantages had become apparent to a larger segment of London's population. The brewhouses of

⁴⁴ Hatcher, *The History of the British Coal Industry*, 38-39. Unger, *A History of Brewing in Holland*, 100.

⁴⁵ H.W. Dickinson, *The Water Supply of Greater London* (London: The Newcomen Society, 1954), 20-22.

strangers were being modeled on ones that had been developed on the Continent in the previous century, which were, in general, larger than their English counterparts. Beer had been sold in London before; however, the invitation of Common Council to foreign brewers to come and sell ale and beer within the City gave beer brewers entrée to a new market. By inviting foreigners, not just stranger brewers but other ale brewers as well, Common Council had sent a message that the Ale Brewers' Guild would not have a monopoly on the market for drink. Stranger beer brewers took that opportunity and ran with it.

The golden opportunity that stranger beer brewers were presented with in the 1470s was seized by them with both hands. They had a growing market in London to sell to, a large number of fellow "Doche" countrymen trained in the Continental method of brewing beer, and, for at least some, a letter a denization that made them a near subject of the realm. In the mid-sixteenth century such denizens, or natural-born subjects, often acted as the legal "face" of brewing operations for strangers who were not denizens.⁴⁶ The ability of denizens to sign contracts, legally enforce them in courts, and own real property such as land and buildings made them an ideal partner for fellow strangers to obtain those when needed. Partnerships could be problematic, as many stranger brewers would find out later in the sixteenth century; however, they were undoubtedly vital to their success. A denizen also need not have been the head of a household or the manager of the brewery, but instead could be a son or a relative of the nominal head of the

⁴⁶ Lien Bich Luu, *Immigrants and the Industries of London, 1500-1700* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 287-291.

brewery who “owned” the brewery in a legal sense. By investing in a letter of denization for one of a younger generation, a whole family could be legally protected from having their brewery closed, goods seized, or contracts go un-enforced if trouble came. Trouble was never far away and could not always be anticipated, as the Flemish beer brewers of St. Katherine’s found out in October 1470 when their breweries were destroyed not only once, but twice, by the Earl of Warwick’s rebel troops in the space of a few days.⁴⁷ Trouble such as that could not be anticipated, but legal trouble in the courts could be and the insurance that a letter of denization provided was a wise investment for many stranger beer brewers.

A letter of denization could also be the passport for the holder into the London livery companies. Legally, a stranger, whether they were an alien enemy or friend, could not join a livery company. A denizen, on the other hand, could do so. Most stranger brewers in the fifteenth century preferred to remain outside of the jurisdiction of the Brewers’ Company by operating their brewhouses in Southwark and St. Katherine’s, but from at least 1461 there was an unofficial “mistry of berebruers” operating in London.⁴⁸ That “mistry” was the genesis of what would become a full-fledged guild by 1493. That rise in the status of beer brewers can be charted in the records of Common Council. Beer brewers were rarely mentioned in the records before the 1470s. After the July 1477 invitation to foreign brewers, however, there is distinctive turn in records as the phrase “the Brewers” that was commonplace before the 1470s was replaced by “Ale Brewers”

⁴⁷ Carlin, *Medieval Southwark*, 161.

⁴⁸ Unger, *Beer in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, 99.

and “Beer Brewers”.⁴⁹ There is also additional evidence of this switch in the form of probate wills from the latter half of the fifteenth and early sixteenth century, which clearly distinguish ale brewers from beer brewers.⁵⁰ By 1493 with the chartering of the Beer Brewers’ Guild of London there was a clear separation of powers between the two companies to regulate the two forms of malt liquor being produced there.⁵¹ Beer and the strangers who brewed it had arrived and were now a threat to the established order of the Ale Brewers’ Company.

A Position of Strength?: The City of London and the Ale Brewers’ Guild

Bennett’s analysis of the removal of women from the urban brewing trade in England is predicated largely upon the rise of male-dominated guilds that slowly pushed women out of the industry as it professionalized. That thesis is largely correct when one looks at the trade in urban areas outside of London. Her case study of Oxford for instance is a convincing example of female by-industrial brewers being replaced by professional male brewers who were members of a select club, the guild.⁵² According to Bennett, by the early sixteenth century guilds “took advantage of the very real need for their product to squeeze others out of competition”, which led to brewers’ guilds controlling “the trade

⁴⁹ For examples of this switch see: City of London, *Journals of Common Council, 1416-1609*, Journal 9 Fo. 106, Journal 10 Fo. 290, Journal 13 Fo. 177.

⁵⁰ NA, PROB 11/9/161, “Will of Lawrence Giles, Beer Brewer of St. Botolph without Aldgate, London”, 1492. NA, PROB 11/13/521, “Will of Philipp Williamson, Beer Brewer of St. Olave Southwark, Surrey”, 1503.

⁵¹ City of London, *Journals of Common Council, 1416-1609*, Journal 9 Fo. 106, Journal 10 Fo. 114.

⁵² For the Oxford case study see: Bennett, *Ale, Beer and Brewsters*, Chapter Three “New Markets, Lost Opportunities: Singlewomen and Widows as Harbingers of Change”, 37-59.

in such towns as London, Oxford, and Southampton” by the early sixteenth century.⁵³ By controlling that trade the members of those brewers’ guilds saw their status rise to the point that they could influence the internal politics of urban centers, which led to regulations in the brewing trade that were favorable to themselves and detrimental to women.⁵⁴ On the face of it, that analysis is not far from the mark if one looks at London at Bennett’s end date of 1600, rather than in 1500. In 1500 the London Brewers’ Guild was in no position to enforce its will on the industry as similar guilds were doing elsewhere in England. Instead the London Ale Brewers’ Guild found itself in a tenuous situation controlling a dying trade and in the bad graces of the City of London. That predicament forced the Brewers to radically alter their trade in the late fifteenth century to meet the threat of stranger beer brewers and to modify their regulation of the industry to suit the needs of the City of London.

In the fifteenth century brewing was clearly a growing trade that should have offered a wealth of opportunities for brewers—whether they were male, female, native, or stranger. From 1374 to 1488 the profession of brewer was the second-most cited occupation in London wills, with 317 wills of brewers being proved.⁵⁵ William Porlond’s meticulous records for the first years he was clerk of the Brewers’ Company demonstrate that women composed a high percentage of the guild’s members. Women could enter into the fraternity of the Brewers and wear the guild livery, but this honor was usually

⁵³ Bennett, *Ale, Beer and Brewsters*, 50.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 50.

⁵⁵ Caroline M. Barron, *London in the Later Middle Ages: Government and People 1200-1500* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 69 n. 20.

reserved for women who were either the wives of guild officers or who were successful brewsters in their own right.⁵⁶ These women were also entitled to join in the Brewers' annual feast. For most women, including the hucksters who sold ale on the street, even that limited membership was out of reach. Male members, provided they met with enough financial success, could expect to become free of the guild and participate in civic politics. Perhaps given enough time they might even expect to join the ranks of the guild officers. Those possibilities were effectively closed to female members.⁵⁷

Bennett's summation of Porlond's data paints a picture of a guild gaining strength following the protracted fight with Whittington as the number of members rose from a nadir of 220 in 1420-21 to 370 in 1424-1425.⁵⁸ This growth in overall numbers in the guild is impressive; however, those numbers were skewed by the fight with Whittington during 1419-1420. Not coincidentally the lowest overall number of brewers (218) and the lowest number of women represented by the guild (76) occurred in 1420-1421, right after Whittington's attack. Within the next four years the number of male brewers would rise by 35%, from 142 to 218; but the number of female brewers would double, from 76 to 152.⁵⁹ That type of growth is clearly unusual and suggests that either brewers were choosing to quit the guild during the period of Whittington's attack out of fear of being associated with it, or perhaps that the guild was not accepting quarterage from individuals

⁵⁶ Bennett, *Ale, Beer and Brewsters*, 68-69.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 68-69.

⁵⁸ Bennett, *Ale, Beer and Brewsters*, 64, Table 4.1 "Women and Men in the Brewers' Guild of London, 1418-1425".

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

who were considered to be a liability. Unfortunately, Porlond's memoranda book begins in 1418, the year before Whittington took office, and therefore does not offer comparable quarterage lists from the 1410s to answer the question one way or the other.

What Porlond did leave is an account of the voluntary tax (*taxatio voluntaria*) assessed upon the guild in 1419-1420 that details the contributions of individual members to a common fund to fight Whittington. In this instance women were clearly outnumbered by men by a wide margin, 9 to 146 according to Bennett. She argues that the lack of support from female members of the guild was either related to a lack of funds amongst unmarried women or a lack of enthusiasm for the guild. The large number of women who paid quarterage to the guild in the years following seems to preclude a lack of support for the guild. However, following the City's attempts to regulate the selling of ale in the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries and the guild's weak position during Whittington's mayoralty it is also possible that marginal female members may have distanced themselves from the guild during its struggle with the City. Knowing the City's antipathy towards hucksters and the brewers who supplied them, many of whom were brewsters just slightly higher in economic station, female members may have conserved their, often meagre, resources to pay anticipated fines rather than support the voluntary taxation assessed by the guild. When Whittington's attack concluded and a sense of normalcy returned it appears that many of these women once again returned to the guild.

Conversely, the wives of brewers, like Agnes Bugge and Idonea Hatton identified by Bennett, were often the wealthiest of female brewers and were prominent contributors to the voluntary taxation. The guild's fight was their fight and the survival of the guild

was of the utmost importance to their success. Their success was paralleled by other female husband and wife teams in the smaller towns and cities of England about a half-century later. It is quite clear that there was no “golden age” for female brewers in the post-Black Death world, yet there were improved opportunities for husband and wife teams of brewers in London in the fifteenth century and elsewhere in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.⁶⁰

The guild could not protect marginal brewsters and hucksters from mistreatment at the hands of the City. Had the Brewers’ Guild been one of the greater companies, such as the Drapers where women were also a large percentage of the workforce producing and selling cloth, the relationship to the City could have been quite different. With the influence of aldermen and common councilors, protection could have been found to avoid the situation with Whittington. In the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, however, that protection was not available for the Brewers. Their company was a lowly one, at least in the eyes of the City, and part of that lowliness was due to their association with marginal members of the London community.

Members of the London Brewers’ Guild were far from the elite circles of politics in the City of London in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. The case of the one brewer who was elected alderman before the seventeenth century is illustrative of the status of brewers and their guild in the eyes of the City. Sir Ralph Dodmer was nominated as an alderman in October 1515, April 1517, and again in 1521. The first two

⁶⁰ Marjorie Keniston McIntosh, *Working Women in English Society, 1300-1620* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 145-156.

times he was nominated his nomination was struck down by aldermanic veto.⁶¹ In 1521 Dodmer was elected as an alderman for Queenhithe, but before he could take office he was asked to translate from the Brewers to one of the Twelve Great Companies.⁶² Dodmer refused to translate upon his election in October of 1521. The other aldermen refused to allow him to take office until he had translated to a higher company and to emphasize their point they ordered him to be placed in the custody of one of the Sheriffs of London. Dodmer's resolve collapsed and he translated to the Mercers on November 7, 1521 and was allowed to take his office.⁶³ Far from being a vital part of the government of the City of London, no fellow brewer would serve as an alderman until the 1630s. Several brewers would serve as common councilors in the sixteenth century; however, unlike elsewhere in England where brewers were often elected as aldermen, in London their influence was minimal until the end of the sixteenth century.

If the brewers of London were not shaping policies in London to suit their needs as they were elsewhere in the early sixteenth century, how did London conform to Bennett's model of women being forced from the trade by the latter half of the sixteenth

⁶¹ Alfred P. Beaven, "Rejections of nominations (the aldermanic veto)," *The Aldermen of the City of London: Temp. Henry III - 1912*, British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=67220> (accessed 4 September 2013).

⁶² Alfred P. Beaven, "Chronological list of aldermen: 1501-1600," *The Aldermen of the City of London: Temp. Henry III - 1912*, British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=67240> (accessed 4 September 2013). The Twelve Great Companies were the Mercers, Grocers, Drapers, Fishmongers, Goldsmiths, Merchant Taylors, Skinners, Haberdashers, Salters, Ironmongers, Vintners, and Clothworkers.

⁶³ Alfred P. Beaven, "Chronological list of aldermen: 1501-1600," *The Aldermen of the City of London: Temp. Henry III - 1912*, British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=67240>. Alfred P. Beaven, "Notes on the aldermen, 1502-1700," *The Aldermen of the City of London: Temp. Henry III - 1912*, British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=67247&strquery=Ralph+Dodmer> (accessed 4 September 2013).

century? The answer to that question is that the Brewers increasingly conformed their internal policies to the wishes of the City of London. Chief amongst the wishes of the City was that the brewing trade be well-ordered and managed by the guild. The Brewers' Company had resisted London's regulation of the trade throughout much of the fifteenth century—something that can be seen in the many citations given to the guild by the City during this period. That resistance had led to the attack by Whittington in 1419-1420 and the invitation of foreign brewers into the city to provide competition to the guild.

Additionally, the City's support for beer brewers, first as a separate "mystery" and later as a true guild, provided the greatest threat to the city's ale brewers. The separation of the regulation of beer brewing to this degree from the city's brewers' guild, not seen in other urban centers, was a direct result of the Brewers' intransigence in the face of the City's explicit wishes that market for ale and beer be free of persons of "ill fame" who acted illegally. By the 1470s the Ale Brewers' Company had reached a nadir. During the last quarter of the century the company would begin to conform more to the wishes of the City of London for the regulation of the market for malt liquor in the city.

At the very top of the list of the wishes of the City of London was for the Ale Brewers to change their distribution system and keep hucksters, as far as possible, from hawking ale and beer in the city. The push to get hucksters of ale and beer off of the street was, of course, not a new development. The City had been attempting to do just that since the middle of the fourteenth century. In the 1470s Common Council began to regulate hucksters once again and in this instance there was little push back from the guild. Common Council slowly began to draw a net around hucksters, and other small

retailers of ale and beer that included cooks and hostellers, by ordering that no one should sell beer by retail unless they were free of the city.⁶⁴ Becoming free of the city could be a difficult and costly process for men. For female hucksters it was an impossibility. By stipulating that retailers had to be free of the city, the leadership of London was guaranteeing that the distribution of ale and beer be kept in the hands of citizens who were both reputable *and* male. Although this should have driven most hucksters, and all females, from the trade, it did not. In the 1480s the City lowered the standards it had set a decade earlier and demanded that all hucksters of ale and beer be of “good fame”.⁶⁵ Although this created a lower bar for hucksters to reach to gain legal status, it also created a wider scope for the City to decide which hucksters would or would not be allowed to operate within the bounds of the city. The Brewers appear to have taken the City’s empowerment in this regard in stride as there is no petition during this period protesting the regulation of this part of the brewing trade. Instead, the Brewers appear to have allowed the City to grasp this regulatory power in order to buttress their trade in ale, which was flagging in response to the threat of beer.

The Machiavellian City

In 1493 beer brewers achieved the pinnacle of protection and status when they were chartered as a guild. The impact of having two brewing guilds in London was catastrophic for the Ale Brewers’ Guild. It not only had to face competition amongst its own members and imports from abroad, but also from beer brewers located within and

⁶⁴ City of London, *Journals of Common Council, 1416-1609*, Journal 9 Fo. 43.

⁶⁵ City of London, *Journals of Common Council, 1416-1609*, Journal 9 Fo. 62.

outside of the city. The struggle between those two groups began with stranger beer brewers supplying royal armies at the expense of London's ale brewers in the early fifteenth century. It would continue with strangers cornering the market for beer in London across the middle of the fifteenth century and would eventually result in the City of London inviting foreign brewers to provide malt liquor to the populace at the expense of the Ale Brewers' Guild. By failing to adhere to the wishes of the City of London in regulating the trade in malt liquor in the city, would cause the guild to face constant attack. From the incident with Whittington in 1419-1420, to the increasing regulation of hucksters in the middle of the fifteenth century, to the City's acceptance of an entirely new guild as a competitor, the Ale Brewers' Guild was in a state of constant defense, fearful of having its privileges trimmed or taken away. That fear drove the guild to adhere more closely to the regulatory demands set by the City.

The City had long targeted what were in its eyes the most troublesome individuals in the brewing trade—the hucksters, cooks, and hostlers that purveyed ale and beer for brewers. The Brewers' willingness to see these individuals become more heavily regulated by the City can only be explained by two great fears. The first was the fear of losing hard-earned privileges. The second was the fear of competition from stranger beer brewers. Those fears drove the Brewers' Company to accept heavier regulation from the City in regards to its distribution chain to curry favor with it. The first fruit of this rapprochement with the City was the acceptance of a provision in 1484 that allowed ale brewers to differentiate their product by stipulating that ale in the city could only be made

from liquor (heated water), malt, and yeast.⁶⁶ That provision was enforced by the City on several occasions when ale brewers were cited for using beer yeast.⁶⁷ That yeast would have been obtained from a batch of fermenting beer, which would have contaminated any ale made with it according to the provisions laid down by the City. Additionally, the penalty for breaking the Assize of Beer and Ale within the city limited the penalties that ale brewers were liable to a maximum of 2s. Beer brewers, on the other hand, were liable to a maximum fine of more than three times that, 6s. 8d. In the case of brewers the City set down their maximum fine; however, in the case of hucksters the City laid down a *minimum* fine of 4d. per offense—demonstrating how determined it was to ensure that hucksters were regulated according to its wishes.⁶⁸

Ale brewers certainly benefited from this treatment, but they were not alone in receiving aid from the City when it came to regulating the trade in malt liquor. The City also agreed that the Beer Brewers' Guild be allowed to regulate not only the standards of their beer in the city, but also foreign beer that was imported into the city.⁶⁹ Above all else, the City wanted the malt liquor to be of good quality and plentiful, and the trade in it to be well-ordered and run to its wishes. Instead of giving a select group of native men complete control of the industry, as occurred in Oxford and elsewhere, London had opted to divide and conquer, driving competition between natives and strangers to create the

⁶⁶ Reginald R. Sharpe (editor), "Folios 193 - 212: Sept 1483 - ," *Calendar of letter-books of the city of London: L: Edward IV-Henry VII*, British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=33658&strquery='Ordinac' Pan doxat>" (accessed 18 September 2013).

⁶⁷ City of London, *Journals of Common Council, 1416-1609*, Journal 10 Fo. 60, Fo. 78.

⁶⁸ City of London, *Journals of Common Council, 1416-1609*, Journal 9 Fo. 106.

⁶⁹ City of London, *Journals of Common Council, 1416-1609*, Journal 10, Fo. 290.

trade that it wanted. Instead of a dichotomy between ale and beer as female and male, the City had created a dichotomy between native and foreign. At the turn of the sixteenth century natives, including wealthier women and wives of brewers, had begun to reverse their fortunes in comparison to just 25 years before. That turnaround, however, came at the expense of hucksters and small-scale female brewers who bore the brunt of the City's ill-will.

Was “Female to Male as Ale was to Beer”?⁷⁰

In *Ale, Beer and Brewsters in England* Judith Bennett concluded that there was a dichotomy in England between the brewing of ale and beer. Ale was a traditional, native beverage that required little capital investment to make. Beer production was new, capital-intensive, and foreign. Those factors led Bennett to conclude that women were marginalized in the production of malt liquor in England due to the domination of capital markets, guilds, and beer-brewing methods by men. When the whole of England is taken into account this model does not hit far from the mark. The production of malt liquor in urban areas was a female-dominated industry in 1300 and by the end of the sixteenth century throughout England women were being marginalized in the trade, by becoming mere purveyors of ale and beer in alehouses, or were completely driven from it. The treatment of female hucksters in London is certainly part of that larger story.

Yet, other women, especially married women who shared the brewing trade with their husbands, were resilient. Marjorie McIntosh has identified married couples working

⁷⁰ Bennett, *Ale, Beer and Brewsters in England*, Ch. 5 “New Beer, Old Ale: Why was Female to Male as Ale was to Beer?”.

in partnerships in the brewing trade in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in the five market towns that are at the heart of her study on women's work in fourteenth to seventeenth centuries.⁷¹ Those partnerships appear to have been a particular feature of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries as men and women partnered to overcome their respective deficiencies—for men, knowledge of the trade, for women, credit. That story is paralleled in London amongst ale brewers as partnerships between husband and wife teams, many of which have been identified by Bennett within the records of the Brewers' Company, appear to have been some of the most resilient ale brewers during the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Married women's knowledge was key to making those partnerships work, but so too was their respectability as married women. That respectability was vital to their continued operation within the City of London. Respectability for the guild, came from the acceptance of the City's demands. It was vital for the Ale Brewers' guild to survive in the face of competition from stranger beer brewers. The Ale Brewers needed the City's help and soon the City would turn to native brewers for help in a fight of its own with the Crown over the status of the same individuals that it had aided in the fight with the Ale Brewers—strangers.

⁷¹ Marjorie Keniston McIntosh, "Drink Work," in *Working Women in English Society, 1300-1620* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 140-181.

CHAPTER THREE

MAKING WAY: THE NATIVIZATION OF THE LONDON BEER BREWING

TRADE, 1500-1600

In 1543 Richard Platt, a young man from Hertfordshire, was apprenticed to a London ale brewer named Hugh Mynors. Platt joined a very traditional, yet dying, trade. Ale, a malt-based beverage made without the addition of hops, was quickly being replaced in the London market by beer, a malt-based beverage made with hops. Beer had been brought to London by Dutch, Flemish, and German immigrants during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and had been, until the early sixteenth century, a beverage for foreigners and soldiers. Yet, in the first half of the sixteenth century beer began to become a competitor to English ale due to its lower cost and its ability to be kept for longer periods of time. Native ale brewers began to be replaced in the market for supplying London with its ale and beer by strangers. Richard Platt faced this situation in 1550 when he became free of the Ale Brewers' Company. This precipitated a dramatic change in his life as he turned his back on the dying industry he had been trained in to embrace the new beer-brewing techniques of strangers. Platt was among the first native brewers to switch from ale brewing to beer brewing, and that switch would make him a great fortune by the end of his life. To make that great fortune he not only learned the techniques of stranger brewers, but would also lead the charge amongst his fellow natives to manipulate the rules and regulations of the Worshipful Company of Brewers to

eliminate the threat of strangers to the Ale Brewers' Company, the City of London, and himself.

Richard Platt is an emblem of what a man of originally modest means could accomplish during the sixteenth century in the London brewing trade. His wealth, power, and influence were firmly based in his relationship with his guild. Unlike many other industries, the Ale Brewers' Guild faced direct competition within the London market from the Beer Brewers' Guild, which had been chartered by Henry VII in 1493. The Ale Brewers' Guild may have been the elder of the two guilds, having been a fraternity since the fourteenth century and officially chartered in 1437, but it was far from dominant. Throughout the fifteenth century the Ale Brewers were often in the bad graces of the City of London, which was reflected in a prolonged conflict with Mayor Richard Whittington in 1419-1420 in which the company was forced to pay heavily to mitigate his anger. That incident, and the cost of making it go away, was just the first of many instances where the interests of the City and the Ale Brewers' Guild did not align in the fifteenth century. Later in 1478 Common Council supported the rights of strangers when they issued a decree stating that "foreign brewers should come into the City, and there freely sell their beer until further order" because ale brewers were selling ale for too dear of a price.¹ The actions of the Ale Brewers' Guild were to have drastic consequences for its membership as the fifteenth century marked the entrance of foreign beer-brewing techniques into London. By the late fifteenth century Common Council and the Crown were both showing support for beer brewing in the community as the Crown bought large quantities

¹ Ball, *The Worshipful Company of Brewers*, 59.

of beer for the military and chartered the London Beer Brewers' Guild in 1493. The misalignment between the interests of the City and Crown on one side and the Ale Brewers' Guild on the other continued throughout the rest of the fifteenth century. Yet, with the coming of the sixteenth century the interests of the Crown, City, and native brewers would begin to align as each sought to better regulate the London market and bring strangers under the oversight of the London guilds.

Anti-Stranger Feeling and Legislation before 1550

Antipathy towards strangers was nothing new in London. Throughout the medieval period strangers had been targeted various reasons. Major anti-stranger riots were recorded in 1262, 1381, 1469, and 1517. The 1381 attack was associated with the larger Peasants' Revolt and resulted in "dozens of Flemings" being dragged into the streets of London and being summarily executed.² The 1469 attack was aimed at the Steelyard, the quasi-fortified east-London neighborhood that was the headquarters of the Hanse merchants. In 1381 the Steelyard had been able to hold off the attacks of the Peasants' Revolt, but in 1469 it was attacked in the lead up to the Anglo-Hanseatic War of 1470-1474 and was heavily damaged. The Steelyard was rebuilt and the Hanse merchants returned, but their influence in London was never quite the same.

The 1517 attack was perhaps the least serious of the riots in terms of property damage, but it was caused by a potent combination of anti-stranger feeling and an economic depression. The Evil May Day attack of 1517 was incited by the preaching of a Dr. Bell (or Beal) at St. Paul's in April of 1517 who gave an "exhortation to all

² Andrew Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities in Sixteenth-Century London* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 14.

‘Englishmen to cherish and defend themselves, and to hurt and grieve aliens for the common weal.’³ The result of this exhortation was a series of anti-stranger attacks across London with rumors of a mass attack on strangers to take place on May Day. When May Day came the rioters were able to free some of their compatriots who had been arrested for anti-stranger attacks in the weeks prior. Encouraged by this success, the rioters concentrated on attacking the liberty of St. Martin le Grand, where a large community of strangers lived. There they were met by the Undersheriff of London, Thomas More, who, after some tense hours, was able to bring the riot under control with the arrest of more than 300 rioters, most of whom would later be pardoned after the intercessions of Queen Catherine and Thomas Wolsey.⁴ Not all of those involved in the riot would be so lucky as fourteen rioters, including John Lincoln, a peddler who had helped to instigate Dr. Bell’s sermon, were convicted of treason and executed.⁵

Certainly the Evil May Day riot pales in comparison to other London riots, like those held on Shrove Tuesdays in the later sixteenth and seventeenth centuries or the Sacheverell Riots of the early eighteenth century, because it involved no more than a thousand people and lasted only about four hours. The Evil May Day riot was not notable for its representativeness of other riots in the sixteenth century, but instead for its singularity.⁶ What perhaps the riot on Evil May Day represents instead is a lessening of

³ Steve Rappaport, *Worlds Within Worlds: Structures of Life in Sixteenth-Century London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 15.

⁴ Ibid, 16. For the pardons of the 300 rioters see: Ben Weinreb and Christopher Hibbert, *The London Encyclopedia* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1983), 266-267.

⁵ Rappaport, *Worlds Within Worlds*, 16.

⁶ Ibid, 16-17.

economic resistance to strangers through physical force, and instead the coming to the fore of resistance to strangers through legislation and regulation.

London had been a place of great opportunity for German, Flemish, and Dutch immigrants, colloquially referred to in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries together as the “Doche”, in the brewing trade since at least the fourteenth century. Through the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries strangers from these areas became the dominant force within the London beer-brewing trade. Their dominance did not go unchallenged by ale brewers, the Ale Brewer’s Guild, or the City of London; still, before the middle of the sixteenth century there were many opportunities for immigrants to find a niche within London where they could practice their trade with little interference from the City or guild authorities. Areas like Southwark, St. Katherine’s, and the many intramural liberties that riddled the City after the Reformation became centers of beer brewing largely because they were areas where strangers could practice their craft with little interference.

The parish of St. Olave’s in Southwark, located in what was to 1550 an area outside the regulatory powers of City and the London Ale and Beer Brewers’ Guilds, was the hub of an extensive area of Dutch settlement where brewing was a major industry. Dutch, and fellow Germanic speakers, settled in this area because they could easily establish themselves and assimilate upon arrival.⁷ The resources for brewing could be found easily in Southwark in the early sixteenth century. It had access to Thames water and easy water transport to bring in the barley, coal, and hops needed to make beer. Those resources were not exclusive to Southwark as neighborhoods like St. Katherine’s

⁷ Carlin, *Medieval Southwark*, 53-54, 154-156. Selwood, *Diversity and Difference in Early Modern London*, 33. Luu, *Immigrants and the Industries of London*, 121.

at London's East End also had advantageous water transport, but other neighborhoods could not offer the same concentration of fellow countrymen that Southwark could. The alien subsidies for 1568 and 1571 identified 916 and 946 aliens respectively in the Ward of Bridge Without where St. Olave's was located. In 1568 approximately 20% of the entire London stranger population resided in Southwark and that number rose to 21% in 1571.⁸ Yet, only twenty years later in 1593 another alien subsidy showed only 402 aliens in the Ward of Bridge Without, representing only 7.6% of the stranger population of London.⁹ Part of that decline can be explained by a growing population elsewhere as the total number of strangers in London grew by about 13.5% between 1571 and 1593. Most of that growing population began to settle increasingly north of the river.¹⁰ Nevertheless, the stranger population residing in the Ward of Bridge Without declined at a much faster rate than any other area of London. Wards like the Tower, Billingsgate, and Vintry declined, but none lost more than half of their stranger population in the space of 22 years. There were many good reasons for this decline, such as a drop in the flow of Dutch immigrants to London in the latter sixteenth century. However, as will be seen, the decline in the fortunes of Southwark as a center of stranger beer brewing was intimately tied to increasing regulation of strangers by the Crown, the City of London, and the Worshipful Company of Brewers.

⁸ Luu, *Immigrants and the Industries of London*, Table 4.8 "Residential distribution of aliens by the wards of the City of London, 1483-1593", 122-123.

⁹ Luu, *Immigrants and the Industries of London*, Table 4.8 "Residential distribution of aliens by the wards of the City of London, 1483-1593", 122-123. Luu's table marks the total alien population in the Ward of Bridge Without in 1593 at 76.6%; however, that number is a typo as the 402 aliens recorded in the Ward of Bridge Without represented only 7.6% of the 5,259 recorded for that year.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

In 1523 a statute titled “Tracts concerning the taking of apprentices by Strangers” was passed in Parliament which would begin the process of bringing stranger craftsmen under the control of the London guilds.¹¹ The act begins by reiterating a ban on strangers taking apprentices that were not subjects of the Crown, which was the heart of a statute from the reign of Richard III.¹² Yet, whereas the Ricardian statute essentially left the regulation of strangers to the central government, the statute of 1523 firmly placed the regulation of strangers and their apprentices under the control of the London guilds. As the act states:

And of this be yet enacted by (the) authority aforesaid, That all manner of persons being Aliens born using any manner or handicraft be they denizens or not denizens, and inhabited within the City of London or Suburbs of the same, ... or within two miles compass of the said City of London or the parishes aforesaid, shall be under the Search and Reformation of the Wardens and the Fellowship of the handicraft within the said City of London.¹³

Furthermore, in addition to placing strangers under pain of search and seizure by the guild wardens, the guilds were also tasked with regulating the journeymen and apprentices of stranger craftsmen. Stranger apprentices were banned and each stranger craftsman was limited to having only two stranger journeymen in their employment at any time.

The issue of stranger artisans was revisited twice more during the reign of Henry VIII—once in 1529 and again in 1540. The importance of the 1529 statute lay in its aim to force stranger craftsmen to employ English servants, apprentices, and journeymen and

¹¹ 14 and 15 Henry VIII, c. 2.

¹² 1 Richard III c. 9.

¹³ 14 and 15 Henry VIII, c. 2.

thus diffuse skills held by strangers outward into the larger English community. The most damaging provision of the 1540 statute to stranger brewers was a stipulation that no native or stranger craftsman was to employ more than four strangers at any one time. Stranger brewers increasingly could no longer employ their own countrymen and keep the skills of beer brewing within a tight-knit community. Instead strangers who had worked in breweries for fellow strangers were increasingly forced into working in the brewhouses of native brewers and sharing the “mysteries” of beer brewing with their new employers.

The Problem of Strangers

After the 1540s the pattern of immigration to England, and London specifically, changed dramatically. Before the 1540s the reasons most cited for immigrants coming to London were economic, which can be seen in the brewing industry in the large influx of “Doche” immigrants into the capital in the fourteenth to early sixteenth centuries. These immigrants came to escape the competition within the beer-brewing industries of their native lands and to exploit their methods of producing beer in the virgin territory of London. Similar stories can be found for a host of other immigrant groups and occupations that came to London in the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries, from Italian bankers to French weavers to German Hanse merchants. All came for economic motivations. Sometimes those motivations were based upon “push” reasons, such as a glutted market for particular crafts in their native lands, or for “pull” reasons, such as Flemish and French weavers being invited to bring their methods of production to

England by the Crown.¹⁴ Immigrants coming to England for financial reasons would not disappear after the 1540s, but they would soon come to be eclipsed by groups of religious refugees who came to London to seek religious sanctuary. This immigration flooded the capital with strangers, which made them much more visible to their hosts.

The last years of Henry VIII's reign saw the first immigrants seeking asylum for religious reasons, but it was to be during the reign of his son, Edward VI, that the flood of religious refugees would become an issue. The influx of immigrants into London probably reached its peak during Edward VI's reign, when the population of strangers within London likely doubled from 5,000 or 6,000 in 1547 to 10,000 in 1553.¹⁵ By 1553 the population of strangers in London was approximately 12.5% of the total population of the city.¹⁶ Mary I's reign saw a decline in the numbers of strangers, but with the accession of Elizabeth I in 1558 the stranger population again began to grow. It would stabilize around 10,000 for much her early reign.¹⁷ The population of strangers would never reach the 12.5% peak that was seen during the reign of Edward VI, but it would remain at nearly 10% of London's population well into the 1570s. Institutions like the Dutch and French stranger churches helped to better tie the exile communities together.

¹⁴ For a more detailed analysis of some of these other cases see: Nigel Goose and Lien Bich Luu (eds.), *Immigrants in Tudor and Early Stuart England* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2005). Luu, *Immigrants and the Industries of London*. Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities in Sixteenth-Century London*. Rappaport, *Worlds Within Worlds: Structures of Life in Sixteenth-Century London*. Joseph P. Ward, *Metropolitan Communities: Trade Guilds, Identity, and Change in Early Modern London* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997). Laura Hunt Yungblut, *Strangers Settled Here Amongst Us: Policies, Perceptions and Presence of Aliens in Elizabethan England* (London: Routledge, 1996).

¹⁵ Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities in Sixteenth-Century London*, 17. Luu, *Immigrants and the Industries of London*, 91-94 (particularly Table 4.1 "Numbers of Aliens in London, 1483-1621").

¹⁶ Luu, *Immigrants and the Industries of London*, 92.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 92.

They could sometimes offer protection from economic interference, as could powerful patrons like the Queen, Lord Burghley, and Archbishop Edmund Grindal. Although the stranger communities had put down firm roots by the 1570s they were still viewed with suspicion by many because of their different languages, religious beliefs that were more closely tied to the Continental Reformation than the English, and more importantly for this study—their economic power.

What did It Mean to be English?

One of the chief problems immigrants faced until the latter seventeenth century in England was their inability to become naturalized subjects. This was not a new problem, as others who had come to England in the medieval period had found out. Strictly speaking, immigrants who were not born in the dominions of the English monarch could not become an English subject except through the difficult process of having a private bill of naturalization passed in Parliament. That action was rare. The few cases that were recorded were usually for the children of English parents who happened to be born abroad.¹⁸ The process was also expensive, with estimates for the cost during the reign of Elizabeth ranging from £4 to £100, which helps to explain why there are only twelve recorded acts of naturalization during the period.¹⁹ Without a method to become naturalized English citizens, immigrants were almost never able to enjoy the full rights and freedoms of English men and women. These included the ability to become free of the City, set up a shop or business, and to pass one's skills on to an apprentice. Without

¹⁸ Selwood, *Diversity and Difference in Early Modern London*, 49.

¹⁹ Luu, *Immigrants and the Industries of London*, 144-145.

those rights strangers were always at a disadvantage. Yet, strangers in the brewing industry clearly prospered throughout much of the early sixteenth century. One of the reasons for that prosperity was the ability of many within the immigrant community to obtain letters of denization from the Crown, which made them adopted subjects of the English monarch. Letters of denization brought distinct benefits to the holder; however, they were not an exact substitute for the process of naturalization and in the overcrowded and competitive London market became a contentious issue between immigrants and natives.

Jacob Selwood in his *Diversity and Difference in Early Modern London* has thoroughly examined the relationships between the Crown, City, guilds, and strangers over the second half of the sixteenth century and the first part of the seventeenth century. Selwood's examination of these relationships demonstrates that strangers were viewed by the Crown, City, and guilds in very different lights. Most telling perhaps, is that of 3,930 strangers accounted for in the Return of Strangers of 1593 only 70 were counted as "free denizens."²⁰ This status is somewhat contentious as it is not entirely clear what it denoted, but Selwood argues that it denotes a person who was both a denizen and had been granted the freedom of the City—i.e. that they had either been granted or purchased freedom from one of the livery companies.²¹ To obtain both of those a person had to have influence with the Crown, to obtain the letters patent that made one a denizen, and with the City and one of the livery companies. Those two prerequisites may not seem at odds

²⁰ Selwood, *Diversity and Difference in Early Modern London*, 44.

²¹ Selwood, *Diversity and Difference in Early Modern London*, 44. Selwood notes that Lien Luu defines the term in a similar manner. Irene Scouloudi defines it as a person who held the freedom of the City, but not always a Patent of Denization.

with each other. Yet, the very small number of free denizens speaks to how difficult it was for strangers to obtain the papers that would make them a subject in the eyes of the Crown and a citizen in the eyes of the City. It was not easy to obtain letters patent that made one a denizen, but the obtaining of them was possible with a little effort and the necessary fees. Obtaining the freedom of the City for a stranger or their child, however, was nigh impossible.

Tensions existed between the City and the central government throughout the latter sixteenth century over the issues of the treatment of recent immigrants to England. The mayor and aldermen of London were always concerned with the tremendous influx of population into the capital. While London's population of immigrants did not grow at the same rate as the overall population in much of the second half of the sixteenth century, there were years of crisis as refugees from the Low Countries and France, most of whom were fleeing religious persecution in their native lands, streamed into the capital. These peak periods were particularly acute in the 1560s and early 1570s, as the armies of Spain moved into the Dutch heartland, and again in the early 1580s when the armies of the Duke of Parma were able to recapture much of Flanders. French immigration came in fits and starts and largely followed the peaks and troughs of the French Wars of Religion. London authorities, and the central government, largely felt sympathetic to the plight of religious refugees from the Continent; however, the thousands of immigrants that arrived on the shores of England could be particularly problematic for the City. London was a magnet for these refugees as the largest economic center and the seat of central government, but it was also importantly the site of two

stranger churches that provided a great deal of aid to recent arrivals.²² The influx of Dutch immigrants in the 1560s and 1580s and French immigrants in the 1570s through the 1590s put pressure on an already overburdened housing market and made them much more visible to their hosts. Their presence also placed them into competition with recent English immigrants hoping to better their economic status and English journeymen and artisans looking for housing. For these groups the immigrants were not refugees seeking asylum for their beliefs, but instead direct competition for their livelihoods.

It was the competition and the vociferous complaints that came from native journeymen and apprentices that drew attention to the problem of immigrants. These complaints were aired in several different forums. Sometimes they were formally presented to the guilds, which were urged by their membership to reduce or eliminate the competition of foreign artisans by not allowing them to join the brotherhood. Without license from the guild, stranger artisans were left with little choice but to operate illegally. In other instances artisans took to more forceful methods. Lien Luu has identified five such instances in 1567/8, 1571, 1573, 1586, and 1595/6 when apprentices either outright attacked strangers or issued verbal threats of violence against them and their families. In 1573 the Lord Mayor of London, concerned about threats of violence towards the stranger community, sent an order to the livery companies to order their members to stop “vexing” the strangers. Even with that order, however, he counseled the

²² Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities in Sixteenth-Century London*, 182-214.

stranger churches to advise their members to stay indoors between 9pm and 5am for their own protection.²³

The fears of the journeymen and apprentices were not entirely unfounded either—especially in the case of housing. One of the chief reasons for a survey of housing conducted in 1569 was the overcrowded housing conditions that were found in a survey the previous year.²⁴ In his *Survey of London*, John Stow remarked that the stranger population of Billingsgate Ward had grown by leaps and bounds: in 1598 there were 150 stranger households in the ward whereas “within thirtie yeares before there was not in the whole warde above three Netherlanders.”²⁵ This remarkable increase resulted in the prices of houses and subdivisions of houses going for such exorbitant prices as £20 for a house that had recently been let for the sum of 4 marks (£2.67).²⁶ The housing crisis was particularly acute in the Thames-side wards. Throughout the 1570s Common Council and the Privy Council had attempted to ease the housing crisis there, with little effect. City authorities were urged by the Privy Council to force lodgers who lived in overcrowded conditions to move out of the Thames-side wards and to fine landlords who had rented properties beyond their capacities.²⁷ These policies were designed to combat the threat of plague; however, these efforts just exacerbated the problem of strangers in the metropolis

²³ Luu, *Immigrants and the Industries of London*, 154-156.

²⁴ Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities in Sixteenth-Century London*, 284.

²⁵ John Stow, “Billingsgate warde”, *A Survey of London*: Reprinted from the text of 1603, C. L. Kingsford (editor), in British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=60037> (accessed 07 August 2013).

²⁶ Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities in Sixteenth-Century London*, 284.

²⁷ Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities in Sixteenth-Century London*, 284-285.

as the City's attempts to move the strangers out of the Thames-side wards just attracted more attention to their presence in the city.

The Attack on Strangers in the Brewers' Company

The visibility of the stranger community combined in 1573 with a stronger Brewers' Guild to produce a concerted policy of exclusion for strangers. The Worshipful Company of Brewers was strengthened by two important events that occurred in the 1550s. The first of these was the merging of the heart of Southwark into London proper as the Ward of Bridge Without in 1550. The second was the unifying of the Ale Brewers' Guild and the Beer Brewers' Guild into the Worshipful Company of Brewers in 1556. Within the space of just six years much of the protection that stranger brewers had enjoyed was taken from them. The community that they were most identified with and in which they could most easily work was subsumed into London, and their livelihood was placed under the regulation of a company that was antagonistic to their interests. The new Worshipful Company of Brewers was dominated by native ale brewers and recent native converts to beer brewing, like Richard Platt. The Beer Brewers' Guild had a contentious relationship with the City in the early to mid-1550s as Common Council records demonstrate.²⁸ The City was particularly worried about the supply of single and small beer to the populace and from the Common Council journals it is clear that beer brewers were cited more frequently than ale brewers for not supplying enough small and single beer as opposed to the stronger, and more profitable, double-beer. In 1551 Surveyors of

²⁸ Corporation of London Records Office, *Journals, 1416-1609* (London: Micro Methods, 1971), Journal 16 Fo 94 "The Petition of the Beer Brewers for advancing the price of Double and Single Beer reserved to a committee", Fo. 126 "An act touching the choosing of surveyors, or the election of Sheriffs and their Officers, to see the Act concerning the Brewers put into execution."

Beer were appointed to insure that enough single and small beer was being produced, but even that measure did not satisfy Common Council.²⁹ Although the Ale Brewers' Guild was temporarily barred from Common Council in 1551 for failing to adhere to the prices on ale fixed by the City, by 1556 it was seen as the solution to the problem of maintaining standards and prices on beer and ale in London. In 1556 after a series of proposals for placing the Beer Brewers' Guild under the control of the Ale Brewers' Guild was finally hashed out.³⁰ No doubt the Beer Brewers' failure to live up to the standards set by the City in supplying small beer and the smaller stranger community during the reign of Mary made this process easier. However, it was the readiness of the Ale Brewers' Company to take on the role of regulatory power in the London ale and beer market that brought Common Council to the decision that the two companies should be merged. With the coming together of the two companies the stranger community of beer brewers in London, which now included much of Southwark, found themselves under the thumb of native brewers.

In 1573 the Brewers' Company began a concerted attack on stranger brewers in London. This attack was part of a year-long crisis in the stranger community, which was largely the result of the rapidly increasing stranger population in London. In late July of that year the Company decreed that "there shall be no stranger, nor foreigner, admitted... into the Brotherhood."³¹ This ban was to last ten years until 1582. Although the ban was

²⁹ Mia Ball, *The Worshipful Company of Brewers*, 73.

³⁰ Corporation of London Records Office, *Journals, 1416-1609*, Journal 17 Fo. 8 "A Bill or supplication of the Brewers of the City for repealing certain former acts, and for the re-uniting the Ale Brewers and Beer Brewers again, agreed to, etc."

³¹GL, MS 5445/4, "Brewer's Company Minute Book: 1568-1573."

aimed squarely at strangers, it was also detrimental to foreigners, English persons who came from outside of London, because the prohibition was designed so “that more English men from the City of London” could enter into the brotherhood.³² The ban on these individuals was engineered by the master and the four wardens of the company in that year. One of the wardens that made the decision was none other than Richard Platt. Platt was joined in this decision by Thomas Hasilwood, a fellow warden, and William Beswick, a former master of the company. Being identified with the anti-stranger stranger policy appears to have been quite popular among the brethren as Platt was elected as the master of the company in both 1576 and 1581, Hasilwood was elected in 1579 (after having served in 1572), and Beswick was elected in consecutive years in 1577 and 1578.³³ Collectively they served as the master of the company for half of the years that the policy was in effect, and turned it into an effective buttress against the admission of strangers into the guild. The policy was so effective that only three strangers were admitted to the company during the ban and two of those were admitted under pressure from Sir Francis Walsingham.³⁴ The policy was to be relaxed in the 1580s and 1590s as 21 stranger brewers were allowed to enter the brotherhood. However, by the early seventeenth century the company had raised the entrance fee for strangers from £20 to £50 to attempt to eliminate competition from strangers, once and for all.³⁵

³² GL, MS 5445/4, “Brewer’s Company Minute Book: 1568-1573.”

³³ Ball, *The Worshipful Company of Brewers*, “Wardens of the Brewers’ Company”, 127.

³⁴ Luu, *Immigrants and the Industries of London*, 290.

³⁵ *Ibid*, 290-291.

The City's Attack on the Stranger Community

In 1574, following shortly on the heels of the exclusionary policies of the Brewers' Company, London's Common Council would enact a policy that would further alter the balance between the stranger community and the City. The Act of Common Council passed on October 26, 1574 was a clear attack on the stranger community and their right to reside and make a living within the city. The Act of Common Council was specifically aimed at the children of strangers who had been born in England and were treated in the common law as English subjects. Much like the children of modern-day illegal immigrants born in the United States, who are entitled to citizenship due to their birth in the country, so to were the children of strangers entitled to be apprenticed as English subjects rather than as strangers or as denizens. This situation was viewed as unfair by native English apprentices and artisans who believed that the children of strangers did not gain their Englishness by simply being born within the realm, but instead inherited their allegiance to a foreign monarch by patrimony. It was not only the lowest orders of craftsmen who believed in this model. Many of the guilds refused to accept these children as apprentices because they were viewed to be strangers, or in the case of companies that would accept these "foreign Englishmen" such as in the Weavers' Company, they were only accepted at higher fees than the sons of natives.³⁶

The combination of a growing stranger population, which had increased remarkably following the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre, and the growing number of native-born children of strangers that were applying to become apprentices within the

³⁶ Selwood, *Diversity and Difference in Early Modern London*, 67.

guilds brought together the interests of the livery companies and the City.³⁷ Together they helped to craft the 1574 Act of Common Council, which sought to address the problem of the “foreign Englishmen.” By taking away the path of children of strangers to legally train and gain the freedom of the City, Common Council sought to disincentivize their settlement within London. This can be seen in the very first paragraph of the Act where it states:

Where Straungers, and specially of late time in great numbers have comen from parties (parts) beyond the seas, and inhabited within this realme, and also in and neere this Citie of London, and the children of such straungers being borne within this Realme, be by lawe accompted English: And neverthelesse experience hath well proved that such children borne of such strangers, have, and doe retaine an inclination and kindly affection to the Countreyes of their parents, and partly for that naturall disposition, and partly by the examples of their fathers whose steppes they followe, many of them have become and shewed them selves very hurtfull members to the common weale of this Realme, . . . and be great hinderers of the naturall English Freemen, and specially poore artificers and handicraftes men, and taking daily apprentices of their owne Countrey mens children, they have already, and in time to come much more are like to fill and pester this Citie with Freemen of the same kinde and generation.³⁸

The ostensible motivations of both the City and the livery companies can be clearly seen in that passage. The City wanted to keep the stranger population of London under control as can be seen in the last line where the City would be “pestered”, which in the parlance of the day did not just mean its modern definition of “to annoy”, but instead also meant in its more literal translation to overcrowd a particular location leading to outbreaks of disease and crime. The motivation for the livery companies can be seen in the passage

³⁷ For a more detailed analysis of this issue see: Selwood, *Diversity and Difference in Early Modern London*, Chapter Two: “No Better than Conduit Pipes”, 51-86.

³⁸ Jan Hendrik Hessels (ed.), *Ecclesiae Londino-Batavae Archivum: Epistvlae et Tractatvs* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1897), 3:270-271.

that discusses the “kindly inclinations” of the children of strangers towards their native lands. The children of strangers were, in the eyes of many within the livery companies, simply not English. Their admittance as apprentices would lead to the livery companies, and the City government that came from its ranks, being taken over from within by the children of strangers. There were clear ulterior motives for Common Council and the livery companies, which can especially be seen in the case of the Brewers who had already enacted a policy of exclusion for strangers within their own company. However, the public face of the debate would not focus on the elimination of competition, but instead would center on the ethnicity of denizens and the children of strangers.

The Act of Common Council of 1574 placed heavy penalties on those who did not support the Council’s vision for a City dominated by natives. The penalties that are stipulated by the Act make this quite clear. Any freeman of London that took on a stranger apprentice would lose ten pounds for the first offense. A second offense would result in the offender being disenfranchised.³⁹ The 1574 Act of Common Council would, in the words of Laura Hunt Yungblut, “debar virtually everyone in London’s immigrant community from employment in a craft, as it affected all the aliens who were recent arrivals, all the aliens who had not received denization or naturalization, and those born in England to parents who were in either category.”⁴⁰ Yungblut also asserts that the Act was rescinded after “pressure from the Privy Council and a number of other individuals” was placed on the Court of Common Council.⁴¹ This, however, appears to have not been

³⁹ Hessels, *Ecclesiae Londino-Batavae Archivvm*, 271.

⁴⁰ Yungblut, *Strangers Settled Here Amongst Us*, 105-106.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, 106.

the case as both Andrew Pettegree and Jacob Selwood have identified uses of the act well into the next several decades.

Strangers, and particularly denizens, did not take the attack on their status within the realm lying down. A proposed “Bill in the behalf of the Denizen’s Children” was drafted for Parliament shortly after the Act of Common Council was enacted. The proposed bill argued that the children of denizens would not be able to move back to their native lands as they were viewed to be English by the lands of their parents.⁴² Pettegree argues that this proposed bill was drafted and prepared by the stranger churches on behalf of the denizens in their communities, with some help from Elizabeth’s ministers. Yet, even those combined forces “were not able to press matters to a successful conclusion in Parliament” as it appears the bill never made it to the floor.⁴³ Elizabeth, Burghley, and others looked upon strangers as wealth generators who could bring new techniques, technologies, and ideas from abroad. If the Crown could not promise that foreign innovators would be safe in London, or that their children would have the opportunity to become part of the London community, it was likely that they would take their knowledge and skills elsewhere. The Act of Common Council was clearly frowned upon by the Crown as it infringed upon its right to grant denizens the status of adopted subjects. Although the Act appears to have not been formally repealed, it also appears to have never been strictly enforced as the use of it would draw the ire of the Crown. That

⁴² Hessels, *Ecclesiae Londino-Batavae Archivum*, 3:272-273. Hessels places this proposed bill in 1574, but footnotes that the date is far from certain. Pettegree places the proposed bill in 1575 based upon evidence from the stranger churches.

⁴³ Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities in Sixteenth-Century London*, 289.

situation may have not pleased those who were behind the Act of Common Council or the Crown; however, those who were hurt the most were denizens and their children.

It was this situation that would dominate the rest of the sixteenth century and the early years of the seventeenth century. The Crown could make strangers into denizens, but could not guarantee, in London at least, that they and their children would be allowed to operate shops, train in a craft, or become citizens of London. The City and the guilds could not effectively shut off immigration to London nor entirely debar denizens, particularly those who held individualized support from the Crown or other influential members of the political and religious establishment, from operating as artisans in London. The result of this balance was that denization became devalued over the course of the concluding decades of the sixteenth century. Luu places the number of denizations during Elizabeth's reign at 1,962, but notes that only 293 of those denizations were obtained after 1578. She succinctly states that "it appears that many strangers did not feel the patents (the letters patent of denization) were worth the trouble."⁴⁴ Yungblut has demonstrated that the Crown and the central government did not abandon the recent immigrants of the 1560s and 1570s to the fate of not being able to incorporate into the larger English community. However, that incorporation largely came outside of London in other metropolitan centers such as Colchester, Norwich, and ports cities like Rye, Winchelsea, and Sandwich.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Luu, *Immigrants and the Industries of London*, 144.

⁴⁵ Yungblut, *Strangers Settled Here Amongst Us*, 48-49, 89-90.

The Regulation of Strangers in the Brewing Trade

The statutes of 1523, 1529, and 1540 were important steps in bringing the brewing community of London under the control of the Worshipful Company of Brewers in the latter sixteenth century. The 1523 statute was vital to bringing the interests of the Brewers and the City together as the statute placed the regulation of the brewing industry in London under the control of the guild. To be sure, until 1556 the community of stranger beer brewers could count on the protection of the Beer Brewers' Guild and in most cases practiced their craft in the liberties in London or across the river in Southwark. However, beginning with the incorporation of the Ward of Bridge Without into London proper in 1550, and the joining of the Ale and Beer Brewers' guilds in 1556, the safety of Southwark from the regulatory powers of the City and the Brewers' Guild disappeared. The Brewers' authority over Southwark was confirmed in the two charters granted to the company by Elizabeth I in 1560 and 1579. The 1579 charter was the more important of the two as it granted the Brewers the right to regulate the market for ale and beer in London and also the "subbarbes of the same and within two myles of the same Cittie."⁴⁶ The Charter of 1579 was an expensive investment by the Brewers, but it greatly enhanced their powers both within the city and especially outside of the city.⁴⁷

The regulations that the company issued at the same time also demonstrate the methods by which they could regulate the trade. The Brewers were given the authority to search the area outlined in the charter and could bring heavy penalties for contravening

⁴⁶ GL, MS 5496, "Oath and Ordinance Book, 1562."

⁴⁷ Mia Ball, *The Worshipful Company of Brewers*, 70-73.

the authority of the company and its officers. In the section titled “For Disobedience”, offenders disobeying the orders of the company could be brought before the company court and penalized. These penalties ranged from imprisonment for the space of nine or ten days and a fine of 10s. for a first offense, twenty days and fine of 20s. for a second offense, and thirty days in prison and a fine of 30s. for a third offense.⁴⁸ The warden’s accounts for the company demonstrate that most infractions were minor and that many were handled with smaller fines, but the company had some rather powerful weapons to enforce its will through the regulations enforced in the company court.⁴⁹ The regulation added to the charter also gave the company the ability to regulate the market for malt within London. This gave the Brewers the ability to confiscate any “forren” beer, beer brewed outside the city, sold by retail within the city, nominally keeping London supplied with ale and beer brewed by members of the company.⁵⁰

The regulations attached to the 1579 charter also touched on the relationship that stranger brewers had with the company. In particular, the regulations laid down the procedures for the taking on of apprentices and confirmed some of the prejudices against strangers. When an apprentice was to be bound to a master, special attention was to be paid to examining “their birth”, which was problematic for all of those not born to freemen of London, but was particularly problematic for the children and grandchildren of strangers. If a master presented an apprentice to be made free who could be proved to

⁴⁸ GL, MS 5496.

⁴⁹ GL, MS 5445/4, “Brewer’s Company Minute Book: 1568-1573.”

⁵⁰ GL, MS 5496.

have not passed the standards of the company, the master could be fined the sum of 20s.⁵¹

Not only were apprentices subject to attacks in the company court. Wassell Webling, one of the most prominent stranger brewers of the latter sixteenth century, was involved in four disputes in the company court between 1570 and 1572 and fined on several occasions.⁵² The charter and regulations coincide precisely with the height of exclusionary practices towards strangers practiced by both the Brewers' Company and Common Council. By making it nearly impossible for strangers and their children to become part of the community of freemen in London, Richard Platt, and others like him, had placed themselves in a position to eliminate their most important competition and garner a greater share of the wealth of Elizabethan London.

The Nativization of the Beer-Brewing Trade

The nativization of beer brewing in London began in the first half of the sixteenth century with the Crown's encouragement of the diffusion of the skills of beer brewers through the statutes of 1523, 1529, and particularly the statute of 1540 that encouraged the "setting to work" of English artisans in the trade. The statutes had the intended effect of providing English artisans familiar with brewing who could be employed in the brewhouses of natives and strangers alike. The reasons that English brewers, most of whom were trained in the Ale Brewers' Guild, suddenly abandoned the brewing of ale for the brewing of beer around 1550 are less clear.

⁵¹ GL, MS 5496.

⁵² GL, MS 5445/4, "Brewer's Company Minute Book: 1568-1573."

The chief reason that ale brewers suddenly became beer brewers probably boils largely down to money. Profit margins on beer were higher because more beer could be brewed with less malt and could be stored for longer periods. Because it could be stored for longer periods, there was an incentive for brewers to employ economies of scale to produce larger batches. Richard Unger has estimated that in the sixteenth century beer consumption in northern Europe was approximately 1.1 liters of beer per person per day on average. London beer drinkers probably consumed more than 1.1 liters of beer per day. The highest consumption was often found in urban areas and, by the late sixteenth century, London was one of the largest cities in Europe.⁵³ It is believed that London's population was approaching 200,000 by the end of the sixteenth century, which would amount to something on the order of 80 million liters of beer consumed by the capital per year. Unger puts the production of beer in London in 1574, a year for which a survey was conducted to account for how much grain individual brewers were using per week, at nearly 100 million liters.⁵⁴ Some of the beer produced was exported from London under license from the Crown, but the vast majority was consumed in the capital and gives further evidence that Londoners drank somewhat more than the average for northern Europeans. That consumption placed the Brewers in an enviable position as they could be virtually assured that they could sell as much beer as they could ever produce. It was in

⁵³ Unger, *Beer in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, 126-133. Unger's estimate largely corresponds to Peter Clark's estimate of 3 pints (1.42L) of beer (both small and strong varieties) per person in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. See: Peter Clark, *The English Alehouse: A Social History, 1200-1830* (London: Longman, 1983), 108-115.

⁵⁴ Unger, *Beer in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, 117.

this climate of expansion that men like Richard Platt built miniature empires within the capital.

From the moment he became free of the Ale Brewers' Guild, Richard Platt became a beer brewer. Being an early adopter of beer brewing gave him a first-mover advantage over his competitors—both native and stranger alike. For example, he could produce approximately twice as much beer from the same amount of grain and could store his beer for a longer period of time due to the preservative qualities of the hops used in the process.⁵⁵ Platt's belonging to the native Ale Brewers' Guild also gave him the inherent rights and influence that came with being a full member. Stranger brewers, as has been demonstrated, found that status harder and harder to achieve.

Platt's pioneering methods were not limited to the adoption of beer, but also included technologies that would drive down his costs. Amongst these advances was the use of coal in his brewhouse, which could cut one of the major costs in brewing, fuel, by as much as half. The tangential evidence for this comes from the Warden's Account Book from 1578-1582 when some of the leading brewers, including Richard Platt, were summoned by the Lord Chamberlain on the 28th of January 1578 to be warned not to allow their members to use sea coal in brewing as it offended the Queen. Amongst those cited for using sea coal was John Platt, Richard's son, and shortly afterwards the Brewers' Company agreed to not use coal near the Queen while she was resident in London.⁵⁶ Admittedly the fact that John Platt used coal is, at best, tangential proof that

⁵⁵ Unger, *Beer in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, 136.

⁵⁶ GL, MS 5445/6, "Brewer's Company Minute Book: 1578-1582".

Richard Platt used coal in his brewing, but it would be in Platt's pioneering character.

Coal seems to have been an interest of the Platts as well. Sir Hugh Platt, Richard's son and John's brother, published a piece of research on creating coal balls made from coal dust as a fuel for brewing.⁵⁷ Richard Platt was not only a first-mover in the beer-brewing trade, but he was also likely an innovator who sought to cut costs wherever possible.

Platt's first brewery was the Old Swan Brewery in Thames Street, which was leased from the Brewer's Company in 1566 for £27 per annum for sixty years.⁵⁸ By the end of his life Platt, his son Hugh, and his grandsons were managing a group of brewhouses, taverns, and alehouses in London, which provided, at least in Richard Platt's lifetime, most of the financial support for the Platt family. Ayesha Mukherjee has identified five other properties that were either brewhouses or beer-retailing outlets in her examination of the Platt family papers held in the St. John's College (Cambridge) archives. In addition to "The Vine" identified in Richard Platt's will and the Old Swan Brewery, it appears that Platt also left his son Hugh the management of "The Hartichoke" in St. Michael's Cornhill, "'The Gold Tunn', and an adjoining brick shop, at the lower end of Cowcross Street", "'The Tunn', with shops cellars, yards, warehouses, rooms, etc., in St. Michael's Cornhill", "'The Red Lyon' and 'Three Blew Anchors' in Red Lion Alley on the southside of Cowcross."⁵⁹ Mukherjee's examination posits that Richard

⁵⁷ Sir Hugh Platt, *Of Coal-Balls for Fewell wherein Seacoal is, by the mixture of other combustible Bodies, both sweetened and multiplied* (London: 1603).

⁵⁸ Malcolm Thick, *Sir Hugh Plat: The Search for Useful Knowledge in Early Modern London* (Totnes: Prospect Books, 2010), 11.

⁵⁹ Ayesha Mukherjee, *Dearth Science 1580-1608: The Writings of Hugh Platt* (Durham: The Durham Thomas Harriot Seminar Occasional Paper No. 35, 2007), 6, 24-25.

Platt's investment in these brewhouses and retailing outlets allowed Hugh, as his only surviving son, to have an income that would allow him to support his agricultural and scientific research.⁶⁰ Platt also invested in properties throughout London as well as property in the area of St. Pancras, which at the time was pasture land north of the city.⁶¹ His will gave his son Hugh all of the messuages, houses with any attached buildings or land, located in Birchin Lane, Thames Street, St. James Garlickhithe, and his properties in the City of London and its suburbs—which included not only the St. Pancras property, but also properties in Westminster as well.⁶² William Platt's will from 1637 demonstrates the substantial size of some of these properties. William Platt, one of Richard Platt's grandsons by Hugh, eventually received some of the Platt family properties in St. Sepulchre, which amounted to "66 houses, gardens, yards, tenements, and lands."⁶³

Clearly Richard Platt had an inherent talent as a man of business. Yet, that inherent talent would have meant little without his connection to the Brewers' Company. He served as warden of the company on several occasions and was elected master of the company on two separate occasions in 1576 and 1581. He was often involved in its day-to-day running, attending the Brewers' court, administering charitable donations from the company, and socializing with his fellow brothers. His connections did not stop with his membership, however, as both his son, John, and two of his grandsons by his son Sir

⁶⁰ Mukherjee, *Dearth Science*, 6.

⁶¹ Walter H. Godfrey and W. McB. Marcham (editors), "The Aldenham School or Brewers' Company Estate," *Survey of London: volume 24: The parish of St Pancras part 4: King's Cross Neighbourhood*, British History Online, [http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=65571&strquery=Richard Platt](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=65571&strquery=Richard+Platt) (accessed 15 August 2013). GL, MS 7296.

⁶² GL, MS 5485. Mukherjee, *Dearth Science*, 24.

⁶³ Mukherjee, *Dearth Science*, 6.

Hugh, Hugh and Richard, were apprenticed within the company. Through John he was also connected via marriage to another major brewing family, the Longes (Longs), who had been brewing in London since the 1540s and possibly even earlier. William Longe, who became the father-in-law of John Platt when he married his daughter Elizabeth, was apprenticed in 1533 to Thomas Rutt and was, by the time John married his daughter in the 1570s, a successful brewer with two sons who would eventually join the trade.⁶⁴

Although John and Elizabeth Platt did not have any surviving children, the relationship between Richard Platt and William Longe did not end with the death of their children. Instead when William Longe died in 1588, he specifically tasked Richard Platt with the charitable distribution of money to four different hospitals in London.⁶⁵ Platt and Longe were both extremely prosperous and diversified from their brewing into investments in land, tenements, and messuages. Longe's investments paralleled Platt's in many ways as he owned messuages in St. Katherine's near the Tower of London which he left to his children in his will. These men held much in common in their personal lives, but it was their professional lives where they, and their select company of full brethren in the Brewers' Company, were able to create an entirely new way of brewing in London.

Building an Industry

Both William Longe and Richard Platt were the beneficiaries of extraordinary timing. They were apprenticed to an industry that would see unprecedented growth in the mid- to late sixteenth century as the population of London boomed. They were also

⁶⁴ "London Apprenticeship Abstracts (1442-1850)", <http://www.originsnetwork.com>.

⁶⁵ NA, PROB 11/72/30, "Will of William Longe, Brewer of All Hallows Barking, City of London."

shrewd businessmen, who were among a growing number of native beer brewers who located themselves in the eastern part of London along Thames Street or nearby in St. Katherine's. What dictated this placement was the new scale of production that was necessary to supply thirsty London with its beer. Of twenty breweries that Lien Luu was able to locate from a survey of 1574 no fewer than fifteen of the twenty were located on either Thames Street or nearby in St. Katherine's.⁶⁶ Amongst the brewers listed are several who had moved from other livery companies, such as the Girdlers, Drapers, Mercers, Leathersellers, and Tilers, into the Brewers' Company to take advantage of the booming market for beer. What is conspicuous is that of the beer brewers listed with locations, only five were listed as working in old the bastion of the beer-brewing trade—Southwark. Why did so many brewers, both old hands and latecomers alike, turn their backs on the historical center of the trade and choose to concentrate themselves in Thames Street and St. Katherine's?

The answer to that was related both to those who worked in the brewhouses and the raw materials that supplied the industry. Thames Street and St. Katherine's were precisely in those river wards identified by John Stow as being crowded with Dutchmen in 1598 and were the same areas identified by Common Council as being "pestered" with strangers in 1574. The decline of the Dutch community in Southwark between the 1570s and 1590s identified by Luu can, at least partially, be explained by the movement of the

⁶⁶ Luu, *Immigrants and the Industries of London*, "Table 8.8: List of Beer Brewers in London in 1574", 294-295.

trade from Southwark to the eastern, river-side wards of London.⁶⁷ With the movement of the trade to eastern London so too did much of the stranger population. The river-side wards maintained their large populations from 1571 to 1593 and the eastern wards of Aldgate, Bishopsgate, Broad Street, and Portsoken near the Thames-side wards saw their population increase by roughly half.⁶⁸ Stranger beer brewers followed the trade as it migrated north.

Both William Longe and Richard Platt took advantage of the ready supply of strangers, both recent immigrants and the children of strangers who could not apprentice themselves to fellow strangers or be employed by them in large numbers, to set them to work in their brewhouses. Amongst the native beer brewers that can be identified as employing strangers in their brewhouses William Longe and Richard Platt ranked first and second, with 10 (in 1564) and 8 (in 1568) respectively.⁶⁹ Both Longe and Platt benefited from the Henrician statutes which limited the number of strangers that fellow stranger brewers could employ. With stranger master brewers limited to four stranger servants, many Dutch, Flemish, and German servants, who would have previously been employed by stranger brewers, came to be employed by native brewers like Platt and Longe. By employing these strangers they utilized their knowledge of beer-brewing techniques and diffused their knowledge through their English workforce.

⁶⁷ Luu, *Immigrants and the Industries of London*, “Table 4.8 “Residential distribution of aliens by the wards of the City of London, 1483-1593”, 122-123. See also page 10-11 above.

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, 122-123.

⁶⁹ Luu, *Immigrants and the Industries of London*, “Table 8.8: List of Beer Brewers in London in 1574”, 294-295.

Natives not only employed strangers kept out of the higher reaches of the industry by policies that they had helped to engineer, but also used their connections in the guild to establish the basis of the brewing industry north of the Thames. They located their brewhouses there because Thames Street was in the center of a web of water connections that made the growth of the industry possible. Water, in general, composes more than 90 to 95% of beer by volume. Brewers have therefore always been concerned with their water supplies and the brewers of sixteenth-century London were no exception. Long before the sixteenth century the brewers of London had to fight to obtain water rights. London brewers were forbidden to use the water from the Chepe Conduit in both 1337 and 1345 after they were accused of using so much of the water that none was left for common usage. The Brewers' Company was eventually able to negotiate for the usage of the conduit after they agreed to pay the City a fee.⁷⁰

With London's burgeoning population in the sixteenth century water supply and water rights became a major problem. In response to this problem there was a massive expansion of London's system of conduits, which resulted in at least nine new conduits between the years 1471 and 1583. Among those nine conduits, no less than four terminated either in central or east London and could have been employed by the brewers in Thames Street.⁷¹ These conduits supplemented already existing sources, like the Great or Chepe Conduit, which had been built during the medieval period. The Chepe Conduit had been authorized in 1236 and was expanded throughout the thirteenth and fourteenth

⁷⁰ Ball, *The Worshipful Company of Brewers*, 24-25.

⁷¹ Among those that terminated near Thames Street were the Grass Street Conduit (1491), the Bishopsgate Conduit (1513), the Aldgate Without Conduit sourced from Hackney (1535), and the Lothbury and Coleman Street Conduit (1546). See: Dickinson, *The Water Supply of Greater London*, 12-13.

centuries. Eventually in 1401 the terminus of the conduit was extended to a cistern named for a former prison called “The Tunn” on Cornhill.⁷² Not coincidentally, one of the breweries owned by Richard Platt was named “The Tunn” and located in Cornhill near this supply of water. The expansion of conduits was, however, just not enough by the end of the sixteenth century and entrepreneurs would devise new ways to supply London, and the brewers of Thames Street, with water.

Perhaps the greatest water supply feat of sixteenth-century London was, at least partially, intended for the brewers in eastern London. This feat was the construction of the London Bridge Waterworks started in 1578 and completed in 1582 by Peter Morris (Morrice). The London Bridge Waterworks was an entirely new system of water management for London as it used the force of the Thames to provide power via a waterwheel to power a pump that would force water uphill into the city. Prior to the waterworks, the pumping of water was virtually unknown and gravity carried water to the metropolis. With Morris’ pump, water could be supplied in great quantities from the Thames, pumped uphill to one of the highest points in London at Cornhill, and then distributed to the rest of the city. Not coincidentally two of the four spouts, those that went east to Aldgate and south to London Bridge, carried water to areas where brewers congregated.⁷³ There is no evidence that the Brewers’ Company directly contributed to Morris’ scheme, but they were beneficiaries of his regular supply of water.

⁷² Thomas Wicksteed, “On the Supply of Water to the Metropolis” in *The Civil Engineer and Architect’s Journal, Scientific and Railway Gazette, Volume III* (London: 1840), 10.

⁷³ Dickinson, *The Water Supply of Greater London*, 20-22.

What there is evidence for in the Brewers' accounts is support for the next great water engineering project at the very beginning of the seventeenth century: the New River Company brought water from Hertfordshire to the New River's terminus at Islington. The project was begun by Edmund Colthurst in 1604, but was completed by Sir Hugh Myddleton between 1609 and 1613. Myddleton received a great deal of both political and financial support from James I for which the Crown was given half the shares in the new company—one of the few sound investments made by the Crown in the seventeenth century. The New River supplied the City with clean water⁷⁴ for well over the next three hundred years and the Brewers' Company were ready buyers of the product. The Brewers' Company records hold a contract between the New River Company and the Brewers from the reign of Charles II, which is likely one of several that the two companies made over the course of the seventeenth century.⁷⁵

Both Morris' waterworks and the New River were boons to the brewers of London as they both provided the most necessary of brewing resources—water. Hops, malt, and coal were also necessary raw materials, but each could be shipped into London from great distances. The brewers of Thames Street could not produce their beer without the regular supply of water. The wealth and influence of Platt and Longe within the Brewers' Company was vital in obtaining the supply of water to their breweries. Publicly

⁷⁴ The New River was the cleanest source of water for London until the Victorian Era. In 1876 the contamination by organic matter was measured for the major London waterworks and the New River was the only one that met the set standard. Southwark's water was deemed the worst in London at the time with 4.5 times the amount of contamination of the New River. See: Edward Walford, "Underground London: Its railways, subways and sewers," *Old and New London: Volume 5*, British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=45233> (accessed 18 September 2013).

⁷⁵ GL, MS 5504.

available water supplies had barely supplied smaller-scale medieval breweries due to their limited flow and the cost of hiring water carriers to cart the water to site.⁷⁶

Importantly, very little of the water originally supplied by Morris' waterworks was made publicly available. Instead most was piped to private homes and businesses for a fee.

Additionally, from the evidence of the seventeenth century, the Brewers' Company often negotiated on behalf of its membership for access to water and the fact that both Platt and Longe were full brethren meant that their interests would likely be represented first.

That influence was vital if they were to obtain the water needed to brew the quantities that each were producing in the 1570s. In 1574 Richard Platt was using 80 quarters of grain per week and William Longe was using 70 quarters of grain per week. Based upon the quantity of grain used, Platt could expect to brew approximately 285 barrels of beer per week (10,260 gallons) and Longe could expect to brew approximately 250 barrels of beer per week (9,000 gallons). Platt ranked second and Longe third in terms of total production in 1574. Only Anthony Duffelde, using 90 quarters of grain per week, could claim a higher production figure.⁷⁷ Having influence in the Brewers' Company was vital in obtaining the more than 10,000 gallons of water needed every week at a reasonable cost. The evidence from Luu's compilation of London beer brewers and their output in 1574 bears this out, as the brewers identified as brewing in Thames Street and St. Katherine's were brewing with an average of 53 quarters of malt per week. The five brewers identified as brewing in Southwark were only using 38.4 quarters of

⁷⁶ Ball, *The Worshipful Company of Brewers*, 24-25.

⁷⁷ Luu, *Immigrants and the Industries of London*, "Table 8.8: List of Beer Brewers in London in 1574", 294-295.

malt per week. Both the Thames Street/St. Katherine's breweries and the breweries in Southwark had equal access to malt, hops, and coal to produce beer via the Thames and a thirsty market eager for their product. However, the one raw material that they did not have equal access to was water. Southwark, the traditional haven of brewers before natives became involved in the trade, had continual water supply problems throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. No serious water supply projects along the lines of the New River and the Thames Waterworks were undertaken in Southwark until the early eighteenth century. Most of the water for the borough was diverted from the Thames into a holding pond, which often proved to be brackish and had to be carted to breweries in the area at great cost.⁷⁸ It was that crucial difference that shifted the brewing trade north across the river to Thames Street and St. Katherine's and allowed it to grow into an industry in which the largest brewers were producing more than 500,000 gallons (2.3 million liters) of beer per year.

The Brewing Industry in 1600

Richard Platt died in 1600. He had seen more than fifty years of development in the London brewing trade. He had started as a young man apprenticed as an ale brewer, but died as one of the largest beer brewers in London. Over the course of that career he had seen his fortune grow from a modest beginning with one brewery, the Old Swan, to a veritable brewing empire that stretched across much of London that included many retail outlets for his product. His son John had joined the company and had married into one of the other major brewing families. His other son Hugh would be knighted for his scientific

⁷⁸ Dickinson, *The Water Supply of Greater London*, 79-80.

pursuits. He had also seen his status in both London and the Brewers' Company rise as he became the master and warden of it and perhaps rose to the status of being both Sheriff and Alderman of London.⁷⁹ The rise of Richard Platt was not a unique one in the Brewers' Company. Perhaps the size and scale of his wealth was singular, but virtually all of the native beer brewers who joined the company to take advantage of the booming London market did well out of their association with it. Furthermore, the company's status also paralleled the fortunes of its members as it rose from an organization constantly in trouble with the London authorities to one that had great influence and acted as a buttress to the policies of the City. But Platt's and the company's fortunes have to be balanced against is the discriminatory policies against strangers and their children that allowed for natives to break into the trade and increasingly marginalize stranger brewers. That marginalization would continue into the seventeenth century and allow for beer to become a beverage that is considered to be unquestionably English. Yet, without the nativization of the trade in London in the sixteenth century that distinction would not have been possible. Beer might have remained a foreign beverage for a foreign people and unfit for the lips of a true-born Englishman.

⁷⁹ Platt is invariably mentioned as Alderman Richard Platt in the Brewers Company Records and is mentioned in several secondary sources as an alderman, but is not listed as serving as an alderman in Alfred P. Beaven's *The Aldermen of the City of London: Temp. Henry III-1912*, which is considered as the authority on the subject. It is not impossible that he served as an alderman, but it seems unlikely as the Brewers ranked fourteenth in order of precedence amongst the guilds and it was uncommon for an alderman to not come from the Twelve Great Companies before the seventeenth century. There is no evidence that Platt became free of a different company at any point during his lifetime, which would seem to preclude him serving as an alderman. See: Chronological list of aldermen: 1501-1600, *The Aldermen of the City of London: Temp. Henry III - 1912*, Alfred P. Beaven, in British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=67240> (accessed 20 August 2013).. For Platt's funeral monument see: John Strpye, *A Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster: Volume I, Book 3* (London: 1720), 11.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE WAGES OF SIN: THE GROWTH AND IMPACTS OF THE EXCISE ON BEER BREWING IN LONDON, 1600-1689

The brewing of beer in London in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries had been shaped by the forces of the City and guild. In the seventeenth century London beer brewers were to encounter new forces that would shape how Londoners' favorite beverage was made. The first of these forces was the introduction of national taxation on beer through the excise. While the excise on beer of the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries dates to 1643, there were already plans under the Tudors and the early Stuarts to tax this most profitable of trades. Although the most developed of these plans, a 1637 tax engineered by Charles I and Captain James Duppa, failed spectacularly, the plan introduced taxation to the industry and consumers. That introduction was to have decided benefits for the more successful, Dutch-style excise of the 1640s. That more permanent taxation was to dramatically affect who was to brew beer in London, and the nation as a whole, as the biggest common brewers, who were at their most prominent in London, were the best equipped to meet the demands that excise taxation posed.

Moving in parallel to the national story of the introduction of the excise was that of the London community of brewers being shaped by catastrophe and calamity across the seventeenth century. The Brewers' Company had shown a tendency towards support for Calvinist or puritan causes even before the seventeenth century began. That backing

for puritan causes was to intensify in the early seventeenth century and individuals connected with the trade, like Sir Isaac Pennington and Roger Quartermaine, were to suffer for their beliefs. As civil war broke out in 1642 the Brewers' Company made clear their support for the Parliamentary cause; however, as the Army and more radical elements of the revolution gained power in 1647 to 1649, that support evaporated. The company that emerged at the Restoration in 1660 was to be known more for its strong support for Crown and Church. The men who came to dominate the company in the reign of Charles II were dramatically different in political orientation and social status from their predecessors. By 1660 brewers were no longer part of a second-rate company with little influence on London politics. This was demonstrated quite clearly in the decade of 1660 to 1670 as no fewer than thirteen brewers were elected to the exclusive post of alderman of London.

Yet, while the fortunes of these brewers rose to, in some cases, the height of influence in the City and the Court, for most brewers the reign of Charles II was calamitous. The Great Fire of 1666 destroyed the heart of the company in the form of the Brewers' Hall. Although the hall was rebuilt at great cost, the accounts of its rebuilding offer compelling evidence that the company was becoming ever more divided between "haves" and "have nots" within the trade. In the sixteenth century members of the company had a sense of a common bond through their profession, their training, and their shared social activities. In the seventeenth century that common bond was undone and an entirely different industry was emerging on the eve of the revolution of 1688-89.

The London beer-brewing industry changed greatly in the latter half of the sixteenth century. From a trade that was divided between ale and beer, natives and strangers, and separate guilds, the industry had emerged under the unified leadership of the Worshipful Company of Brewers and had come to be dominated by natives who brewed beer almost exclusively. Men like Richard Platt had seen their fortunes grow exponentially as they had pushed out their stranger competitors, while at the same time learning their beer-brewing techniques. To accomplish that dominance, however, the guild had made a Faustian covenant as their members had needed the support of the City of London and had drawn the ire of the Crown for their efforts against the stranger community of London. The fruits of that Faustian deal were immense, as the growth in the size of breweries, many of which were brewing 500,000 gallons or more per year by 1600, and the wealth of brewers can attest. Yet, to achieve that wealth and prominence brewers had also placed a target squarely on their backs. The wealth generated by breweries, that seemingly could not brew enough to satisfy the thirsty population of London, made beer, and those who brewed it, a popular target for an excise tax.

Successive English governments were to propose excise taxation in several forms primarily as means to obtain desperately needed revenue. That revenue was needed because of the growth of the state in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The functions the English Crown had taken on in addition to its traditional duties of national defense and maintaining law and order left it perennially cash-strapped. Proposals for excise taxes during the reigns of Elizabeth I, James I, and Charles I all aimed to alleviate that problem. Yet, at the same time, excise taxes were often sold in the English, and the

Continental, context as a way for governments to discourage behavior deemed detrimental to the public good. The connections between beer and drunkenness made it a prime target. While the nominal reason for the tax was to encourage individuals to become more moral and avoid the sin of drinking to excess, the real reason for the tax was that there was little anyone could do to avoid it. Beer was such a universal commodity—drunk by young and old, men and women, rich and poor—that the revenues of any excise tax placed upon it would be as near a sure thing as any seventeenth-century official could imagine. Taxes on other commodities could be lucrative, but they suffered from drawbacks that beer did not. Tobacco and wine had to be imported, and although addictive like beer, did not have quite the same universality of appeal. Cider, perry, and a host of other English goods were taxed, but none even came close to the revenues generated by the excise on beer and ale. For these reasons the excise on beer and ale was universally despised by both producers and consumers alike. This can be seen in Dr. Johnson's description of an excise in his *Dictionary*—“Exci'se. n.s. . . . A hateful tax levied upon commodities, and adjudged not by the common judges of property, but wretches hired by those to whom excise is paid.”¹ Nevertheless, the excise was to become the heart of the English taxation system in the seventeenth century because it was so lucrative, and the first individuals to feel the full brunt of the tax were to be those London brewers who had transformed the industry in the previous century.

¹ Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language*, Volume II (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, 1805).

An Untapped Source: The Taxation of the Brewing Industry before the Excise

Ale and beer had been regulated in England from at least 1266 with the creation of the Assize of Ale. Brewers were required to use proper measures, such as the standardized cup known as a hanap in London, to sell their product for the rate set by the justices of the peace or other civic authorities, and meet quality standards as measured by the ale-tasters or ale-conners. The regulation of the price and quality of beer and ale only grew with the creation of guilds across the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. For instance, in 1619 the government of James I issued a proclamation reaffirming price controls of one penny per quart of strong beer and one half-penny of small beer, which were to be enforced by the justices of the peace. The proclamation exhorted them to be “very carefull, from time to time, to cause the Brewers to bee proceeded against, in their generall and Quarter Sessions, for delivering Beere, or Ale, to such unlicensed persons, according to the Statute in that case provided.”² Yet, beer and ale were for all intents and purposes untaxed until the adoption of a direct tax on beer was introduced by Charles I in 1637.³

It was not as if English governments were uninterested in taxing this most-necessary commodity; instead successive English regimes were interested enough to propose plans to tax beer and ale from at least the sixteenth century. The licensing of alehouses from the reign of Edward VI offered the opportunity to tax the keepers of alehouses, inns, and taverns through the purchasing or renewal of a license. Although the

² England and Wales. Sovereign (1603-1625 : James I), *A Proclamation, with articles of direction thereunto annexed, concerning ale-houses* (London, 1619).

³ H.A Monckton, “English Ale and Beer in Shakespeare’s Time,” *History Today* 17 (1967): 828-834.

authors of the act intended the licensing of premises that sold alcohol to be a tool for justices of the peace to maintain good order, the fees for licensed alehouses and the fines assessed on unlicensed alehouses were quickly realized as a revenue stream.⁴ That revenue stream tended to be small, however. Thus, revenue from licenses appears to have been a secondary consideration to the governments of the mid-sixteenth century. Yet, in at least one sixteenth-century case the money raised from the licenses and fees was intended to be used for one of the Crown's duties—national defense.

The 1577 census of alehouses, inns, and taverns was ordered to be undertaken by the justices of the peace to yield a firm number of premises on which a tax could be assessed for the repair of Dover harbor. The survey was undertaken from late 1577 to early 1578. It is incomplete and has several important exclusions—with none being more important than London. Nevertheless, the survey was completed for 27 counties and several towns which listed a total of over 15,000 alehouses, inns, and taverns.⁵ Further returns that trickled in over the course of 1578 eventually counted no fewer than 19,759 licensed premises in England at that time.⁶ Those numbers were alarmingly high for a regime bent on maintaining good order. Yet, at the same time such a large group, who were dependent upon the good will of the government for their licenses to operate, was also seen as a potentially great revenue source. The plan to tax the purveyors of alcohol across the kingdom to support the rebuilding of Dover harbor took more than two years to develop as the “Mayor, Jurats, and Whole Commonality of the town and port of

⁴ 5 & 6 Edward VI, c. 25.

⁵ NA, SP 12/96/210-213.

⁶ H.A. Monckton, *A History of English Ale and Beer* (London: The Bodley Head Ltd., 1966), 100-104.

Dover” petitioned the Privy Council for help in rebuilding the harbor by “soliciting an aid to their funds by a grant of the rates set upon alehouses and taverns” in December 1579.⁷ Shortly thereafter in March 1580, the Privy Council ordered that all keepers of alehouses should pay a fine of 2s. 6d. on every new license and all current purveyors should pay the same fine to support the rebuilding of Dover harbor.⁸ It appears that the collection of these fines was not as successful as was hoped, as some dismal calculations attributed to Sir Francis Walsingham from August 1580 attest.⁹ Even if the 2s. 6d. fine was collected on the more than 14,000 alehouses in England at the time, its proceeds would have only made a slight dent in the £7,030 estimate for the cost of the rebuilding of Dover harbor, which explains the exploration of other revenue sources by the Council in September 1580.¹⁰ Although the plan of assessment for the rebuilding of Dover harbor appears to have been a failure, it did set a precedent of taxation through fees that was to be quickly copied by Elizabethan and Jacobean entrepreneurs.

The first such instance was a plan floated by Sir Thomas Gorges to better regulate the London beer market by having the Queen employ him in the capacity of a General

⁷ Elizabeth I - Volume 133: December 1579, *Calendar of State Papers Domestic: Edward, Mary and Elizabeth, 1547-80*, Robert Lemon (editor), in British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=60779&strquery=> (accessed 22 January 2014).

⁸ Elizabeth I - Volume 136: March 1580, *Calendar of State Papers Domestic: Edward, Mary and Elizabeth, 1547-80*, Robert Lemon (editor), in British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=60784&strquery=> (accessed 22 January 2014).

⁹ Elizabeth I - Volume 141: August 1580, *Calendar of State Papers Domestic: Edward, Mary and Elizabeth, 1547-80*, Robert Lemon (editor), in British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=60789&strquery=> (accessed 22 January 2014).

¹⁰ NA, SP 12/141/103. Although there were 19,759 licensed alehouses, inns, and taverns in England according to the survey of 1578, only 14,202 can be identified as alehouses. 3,597 premises were not categorized in the returns. The proportion of alehouses that can be identified in the survey are 88% of the total. An estimate of the alehouses in England based upon that trend would be 17,388. See: Monckton, *A History of English Ale and Beer*, 101-104.

Gauger of Beer. Gorges was a Groom of the Chamber to Elizabeth and in 1580 he petitioned Lord Burghley to be appointed as the General Gauger of Beer for the entire kingdom. For the fee of one penny per barrel, Gorges would be given the power to ensure that the brewers of England would fill all barrels and casks properly. For this opportunity he was to pay the Crown a flat fee of £100 upon his appointment and a £200 annual rent. Gorges claimed that the buyers of ale and beer were deceived by brewers and coopers to the total of £30,000 yearly and the Queen herself was defrauded of £700 or £800 each year by London brewers through casks that were not filled to their proper capacity.¹¹ How the Brewers became aware of Gorges slight on their honor is unknown; however, once it did become known, they responded vociferously. Refuting the claims against them, the Brewers responded by stating:

That the Sizes of Vessels were limited by Statute, and well known to the most Part of Buyers; and were continually look'd unto by the Clerk of the Market, and by the Mayors and other Head Officers of Cities and Corporate Towns, and within Liberties; who were authorized, thereunto by Statutes, Charters, and Grants; and the Defects might be easily perceived by the Buyer: So as there was no great Need of a Surveyor in that Behalf.¹²

The Brewers then attacked Gorges by claiming that the motive in his suit was profit, as he was likely to reap £5,000 yearly in London alone and “throughout the Realm it would make the Sum up 10,000 *l.* a Year at least.”¹³ Perhaps the paltry £200 per year that Gorges would pay the Queen as rent for this lucrative position has more to do with why

¹¹ Robert Seymour, *A Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster, Borough of Southwark, and Parts Adjacent. ... The Whole being and Improvement of Mr. Stow's, and other Surveys*, Volume II (London: 1735), 361.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

his suit was dismissed. Yet, there was also the issue of the Crown having to contend with the corporations of England, with London leading the way. For the Brewers, London's beer market should be a matter for Common Council to decide upon and the protracted and ongoing fight between the Crown and City over strangers in London demonstrates the Crown's limitations in imposing its will on the corporation at the time.

Gorges reapplied to Burghley in 1586, but yet again his proposal was denied. The Brewers had apparently remedied the more egregious offenses that had been brought to the notice of the Crown in 1580.¹⁴ Burghley seems to have been monitoring the situation closely as his papers contain Gorges' appeal for the surveyorship, as well as several documents supporting either Gorges or brewers, several of which defended the London Brewers' guild in particular.¹⁵ It appears Burghley was less afraid of antagonizing Gorges than he was of London's brewers in 1586, as Gorges' suit was quietly dropped. Brewers were successful in fending off this attempt at taxing the industry, but the idea of extracting funds from such a lucrative industry was not long forgotten.

The Laboratory of Taxation

The idea of taxing beer did not lie dormant for long. It reappeared during the reigns of James I and Charles I under the leadership of Jeffrey Duppa and his son Captain James Duppa. Jeffrey Duppa was purveyor of the buttery to Elizabeth I and later became

¹⁴ Seymour, *A Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster*, 361.

¹⁵ For Gorges suit see: BL, Lansdowne MSS 71-30. For documents supporting the case for and against the Brewers see: BL, Lansdowne MSS 71-29. BL, Lansdowne MSS 71-31. BL, Lansdowne MSS 71-33. BL, Lansdowne MSS 71-34. BL, Lansdowne MSS 71-35.

brewer to James I.¹⁶ His younger son, Brian, would subsequently become Bishop of Chichester (1638-1641), Bishop of Richmond (1641-1660), and Bishop of Winchester (1660-1662). In 1634 he was also appointed as Charles I's chaplain, and through this position he became the tutor to the future Charles II and James II. Duppa's elder son, Captain James Duppa, appears to have earned his title of captain as a member of Charles I's navy, being listed as the captain of the *Seahorse* in 1626 and in command of a "fleet" of six ships near Yarmouth in 1627.¹⁷ Yet, like his father, he was perhaps best known at Court as a brewer and investor in overseas ventures.

Together Jeffrey Duppa and James Duppa were to invest heavily in partnerships in breweries and in the newly formed trading companies of the early seventeenth century. Jeffrey Duppa was a sleeping partner in "one of the largest London breweries."¹⁸ James Duppa was brought into this business at some point, but in what capacity during the elder Duppa's lifetime is unclear. Together they were also investors in the Virginia Company, with both being listed in the second charter of the company issued in 1609. Jeffrey Duppa was eventually to purchase £50 worth of stock in the company.¹⁹ The two were not only

¹⁶ "Duppa, Brian (1588–1662)," Ian Green in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/8303> (accessed November 27, 2013).

¹⁷ For his service in *Seahorse* see: Charles I - volume 24: April 1-15, 1626, *Calendar of State Papers Domestic: Charles I, 1625-26*, John Bruce (editor), in British History Online, [http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=51901&strquery=James Duppa](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=51901&strquery=James+Duppa) (accessed 28 January 2014). For his service as commander of the fleet at Yarmouth see: Charles I - volume 78: September 11-20, 1627, *Calendar of State Papers Domestic: Charles I, 1627-28*, John Bruce (editor), in British History Online, [http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=51971&strquery=James Duppa](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=51971&strquery=James+Duppa) (accessed 28 January 2014).

¹⁸ F.J. Fisher, *London and the English Economy, 1500-1700* (London: The Hambleton Press, 1990), 44.

¹⁹ Alexander Brown, *The Genesis of the United States*, Volume II (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin and Company, 1891), 883.

investors, but were also key suppliers of beer to the early colony, although more harm than good came of this relationship. In 1623 the merchant vessel *Abigail* brought beer purchased from the Duppas to Virginia, which was reputed to be so bad in quality that “the stinking beer” was “the death of two hundred.”²⁰ Although the Duppas appear to have not suffered any consequences for supplying a product of such poor quality, one of the Virginian settlers wrote to the company saying “It would but please the country to hear that you had taken revenge of Dupper (Duppa).”²¹ This was not the only time the Duppa’s beer would be called into question. In that same year they were contracted to supply beer for the East India Company, but only because their beer was English and, unlike Dutch beer, would not be objected to by those in the East India Company’s service.²²

Just as the Duppas appear to not have cared much about the public perception of the quality of their product, so too it appears that they did not care much about their reputation in the eyes of fellow investors. The Duppas were interlopers in several trades. Their investments in the brewing industry may have nominally been legal as they were investors in their breweries rather than actual brewers belonging to the Brewers’ Company. James Duppa partnered with Thomas Clee, a member of the company, who brewed within the Liberty of the Tower. Clee’s brewery must have been of some size as it was used as a landmark to establish the southwest corner of the bounds of the liberty

²⁰ Macalester College Department of History, Literature, and Political Science, *Macalester College Contributions*, First Series (St. Paul: Pioneer Press Publishing Company, 1890), 167.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² W. Noel Sainsbury (ed), *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, East Indies, China and Japan, 1622-1624* (London: Longman & Co., 1878), 181.

during Charles II's reign.²³ By brewing within the precincts of the liberty, Clee and Duppa were legally free to brew without interference from the Brewers as their powers did not extend into the city's liberties. The quality of the beer produced by Clee, and the perception it had with the public, speaks to the cutting of costs and quality standards by the partners. Yet, the product appears to have sold well enough to make a tidy profit to the Duppas and Clee.

James Duppa's interloping in the brewing trade was also paralleled in the trade of the Muscovy Company. Possibly with the consent of his father, he outfitted an expedition to Cherry Island in 1608. Today Cherry Island is known as Bear Island and is located in the Norwegian Svalbard Archipelago. The island had been exploited for whale oil and walrus oil and tusks by the Muscovy Company since the late sixteenth century. However, the expedition of 1608 sent by the company cost it a £1000 loss due to the expedition outfitted by Duppa and another ship from Hull.²⁴ Duppa was not only an interloper, but also a projector who wished to create a competitor to the other major trading companies in Guiana and the mouth of the Amazon. He became an investor in the Guiana Company of 1627 and in 1629 petitioned Charles I for support for the venture. Duppa requested 3,000 men and 100 pieces ordinance, for which the King would receive £50,000 for 21 years after four years in which the colony would be established.²⁵ Charles I wisely

²³ John Bayley, *The History and Antiquities of the Tower of London*, Volume II (London: T. Cadell, 1825), 124-125.

²⁴ William Robert Scott, *The Constitution and Finance of English, Scottish and Irish Joint-Stock Companies to 1720*, Volume II (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910), 53.

²⁵ W. Noel Sainsbury, *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, 1574-1660* (London: Longman, Green, Longman, & Roberts, 1860), 101.

refused the offer, no doubt knowing that it would antagonize the Spanish, something he could ill-afford at the time, and that two other companies had already failed to settle the area. Although Charles I had turned down this scheme it would not be the last time the Duppas would be involved in government finance. Their knowledge of the brewing trade and their connections at Court and in the merchant community made them the ideal people to turn to for help in attempting to raise funds from the trade in beer.

In 1620 confronting the perennial royal problem of finding revenue, James I commissioned Jeffrey Duppa and Henry Stanley, a future Member of Parliament for Maidstone, to conduct a survey on how best to raise funds from the brewing trade. Duppa and Stanley's report of February 1620 recommended "for the suppressing the hateful sine of Drunkenness" that the government should license only a select group of common brewers. Common brewers were commercial breweries who produced beer or ale for an entire community. There were 26 such brewers in London in 1585 and about 650 were recorded across England in 1637 when a survey of their number was conducted.²⁶ Common brewers were the key to the proposal because, it was argued, they would be both easier to control and to tax. For Duppa and Stanley, all other brewers, including "innkeepers, alehousekeepers, and tipplers", should be prohibited from brewing because they brewed "irregularly" and made "strong Drinke" despite the many prohibitions on strong beer.²⁷ The only manner in which this plan could be accomplished was by the "plantinge" of common brewers across the country, which would be licensed by the

²⁶ Mathias, *The Brewing Industry in England*, 6. Hornsey, *A History of Beer and Brewing*, 378.

²⁷ NA, SP 14/112/169.

Crown to keep their number at a manageable level. Each common brewer would pay a 4d. tax on every quarter of grain that they used to Duppa and Stanley as the agents for the Crown, and a proportion of that revenue would be theirs to keep.²⁸ Alehouses, inns, and taverns could still be licensed to sell beer produced by common brewers; however, they would face stiff fines and the loss of their licenses should they be caught producing beer or ale.

Many common brewers were not averse to this proposal as the elimination of the large number of smaller brewers would inevitably benefit them.²⁹ Duppa and Stanley, who owned a common brewery in Maidstone, would also surely have reserved one or more of the coveted licenses for themselves. The smaller brewers who were to be eliminated by this proposal did not take this threat lying down. They petitioned Parliament in 1621 just as proposals for the scheme were taking shape. Although the plan continued to move forward, it was eventually to be undone in 1624. James I's ability to create a protective monopoly for Duppa and Stanley to license common brewers became part of a legal dispute over whether the Crown had the authority to issue such patents. In 1621 James had also used such letters patent to give the authority to collect fines on inns, which were not included in the licensing statute of Edward VI, to Sir Giles Mompesson. Mompesson licensed a great number of unlicensed alehouses as inns, which allowed him to pay the King a total of £1,350.³⁰ This scheme, as well as the plan of Duppa and Stanley, ran counter to the authority of local government, in the form of the justices of the

²⁸ NA, SP 14/112/169.

²⁹ Monckton, *A History of English Ale and Beer*, 114.

³⁰ Hornsey, *A History of Beer and Brewing*, 371.

peace, to license purveyors of alcohol and “caused an uproar in the Commons.”³¹ In early 1624 James somewhat reluctantly gave his assent to the Statute of Monopolies, which invalidated all previous royal letters patent and removed the ability of the monarch to grant a monopoly—at least in the form that was needed for Duppa and Stanley’s plan to work.³² The monarch could still grant protective patents for novel inventions and corporations, but the personal monopolies proposed by Gorges, Duppa, and Stanley were now invalid. James I and Duppa’s designs on a beer tax were ultimately undone; however, a new beer tax was to be revived shortly by their sons.

A Trial Balloon: James Duppa’s 1637 Beer Tax

The proposal engineered by Captain James Duppa during the reign of Charles I was spurred by the King’s desperate need for revenue. Beginning in 1629 Charles began to live “of his own” without Parliament, marking what has come to be known as his personal rule (1629-1640).³³ Although this was due to a myriad of issues, one of the chief factors was the problem of state finances. Charles I’s early reign was burdened by costly wars with Spain and France, which drove royal finances deeper and deeper into the red. Although much of that deficit was due to the actions of Elizabeth I and his father, Charles’s continued support for his father’s favorite, the Duke of Buckingham, and Buckingham’s management of the dismal war effort did little to ingratiate Parliament to

³¹William Cobbett, *Cobbett’s Parliamentary History of England*, Volume I (London: T. Hansard, 1806), 1219-1231. Hornsey, *A History of Beer and Brewing*, 371.

³² 21 Jac. 1, c. 3.

³³ Pauline Gregg, *King Charles I* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1981). L.J. Reeve, *Charles I and the Road to Personal Rule* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989). Kevin Sharpe, *The Personal Rule of Charles I* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

Charles's requests for money. Following the dissolution of Parliament in March of 1629, Charles attempted to finance the state via the taxes and impositions due to the Crown that were already in place. Supplementing these were "novel" impositions like the distraint of knighthood, a fee assessed on holders of land worth more than £40 who were supposed to present themselves for a knighthood upon a king's coronation, and new rents assessed on individuals residing in the King's forests. While these seemed "novel" to those who had these fees assessed upon them, they were in actuality based upon medieval statutes that were still in effect. Perhaps even more troubling were the forced loans assessed on wealthy individuals and corporations and the expansion of ship money from the ports and counties on the south coast to the entirety of the kingdom. Each of those was a financial expedient that was to cause harsh recriminations for the King's government and to eventually lead England down the path to civil war.

The revival of a plan to tax beer across England during the 1630s through the licensing of common maltsters (malt merchants) and brewers is part of this larger story. Captain James Duppa's scheme was based upon some of the tenets of his father's plan and was predicated upon Charles I granting him the ability to assess a tax on malt used by common brewers across all of England. Although the idea of a personal monopoly on the collections of fees on a good had been banned in the Statute of Monopolies, Charles I continued to issue such monopolies during his period of personal rule despite the statute.³⁴ The King circumvented the statute by issuing monopolies to companies, which

³⁴ David Loades, *Politics and Nation, England 1450-1660*, 5th ed. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999), 328.

was not banned in the statute, rather than individuals. This is how James Duppa became part of the commission to regulate malt in 1636.

It appears Duppa was the prime mover behind the proposal to tax beer through a duty on malt during the 1630s. His proposal to raise £40,000 through a tax on maltsters and brewers throughout the kingdom must have seemed like a godsend to the perennially cash-strapped Charles I. The King's precarious finances go a long way towards explaining how such a complicated plan was not only proposed, but enacted.³⁵ Duppa's proposal to the Privy Council in 1635 or 1636 was a forerunner of the true excise tax in England in that it aimed to levy a tax of 6d. on every barrel of beer produced in England.³⁶ His proposal was the genesis of what was to become a company of individuals, headed by Sir William Parkhurst, the Warden of the Mint, which were granted the right to "restrain the unnecessary and unlimited number of common Maltsters, and also to restrain all Innkeepers, Alehouse-keepers, Taverners, and other Victuallers, from brewing the Ale and Beer they offer by retail" on January 30, 1636.³⁷ This corporation was composed entirely of courtiers, with three clerks of the Privy Council and four clerks of the King's Signet, who had little or no knowledge of the brewing trade among the membership. It was, therefore, left to Duppa as one of the commissioners tasked with putting the scheme into effect.

³⁵ Charles I - volume 306: Undated 1635, *Calendar of State Papers Domestic: Charles I, 1635-6*, John Bruce (editor), in British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=52644> (accessed 05 December 2013). Monckton, *A History of English Ale and Beer*, 115.

³⁶ Monckton, *A History of English Ale and Beer*, 114.

³⁷ Robert Sanderson, *Foedera, Conventiones, Literae, Et Cujuscunque Generis Acta Publica, inter Reges Angliae*, Volume XX (London: 1735), 101-103.

Duppa was given the task of negotiating with maltsters and brewers to settle on a tax that would both increase the revenues of the Crown, yet also be reasonable enough that those who were taxed would pay it. The end result of this negotiation was not a true excise tax, in that it did not seek to tax the number of barrels produced, but instead would rely on rents and fines payable to the Crown for malting and brewing. Rents and fines were not only more traditional, having parallels in the licensing of alehouses, but were also an up-front cost that could easily be passed on to consumers. Disguising taxes in the more acceptable guise of rents and fines was also important for the Crown in that they were not considered to be a foreign invention, unlike the Dutch-style excise tax that was to be introduced during the Civil War. What James Duppa hoped to accomplish by these rents and fines was what Jeffrey Duppa had proposed a decade earlier—the reduction of the large number of small brewers and maltsters in favor of larger common brewers and maltsters, who were more easily taxed.

Before such a plan could be accomplished Duppa had to do his homework. He had to determine what would be the most effective number of common brewers and maltsters to be licensed as part of the plan. As part of this research he was ordered on September 25, 1636, along with three other commissioners, to travel across the kingdom to negotiate with individual malt makers for their licensing as common maltsters, who would in turn supply malt only to the common brewers.³⁸ Two days later the justices of the peace for Lincolnshire, Somersetshire, Berkshire, Oxfordshire, Middlesex, Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire, Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Essex, Suffolk,

³⁸ NA, SP 16/332/31.

Huntingdonshire, Cornwall, Norfolk, and Devonshire were informed of the commissioners' duty to negotiate with maltsters in their localities.³⁹ Among those justices informed of the commissioners' duty were John Hampden, shortly to be involved in his court case against ship money, and Oliver Cromwell. The commissioners were still negotiating with maltsters and brewers in January 1637. On January 15 of that year they were re-commissioned to not only continue to negotiate with those groups, but to also to create a list of certified brewers and maltsters to be passed on to the King.⁴⁰ Shortly thereafter the King gave the commissioners articles for both common maltsters and brewers, which were to govern those who compounded with the commissioners to become licensed.⁴¹ Finally, on January 31, the King granted the corporation the "Commission authorizing them to compound with persons willing to be incorporated for using the art and mystery of common maltsters, and also with such persons as offer themselves to take grants from his Majesty to be allowed as common brewers", which gave the corporation, or more accurately the commissioners under Duppa, the authority to begin collecting the fees for licenses on common maltsters and brewers.

Duppa's plan was put into effect by Charles I via a royal proclamation in July 1637. Only common maltsters and brewers licensed by the Crown were to produce malt and beer respectively. No innkeeper, alehouse-keeper, taverner, cook, or victualler was to brew ale or beer—creating a monopoly for common brewers on ale and beer brewed

³⁹ NA, SP 16/332/70-73.

⁴⁰ Charles I - volume 344: January 15-26, 1637, *Calendar of State Papers Domestic: Charles I, 1636-7*, John Bruce (editor), in British History Online, [http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=52710&strquery=1637 "maltsters"](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=52710&strquery=1637+maltsters) (accessed 28 January 2014).

⁴¹ NA, SP 16/345/84.

outside of the home. Many individuals, particularly in rural settings, still brewed their own beer and ale and would be able to continue to do so under the act; however, virtually all urban consumers were now forced to buy their beer from a select few common brewers.⁴² The proclamation envisioned that just as alehouses were licensed by justices of the peace throughout England, so too would all maltsters and brewers with the lucrative fines and rents collected being paid to the Crown's, and the corporation's, coffers.

In some areas the work of the commissioners was quite successful. Duppa and his associates were able to license no fewer than 643 common brewers in 1637, which were to pay £5,312 12s. 4p. for their licenses.⁴³ An additional £504 1s. was expected from the licensing of 132 maltsters.⁴⁴ Although those numbers were far from the £40,000 per year that was projected by Duppa in the plan's formative stages, the documentary evidence also reveals that 21 counties had no common brewers licensed at the time the undated 1637 list was compiled.⁴⁵ It is likely that those counties had commissioners working in them at the time the list was written. Some areas, like East Anglia and the West Country, are disproportionately represented whereas almost no common brewers were listed as licensed in others, like the Midlands and Middlesex, which suggests that the commissioners' work was far from complete when the list was completed. It also is known that some Middlesex brewers near London were licensed by the commissioners in 1637. The London Brewers' Company sent a petition to the King in February 1638

⁴² Sanderson, *Foedera*, Volume XX, 157-159.

⁴³ NA, SP 16/377/124.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ NA, SP 16/377/126.

arguing that the commissioners were infringing upon their right to regulate the brewing trade near London. This petition demonstrates that the commissioners were continuing their work in licensing ever more brewers and maltsters; however, it is also the first example of a conflict between the Brewers and the commissioners over the right to regulate London's market for beer, ale, and malt.

London was a glaring exception within Duppa's plan. The charter granted to the Brewers' Company in 1579 gave the Brewers the ability to regulate the market for malt in London in conjunction with city authorities. Virtually no malt was made within the city, and so what friction existed between the commissioners and London brewers seems to have been confined to the licensing of common brewers near London and insufficient supplies of malt coming into the city from the common maltsters licensed by Duppa and his associates. In early February 1638, 45 members of the Brewers' Company, including the three wardens for that year, petitioned the King to examine the performance of the Commissioners for Brewing. Their petition argued that the price of malt had become too dear because of the new regulations on it, which caused many of their members to stop brewing. This in turn created a shortage of beer and ale in the city, precipitating "the utter undoing of them (the Brewers), their wives, and children and thousands of poore people."⁴⁶ The petition also suggests that the brewers who contracted with the King's Board of Green Cloth for 1,700 tons of ale and beer would be unable to provide it, meaning even the King would have to do without should the situation remain unrectified. Shortly thereafter on February 3, 1638, the Commissioners for Brewing, including

⁴⁶ NA, SP 16/381/7.

Duppa, sent a response to the King that the dearth of malt in London was a temporary issue due to the late winter and rivers either still being iced over or flooded. Once river traffic could be re-established the dearth would be rectified.⁴⁷

Unsurprisingly, the conflict between the commissioners and London's Brewers' Company continued to escalate across 1638. Just ten days after the commissioners had given their reply on the state of the malt market in London, the Brewers petitioned the King again over the infringing of their charter by the commissioners. The 1579 charter granted the Brewers the right to regulate the market for ale and beer within a two-mile area surrounding London. Their petition claimed that the commissioners were infringing upon that right and, in order to better regulate the city's market for ale, beer, and malt, a new charter should be issued that extended their control to a radius of four miles around the city.⁴⁸ That area would be granted to the Brewers in their 1639 charter, which was a blow to the already unwinding scheme to regulate malt and beer. The Brewers' intransigence to being regulated by the King's men was not the sole reason for the failure of the commissioners. However, their ability to keep the commissioners from regulating the largest, and most lucrative, market was a serious blow to Duppa's plan.

The inability of the commissioners to regulate the London market need not have been the death of the plan, however. The commissioners did receive support from brewers elsewhere in the country. The Brewers of Chester, who had recently been incorporated, also petitioned the King a year earlier in 1637. Their petition, however, was

⁴⁷ NA, SP 16/381/86.

⁴⁸ Charles I - volume 382: February 13-23, 1638, *Calendar of State Papers Domestic: Charles I, 1637-8*, John Bruce (editor), in British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=52783&strquery=Duppa beer London> (accessed 29 January 2014).

in support of the suppression of brewers that were also innkeepers or alehouse-keepers—something that was at the heart of Duppa’s plan.⁴⁹ The commissioners had been kept out of London, but the rest of England was now being taxed according to the Duppa’s scheme. In order to comply with the King’s proclamation a maltster or brewer was “obliged to give a bond and to provide a list of all his vessels, together with a schedule of dimensions and capacities of steeping-vats, cisterns, floors, mash-tuns, coolers, and so on” to Duppa or one of his associates.⁵⁰ The plan had now been put into motion. Yet, within the space of just one year the scheme began to come apart at the seams.

In 1638 the King issued a proclamation removing the regulations on the malting trade contained in the 1637 proclamation, which pulled most of the teeth from Duppa’s plan.⁵¹ The King’s about face was largely due to a dearth of malt in the country, which was partially caused by a poor harvest, but was also exacerbated by the smaller numbers of maltsters working in the kingdom. The common brewers of Essex echoed the petition of the Brewers’ Company on the problem of malt when they claimed they were plagued by “high rates of malt” that would be their “incurable ruin.”⁵² Insufficient supplies of malt were a serious problem throughout 1637 and 1638 and the petitions of maltsters and brewers across the country appear to have spelled the doom of Duppa’s plan to regulate

⁴⁹ NA, SP 16/355/3.

⁵⁰ Monckton, *A History of English Ale and Beer*, 115.

⁵¹ Robert Sanderson (ed.), “A Proclamation for the free and lawful use of Malting” in *Foedera, Conventiones, Literae, Et Cujuscunque Generis Acta Publica, inter Reges Angliae*, Volume XX (London: 1735), 234.

⁵² Charles I - volume 377: Undated 1637, *Calendar of State Papers Domestic: Charles I, 1637-8*, John Bruce (editor), in British History Online, [http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=52775&strquery=malt 1637 petition](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=52775&strquery=malt+1637+petition) (accessed 29 January 2014).

malt. Without the ability to regulate the number of maltsters it was impossible for the commissioners to collect taxes on the thousands of smaller producers of malt spread throughout the kingdom. Once maltsters had been exempted from the taxation system it was only a short time before brewers, and the other traders that had been banned from brewing in 1637, made stronger complaints for their own exemptions. Duppa, as the commissioner in charge of collecting the planned taxes, was left “holding the bag” by Charles I’s about face. The King’s increasingly troublesome situation in 1637, 1638, and 1639 eventually led to his calling of Parliament in 1639 and one of the very first concessions made to that body was to recall the licenses on brewers and to cancel their bonds.⁵³

Duppa’s situation in his two years as commissioner for collecting these taxes became increasingly desperate. In 1639 he wrote a note of account to the King which gives some idea of just how desultory his efforts to collect the tax were:

Note of accompts of Capt. James Duppa, receiver of fines and rents of maltsters and brewers. Total of his whole charge, 14,728l. 3s. 7d.; from which deduct 3,000l. paid into the Exchequer, leaving 11,728l. 3s. 7d. Whereof due to Captain Duppa 400l. for two years’ execution of his office; also he craves allowance of moneys unreceived, 7,029l. 9s. 1d., for which he has made oath upon his several accompts, leaving due to his Majesty in the said accountant’s hands, 4,298l. 14s. 6d.⁵⁴

Instead of being a boon to the royal treasury Duppa’s scheme had burned much political capital for Charles I and had delivered only £3,000 into his hands, which fell far short of the projected £80,000 for the two years that the tax was in effect. Not only had the King’s

⁵³ Monckton, *A History of English Ale and Beer*, 115.

⁵⁴ Charles I - volume 438: Undated 1639, *Calendar of State Papers Domestic: Charles I, 1639-40*, William Douglas Hamilton (editor), in British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=52888> (accessed 05 December 2013).

financial position become increasingly desperate during that time, so too had Duppa's. In 1640 he petitioned the King through the Bishop of London for payment of £4,890 for his service as a commissioner and the expenses he incurred while in that position. He also requested to be allowed to return the bonds for licenses to maltsters and brewers. These would be returned without the fines and rents already paid, presumably because he knew the funds to do so would not be forthcoming from the treasury.⁵⁵ This first attempt at a national tax on beer can only be judged to have been a complete failure. Yet, the idea of a national tax on alcohol consumption had been debuted on a national stage and it was to be less than five years until a far more invasive Dutch-style excise tax was to be enacted throughout England. That Dutch-style excise tax was to not make the mistake that was at the heart of Duppa's plan—the inability to tax the London market. The London market had grown by leaps and bounds in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century and any successful plan for an excise had to tap this lucrative market.

The Brewers' Company 1600-1640

The most important development of the sixteenth century for London brewers was the rise of the Worshipful Company of Brewers. What had been a company on the ropes in the late fifteenth century, in the bad graces of the City and facing direct competition from a rival guild, had grown into a powerful force. As the guild modified its practices to better suit the desires of the City for a well-regulated market for ale and beer, it also saw its fortunes rise. Members were able to monopolize the market for beer in the city by

⁵⁵ Charles I - volume 445: February 11-20, 1640, *Calendar of State Papers Domestic: Charles I, 1639-40*, William Douglas Hamilton (editor), in British History Online, [http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=52898&strquery=Juxon Duppa](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=52898&strquery=Juxon+Duppa) (accessed 29 January 2014).

subsuming the Beer Brewers' Guild and banning strangers from operating legally within the bounds of London. Those changes were eventually set in stone with the series of charters granted to the company in the 1560s and 1570s, which gave them a monopoly on the selling of ale and beer within London and a two-mile wide radius surrounding it. Men like Richard Platt had seen their status transformed in their lifetimes as they became the only suppliers of London's preferred beverage. By 1600, when Platt died, he and other brewers had become wealthy, and in his case, had become a pillar of both the company, serving as both master and warden, and the community, by serving as a common councilor. Nevertheless, by 1600 the fortunes of the company, and many of its members, had perhaps reached their height. They were once again facing competition, but in this case the enemy was often within their own ranks.

The Brewers' Company had two primary roles. The first was to train apprentices and pass on the "mysteries" of brewing to the next generation. The second was to regulate the market for beer and ale to ensure that the products being produced by London brewers met quality standards set by the guild and the City. Those two roles became increasingly at odds with each other over the course of the seventeenth century as the size of breweries continued to grow. As breweries became larger so too did the capital investment needed to run them. That capital was at first found in partnerships between individual brewers; however, by the late sixteenth century even these partnerships could not provide the needed funds. The answer to that problem was an infusion of capital from investors from outside of the company. During the latter half of the sixteenth century it became common for members of other companies to translate into the Brewers, which

brought infusions of capital into the trade. Several of London's largest brewers came into the company during the sixteenth century via this method, including the most prosperous brewer in London at the time of the survey of brewers in 1574—Anthony Duffelde.

Duffelde translated from the Mercers, while others translated from the Girdlers, Drapers, Leathersellers, Tilers, and Skinners.⁵⁶ These men brought capital, but were lacking in the skills to actually produce beer. Journeymen and masters trained in the guild were still needed to manage these breweries, but instead of owning brewhouses in their own right they became employees of men who were, in most cases, only nominally brewers. Even Platt and his family followed this model late in his life as his brewery came to be managed by William Bigge, whereas his son and grandsons benefitted from the wealth that came from the breweries and the properties attached to them.⁵⁷ This two-tiered company was to create frictions across the seventeenth century as those who owned and those who worked in breweries became two distinct populations.

It was only a short step from members of other companies translating into the Brewers in order to join in the growing market for beer to breweries being owned by members of other companies. It was not uncommon in early modern London for members to translate from one company to another—especially if one had aspirations to become part of the higher reaches of city government. During the heyday of translations into the Brewers' Company in the sixteenth century it was not uncommon for someone to give up the privileges of being a member of one of the Twelve Great Companies, from

⁵⁶ Luu, *Immigrants and the Industries of London*, 294-295, Table 8.8 "List of beer brewers in London in 1574."

⁵⁷ GL, MS 5485.

whom aldermen and the mayor were selected, to assume the economic advantages that being a member of the Brewers' Company provided. Several Mercers, like Duffelde and William Wood, and Drapers, like John Burde and Edmonde Taylor, translated in this manner by 1574 when the survey of brewers was conducted.⁵⁸ However, for those who wanted the advantages of the political prestige that came with being a member of London's elite and the economic advantages of owning a brewery the only solution was to remain a member of one of the Twelve Great Companies.

An illustrative example of this situation is Isaac Pennington, who would rise to become a London alderman and eventually its Lord Mayor. Pennington did not buy into the brewing trade, but instead married into it. His second wife, Mary Wilkinson, was the daughter of the brewer Matthew Young.⁵⁹ With his marriage he acquired a brewery in Whitefriars in 1629. This brewery must have been of some consequence as it was among eleven breweries tasked with supplying the navy with 1,660 tons of beer within a fortnight in May 1625 during the early stages of the Anglo-Spanish War of 1625-1630.⁶⁰ Although Pennington was well-known as a London brewer he had no formal connection with the Brewers' Company, nor was involved in the day-to-day running of the brewery. Pennington, like his father, was a member of the Fishmongers, which ranked ahead of the Brewers in precedence and was one of the Twelve Great Companies. His wife's family

⁵⁸ Luu, *Immigrants and the Industries of London*, 294-295, Table 8.8 "List of beer brewers in London in 1574."

⁵⁹ "Penington, Isaac (c.1584–1661)," Keith Lindley in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/21840> (accessed December 11, 2013).

⁶⁰ United Kingdom, Historical Manuscripts Commission, *The Manuscripts of the Earl Cowper, K.G., preserved at Melbourne Hall, Derbyshire, Volume I* (London: 1888), 200.

was connected with the trade as Matthew Young was a brewer and Lewis Young was taking on apprentices in the Brewers' Company in the 1630s and 1640s.⁶¹ Lewis Young was a partner in the trade with Pennington in the 1630s and may have been the brother of Mary Pennington. Pennington, however, left the management of the brewery to his wife's relatives. In this he was not alone as James Duppa's investment in the brewing trade was also managed by a member of the Brewers' Company, Thomas Clee. However, instead of joining the Brewers' Company, as some sixteenth-century individuals had done, Pennington and the Duppas remained divorced from the day-to-day running of a brewery and the company that was supposed to govern their actions. They were investors moonlighting as brewers.

Pennington was instead involved in several different trades simultaneously. He was an investor in both the Levant Company and the East India Company, as well as being a trader in French wine.⁶² Pennington's expertise was not in any of these trades, but in the financial investments that made individual ventures possible. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that he was forced to contribute the largest amount to the forced loan of 1640 amongst the Levant Company traders. Pennington's contribution of £800 was £300 more than his closest rivals. Considering "London's wealthiest citizens were more or less obliged to lend in proportion to their estates", Pennington was clearly among the most

⁶¹ "London Apprenticeship Abstracts (1442-1850)", Society of Genealogists Dataset, compiled from the records of the Brewers' Society, *The Origins Network*, <http://www.originsnetwork.com>.

⁶² Robert Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution: Commercial Change, Political Conflict, and London's Overseas Traders, 1550-1653* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 323-324. "Pennington, Isaac (c.1584-1661)," Keith Lindley in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

prosperous traders in London at that time.⁶³ Pennington's assessment was also likely negatively impacted by his political beliefs, which were steeped in puritan teachings.

Although Pennington and the Brewers did not have a formal relationship, the religious beliefs of each paralleled each other to some degree. Pennington was a parishioner of St. Stephen, Coleman Street, which, by 1633, had John Goodwin as vicar. Goodwin was one of the most forthright Independent preachers in London and was given the sobriquet "The Great Red Dragon of Coleman Street" by his Presbyterian enemies.⁶⁴ Pennington was also a supporter of protestant Palatinate refugees and his home in Whitefriars also became "an 'ordinary' for puritan visitors to the city."⁶⁵ Pennington's religious beliefs were more extreme than most of his contemporaries in the Brewers' Company; however, there were distinct ties between the company and the more militant shades of English Protestantism. Richard Platt's will of 1600 had clear Calvinist allusions such as "God the Holy Ghost who sanctifieth me and all the elect people of God" and his bequest of £5 to be distributed to the "godliest" and "most honest livers" in Aldenham.⁶⁶ By the time of Pennington, Platt's parish of St. James Garlickhythe was also known to be strongly Independent.⁶⁷ Although painting the entirety of the Brewers' Company with a broad brush of puritanism is perhaps imprudent, there is clear evidence that some of its members were part of the most radical elements of London's religious climate.

⁶³ Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution*, 80-81. For Pennington's assessment see note 88.

⁶⁴ David Masson, *The Life of John Milton, Volume III 1643-1649* (New York: Peter Smith, 1946), 158.

⁶⁵ Patrick Collinson, *From Cranmer to Sancroft* (London: Continuum, 2006), 86.

⁶⁶ GL, MS 5485.

⁶⁷ Dai Liu, *Puritan London: A Study of Religion and Society in the City Parishes* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1986), 87, 102.

In 1641 a pamphlet, titled *A Word to Fanatics, Puritans and Sectaries or New Preacher, New; Greene the Feltmaker, Spencer the Horse-rubber, Quartermine the Brewers Clarke; some few others, that are mighty sticklers in this new kinde of talking Trade, which many ignorant Coxcombes call Preaching*, was published. Although a brewers' clerk is listed prominently in the title, the afore-mentioned Quartermine, who was Roger Quartermaine, plays no role in the piece. Instead the pamphlet focuses upon condemning the preaching practices of London's radical Protestants in scathing phrases such as "for it is not the custome of any well settled church in Europe to ordaine such as you, I mean Hat-makers, Coblers, Taylors, Horse-keepers, upon one and the same day to be plancke and pulpit, in the forenoon making a hat, or rubbing a horse, in the afternoon preaching a sermon."⁶⁸ Quartermaine, although not described in the piece, was very much part of this milieu. He was called before the Court of High Commission no fewer than six times in 1640 and was questioned rigorously on his beliefs. During his interviews he revealed that not only was he a clerk for the Brewers, but also perhaps part of their legal counsel as he gave his profession as the "soliciting of Causes."⁶⁹ During his interviews at the Court of High Commission, and subsequent interviews before the Privy Council, he was accused of being "a Separitist, an Anabaptist, a Brownist, a Familist" and "preacher to them all."⁷⁰ Quartermaine would come to be tried for refusing to take the *ex-officio*

⁶⁸ John Taylor, *A Word to Fanatics, Puritans and Sectaries or New Preacher, New; Greene the Feltmaker, Spencer the Horse-rubber, Quartermine the Brewers Clarke; some few others, that are mighty sticklers in this new kinde of talking Trade, which many ignorant Coxcombes call Preaching* (London: 1641).

⁶⁹ Roger Quartermaine, *Quartermayns Conquest over Canterburies Court* (London: 1642), 5.

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 23.

oath that would incriminate himself in his trial at the Guildhall in late October and early November 1640. Quartermaine's account of the trial paints the case for his guilt and eventual execution as a foregone conclusion; however, much of this was artistic license as the jury returned a verdict of *ignoramus* and Quartermaine was allowed to walk free. The religious affiliation of the Brewers' Company cannot be inferred from the actions of one man. Yet, the employment of Quartermaine by the company in the capacity of a clerk, and perhaps as legal counsel, indicates that the company was likely tolerant, if not accepting, of such views.

Although Pennington did not run in exactly the same circles as Roger Quartermaine, he also suffered for his religious beliefs. Archbishop William Laud, who had headed several of Quartermaine's sessions at the Court of High Commission, would also close down Pennington's Whitefriars brewery. Nominally the brewery was closed because of smoke pollution that came from the coal burned there, but it was strongly suspected at the time that it was shuttered due to Pennington's political and religious beliefs and the animosity of the Archbishop towards Pennington.⁷¹ The closing of the Whitefriars brewery was a significant financial setback for Pennington and his partner Lewis Young. The two claimed a loss of £2,000 in two separate petitions to Parliament in 1641 and 1647, which appear to have been unsuccessful.⁷² Although Pennington and Young had been forced to leave the trade in 1637 it would not be the end of Pennington's involvement in brewing. By 1644, after Laud had fallen and the City revolted, he had re-

⁷¹ "Pennington, Isaac (c.1584–1661)," Keith Lindley in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

⁷² Valerie Pearl, *London and the Outbreak of the Puritan Revolution: City Government and National Politics, 1625-1643* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), 179-180.

entered the trade by renting a brewhouse from the City in the area of Broken Wharf.⁷³ Pennington and Young were also not alone in having their breweries taken for coal pollution as a fellow brewer, a Mr. Bond in Westminster, also saw his brewery so taken. In Bond's case Laud reportedly offered to drop the case against Bond if he would pay £1,000 to help repair St. Paul's Cathedral. When Bond refused, he was arrested, sent to the Fleet, had his houses pulled down, and eventually paid the £1,000, having reportedly lost three times that amount in his unsuccessful legal case.⁷⁴ It was their shared political and religious beliefs that were to radicalize both Pennington and the Brewers during the difficult years to come and, in the case of the Brewers, to accept an even more invasive tax system than what had been proposed during the personal rule of Charles I.

Crisis: Civil War and the Excise, 1642-1647

It is one of the greatest ironies of the turbulent Civil War period that the godly republic envisioned by the elect of the Parliamentary and Commonwealth regimes could not have even attempted their experiment in godliness without the basis of sin, specifically the taxation on the sinful (at least when taken in excess) commodities of tobacco, wine, and above all else beer and ale. The taxation system proposed by the Duppas in the 1620s and 1630s was to pale in comparison to what was enacted by Parliament and the Crown in the course of the Civil War. Instead of a very traditionally English style of indirect taxation through fees and fines, the exigencies of civil war were to make possible what had previously thought unthinkable—a Dutch-style system of

⁷³ Pearl, *London and the Outbreak of the Puritan Revolution*, 176-177.

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, 180.

excise taxes on a national scale. The Crown's attempt to tax beer in 1637 to 1639 was just one experiment of many that were embarked upon during the 1630s in order for Charles to live "of his own" and avoid becoming entangled in parliamentary politics. Brewers were not alone in seeing attempts to tax their produce; however, no one commodity was to be as vital to the fortunes of the war as beer. Beer was to be the "bread and butter" of revenues for both Parliament and the Crown in their attempts to defeat each other. Just as in the larger context of the national war, London was the key.

London was of course the dominant market of England. No other area in the British Isles brought together so much population, so much foreign and national trade, or so much industry. In order to defeat the forces arrayed against them it was vital for Parliament to maximize the financial resources of the London community in general, and the Brewers in particular. From the very beginning of the conflict it was quite clear that Parliament could count on the support of the company for financial and other resources. In June 1642 the company raised the full quota of £1,380 of the £100,000 that Parliament sought to raise from prominent London citizens and the livery companies. The £1,380 was raised voluntarily from 23 company brewers who contributed either £100 (five contributions), £50 (seventeen contributions), or £30 (one contribution).⁷⁵ Money was not the only contribution that the company was to give in 1642. On September 7, Leonard Hammond, one of the three wardens for the company in that year and a future alderman for the City, negotiated with the Committee of the Armory meeting in the Guildhall to supply weapons. These included "5 pikes, 5 swords, 5 bills, ... 5 muskettes; ... (and) 5

⁷⁵ GL MS 5445/16 "Brewers' Company Minute Book, 1634-1642".

bandoliers” among other weapons to be supplied to the armory by the company.⁷⁶

Perhaps because of this strong support during the early and hectic days of civil war, Pennington, who had been appointed as Lord Mayor by Parliament following the removal of Sir Richard Gurney, invited 36 brewers to dine with him on the 16th of May 1643.⁷⁷ Meeting with a select number of representatives from a livery company was a common occurrence for Lord Mayors; however, Pennington’s connection with the brewing trade and the rather large contingent of brewers invited on this occasion perhaps speaks to Pennington’s desire to maintain good relations with the company. Whether or not the dinner with Pennington was a reward for support, the company remained loyal to the Parliamentary regime during the war. In 1645 the Brewers again raised £1,200 from its members for the use of Parliament. Although this amount was not as high as what was raised in 1642 it appears that raising even this amount was quite a financial hardship as the company was forced to bargain for the “sale and morgage of the brewhouse and tenements at Garlickhithe” to help meet their responsibilities.⁷⁸ The hardship borne by the company in 1645 can only be explained by broad support in the company for Parliament in the civil war. That support was problematic, however, as by 1643 the emergency presented by the war was to hit the Brewers hard as they became a key cog in Parliament’s taxation plans.

In early 1643 Parliament began to feel the financial strain of paying for a war on several fronts against the King. Parliament had survived the first year of the conflict with

⁷⁶ GL MS 5445/17 “Brewers’ Company Minute Book, 1642-1652”.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

a mish-mash of revenue sources that included voluntary contributions, such as the one assessed on the Brewers, and traditional revenues, such as the customs revenue derived from tonnage and poundage. Yet, as early as August 1642, Parliament was finding established revenue streams to be inadequate. In the ordinance authorizing a new book of rates for tonnage and poundage, it states that “the sum of Two Hundred Thousand Pounds, or thereabouts” was already due just to the navy to keep the fleet manned and supplied.⁷⁹ Such a number had seemed impossible just a few months earlier, but in the midst of a civil war such sums had to be found. It was John Pym who found them. Beginning in early 1643 Parliament, under Pym’s leadership, instituted weekly assessments for the counties and major cities of England and Wales, which were to be administered by local assessors. These assessors were tasked with extracting set amounts from the localities via a tax on property.⁸⁰ Other taxes soon followed, but none were to be as effective as Pym’s master stroke, the *Ordinance for the Speedy Raising and Levying of Moneys by way of Charge or Impost upon Several Commodities*, better known as the Excise Ordinance, which was passed on July 22, 1643.

On July 23, 1643 the nation awoke to a new and very foreign taxation system.

The Excise Ordinance effectively introduced a Dutch-style excise tax system that placed taxes on purchases of many of the most common goods including beer, wine, tobacco,

⁷⁹ August 1642: The Ordinance of Parliament, concerning the Subsidy of Tonnage and Poundage., *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, 1642-1660*, C.H. Firth, R.S. Rait (eds), in British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=55736> (accessed 04 February 2014).

⁸⁰ February 1643: An Ordinance for the speedy raising and levying of Money for the maintenance of the Army Raised by the Parliament, And other great Affaires of the Commonwealth, by a Weekly Assesment upon the Cities of London and Westminster, and every County and City of the Kingdome of England, and Dominion of Wales., *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, 1642-1660*, C.H. Firth, R.S. Rait (eds), in British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=55784> (accessed 04 February 2014).

glass, soap, paper, and a host of others. The excise on beer was to be 2s. on every barrel of beer sold for more than 8s. (strong beer) and 6p. on every barrel of beer sold for less than 8s. (small beer). These taxes were to be paid by the brewer, who was allowed to pass the cost of 2s. or 6p. on each barrel on to the consumer. Furthermore, unlike the proposed schemes of the Duppas, the excise was to extend not just to beer brewed by common brewers, but also to beer brewed within the home. Although beer brewed in the home and consumed there was to be taxed at half the rate of beer brewed by common brewers, this provision meant that the collection of the excise was to extend not just to the public sphere, but also into private homes.⁸¹ Parliament was to further extend taxation on the industry by introducing an excise on hops at the rate of 6p. for every 20s. sold by the hop grower in 1644.⁸²

These excise taxes are often looked upon as the key innovation that allowed Parliament to defeat the Royalists; however, almost as fast as this innovation was introduced, it was copied by the King's supporters. By December 1643 the King and his advisors had decided to not only copy the schedule of commodities, but also expanded upon that schedule to tax more goods, and at higher rates, than Parliament.⁸³ Parliament had a six month head start on the Royalists, but their systems of collection were quite similar. Nominally each had a professional force of collectors, which in the case of the

⁸¹ England and Wales, Parliament, *An Ordinance of the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament: For the Levying of Moneys, by way of Excise, or, New-Impost...* (London: 1643).

⁸² England and Wales, Parliament, *An Additional Ordinance for the Excise, or New-Impost* (London: 1644).

⁸³ D'Maris Coffman, *Excise Taxation and the Origins of Public Debt* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 8.

Royalists were the clerks of the markets. Yet, during the course of the war, Parliament was able to extract far more in revenues from the excise. This can partly be explained by the expanding territory under its control; however, it also appears that the King's collectors had to resort to assistance from Royalist military commanders. Over time it became more common for those same Royalist commanders to exact taxes directly.⁸⁴ The deck was always certainly stacked against the Royalists as the areas of England they controlled were generally poorer and less populous than the areas under Parliament's control. Yet, even though each side nominally had an infrastructure for collecting the excise in place, it was the excise taxes collected in London that were to tip the scales in Parliament's favor.

On October 28th 1656 Samuell Barnard, an accountant for the Gentleman and Commissioners of the Excise, completed what he titled "An Abstract of what hath beene Collected for Excise both in London and Elsewhere in every distinct Country Upon each particulare Merchandize Inland and Imported for on whole Year Ending the 25 of March 1655." In it Barnard painstakingly reported the total revenues collected on 33 different commodities by the excise officers of the Protectorate government for 35 units, which were mostly county-sized, including the city of London. Barnard put the total amount collected on beer in 1654-1655 throughout England and Wales, with the exception of the city of London, at £113,842 15s. 3d.⁸⁵ London's total for the same year was £74,807 16s. 9 ½ d. or 39.7% of the £188,650 12s. ½ p. collected for whole of England and Wales

⁸⁴ Coffman, *Excise Taxation and the Origins of Public Debt*, 8.

⁸⁵ Samuell Barnard, "An Abstract of what hath beene Collected for Excise both in London and Elsewhere in every distinct Country Upon each particulare Merchandize Inland and Imported for on whole Year Ending the 25 of March 1655", BL, Lansdowne MS 1215-2-Fo. 7.

during that year. Furthermore London's total was approximately six-and-a-half times as much as the closest English county, Norfolk at £11,501 19s. 8 ½ p., and more than 22 times the average collected in the 34 units that were recorded by Barnard.⁸⁶ London's preponderance did not stop at the excise on beer, however, as the two columns that recorded taxation on hops also show a marked domination of the London market. The total revenue collected on the two excise taxes on hops amounted to £1,322 3s. 2p. or 41.2% of the total of £3,208 6s. 9 ½ p. collected for 1654-1655.⁸⁷

The excise was one taxation option in the toolbox of the government, but its importance cannot be overstated in its ultimate success in the Civil War. No commodity came close to deposing beer as the most lucrative good taxed by the English government throughout the rest of the seventeenth century. Barnard's calculations for 1654-1655 give a glimpse of just how dominant the excise on beer was as it amounted to slightly more than 46% of all of the excise revenues collected in that year. That number is astounding. Yet, what is even more astounding is that the excise on beer and ale in London alone accounted for 18.4% of the total excise revenue for the entirety of England and Wales in 1654-1655.⁸⁸ London's domination of the excise tax returns indicates how important maintaining a steady flow of revenues from the London beer excise was to the fortunes of the Cromwellian regime. That dominance meant that enforcing the excise on beer and ale in London was of the utmost importance to the Gentlemen and Commissioners of the

⁸⁶ BL, Barnard, Lansdowne MS 1215-2-Fo.7. The average for the 25 units reported on by Barnard was £3,348 6s. 4 ½ p.

⁸⁷ BL, Barnard, Lansdowne MS 1215-2-Fo. 7.

⁸⁸ BL, Barnard, Lansdowne MS 1215-2-Fo. 7

Excise throughout the Commonwealth and Protectorate periods. That importance would only come to grow over the course of the latter seventeenth century.

Resistance by the Brewers to the Excise and Commonwealth, 1647-1660

Although the company was a clear supporter of Parliament during the First Civil War (1642-1646), its support for the Rump and the Cromwellian regime appears to have been lukewarm at best. Much of this lukewarm support was the work of the excise, a wedge that drove deeper the more expensive it became for the Brewers. Yet, the Brewers were also shaped by national and local politics. Their support for Parliament was extensive during the First Civil War; however, as Parliament came to be controlled more and more by the Army and more radicalized, the Brewers stepped back from their Parliamentary support. In this shift they mirrored London as a whole, and the Brewers were to be transformed as a company by the revolution.

On August 24, 1647 the Brewers petitioned both the House of Lords and the House of Commons to “take the Excise off Beer.”⁸⁹ No fewer than 76 members placed their names on the petition calling for the end of it because of “the Strangeness of the Excise to the Free-born Subjects of this Kingdom, and the Inequality of it” falling more “on the Poor than on the Rich.”⁹⁰ They hoped that such a “grievous yoke” would be removed as beer was “so native and Necessary” a commodity. Furthermore, they argued that such an excise as “Four Shillings in the Pound” was paid only in “*The Low*

⁸⁹ House of Lords Journal Volume 9: 24 August 1647, *Journal of the House of Lords: volume 9: 1646-7*, in British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=37111&strquery=> (accessed 31 January 2014).

⁹⁰ Ibid.

Countrys.”⁹¹ The excise was not only burdensome, but was also a foreign imposition. That imposition might be borne during a time of emergency; however, the petition implies that the time of emergency was well past and such a tax was now not only burdensome, but dangerous to the good order of the nation.

The Brewers’ petition was met with swift, and decisive, action by the House of Commons. Eight members of the company—John Parsons, Abraham Corcellys, Leonard Leonards, Oliver Vaughan, Peter Leonards, John Greate, John James, and Robert Haughton—were called before the House the same day that the petition was presented. The House interviewed seven of them on their outstanding debts to the officers of the excise and ordered them to pay those debts by the following Friday, August 30.⁹² It appears that the petition and the non-payment of the excise by the eight brewers called was something of a tax strike. It was suspected that the brewers who had not paid were doing so not because of inability, but instead due to their intransigence. The Speaker of the House admonished them saying:

The said Brewers were again called in: And Mr. Speaker acquainted them, by the Command of the House, That the House was so far from being satisfied with their Answers, that they suspected something worse to be in it than the bare Non-payment of the Money: That the House required them to pay in the respective Sums due by them, by *Friday* next, peremptorily; else they must expect the Power of the Ordinances executed upon their Persons and Estates.⁹³

⁹¹ House of Lords Journal Volume 9: 24 August 1647, *Journal of the House of Lords: volume 9: 1646-7*, in British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=37111&strquery=> (accessed 31 January 2014)..

⁹² House of Commons Journal Volume 5: 24 August 1647, *Journal of the House of Commons: volume 5: 1646-1648*, in British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=25162&strquery=John Greate> (accessed 31 January 2014).

⁹³ *Ibid.*

It seems likely that the excise debts were paid as no further action was taken in 1647.

Yet, within a year John Greate, Leonard Leonards, and John James, along with two other brewers, were ordered to be held as delinquents by the Serjeant at Arms of the House of Commons in August 1648.⁹⁴

In striking against the excise these brewers were not alone, as other cases, like William Prynne's general declaration against excise taxes and excise taxes on hops, in particular, demonstrate.⁹⁵ In September 1654 Prynne was ordered to pay the excise on the hops being grown on his property. Prynne had recently been released from prison and, quite to the surprise of the sub-collector in charge of the excise in his area, he decided to protest the assessment on his hops. Faced with the threat of having to fight a legal battle with a man highly-practiced in legal manners, the sub-collector backed down and Prynne's hops were excluded from the excise.⁹⁶ Prynne and the Brewers shared a detestation for the expansion of what they believed to be, arbitrary taxes that were collected by strong-armed methods. As the excise expanded into ever more commodities, which in the case of beer could even be assessed within the confines of the home, resistance grew.

⁹⁴ House of Commons Journal Volume 5: 24 August 1647, *Journal of the House of Commons: volume 5: 1646-1648*, in British History Online, [http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=25162&strquery=John Greate](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=25162&strquery=John+Greate) (accessed 31 January 2014).

⁹⁵ William Prynne, *A Declaration and Protestation against the Illegal, Detestable, Oft-condemned, New Tax and Extortion of Excise in General; And for Hops (a Native incertain commodity) in Particular* (London: 1654).

⁹⁶ Ethyn Williams Kirby, *William Prynne: A Study in Puritanism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1931), 111-113.

Perhaps the best evidence for this trend is the careers of brewers who were elected as aldermen during this period. In 1645 John Bide was elected as alderman for Vintry ward and was to serve simultaneously as alderman and sheriff during 1648.⁹⁷ Bide had previously served as the master of the Brewers' Company from 1643 to 1644 and was its head during the height of the First Civil War. Bide was a Presbyterian who, by the time of his service as alderman, had become offended by the arbitrary rule of the Army. In September of 1647 he was called before the House to be impeached for "High Crimes and Misdemeanors."⁹⁸ The reason for Bide's impeachment is unknown; however, his impeachment came the same day that the Lord Mayor, John Gayer, and five Presbyterian aldermen were impeached and removed from their offices for raising forces in the city against the army.⁹⁹ Seven months later, on April 27, 1648, Bide went to the House to present a petition on behalf of the citizens of London. The petition presented by Bide was particularly concerned with the encroaching power of the Army in the city as troops had been stationed in London following Royalist riots earlier in the month. Bide was allowed to present the petition; but the House put off the demands of the City for future consideration. Bide's service as alderman ended in mid-1649 following the tumult of Pride's Purge, the trial of the King, and Charles I's execution. In abandoning service to a

⁹⁷ Bide was the second brewer to serve as alderman since the unfortunate Ralph Dodmer in the sixteenth century, following Samuel Cranmer who served as alderman for Cripplegate from 1632-1640. See: Chronological list of aldermen: 1601-1650, *The Aldermen of the City of London: Temp. Henry III - 1912*, Alfred P. Beaven, in British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=67241&strquery=brewer> (accessed 21 December 2013).

⁹⁸ House of Commons Journal Volume 5: 25 September 1647, *Journal of the House of Commons: volume 5: 1646-1648*, in British History Online, [http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=25184&strquery=John Bide alderman](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=25184&strquery=John+Bide+alderman) (accessed 31 January 2014).

⁹⁹ Samuel Rawson Gardiner, *History of the Great Civil War, 1642-1649*, Volume III (London: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1901), 369-370.

community, and a country, that was becoming more and more subservient to the wishes of the Army, he was not alone.

The company as a whole began to turn away from being identified with support for Parliament, by now the remnant known as the Rump, and the Army. Three brewers were elected as aldermen in 1651—Robert Jaques, John de Greate, and Leonard Hammond. Each served a very short term of office. Jacques served for six days, Greate for eight, and Hammond for only three.¹⁰⁰ Each of the three were also elected as the master of the Brewers' Company between 1641 and 1652. Greate was master in 1641-42, Hammond in 1647-1648, and Jaques in 1652-53. All had also signed the petition asking for the repeal of the excise in 1647. Additionally, it was Greate who was ordered to be arrested by the House for his refusal to pay in the next year. Both Jaques and Greate refused their election as aldermen and paid individual fines of £800 to avoid having to serve.¹⁰¹ The reluctance of these individuals to serve is indicative of the company as a whole as no other brewer was to be elected until the very end of Cromwell's protectorate in late 1657. Even in that case the brewer in question, Edward Lawrence, left the position quite quickly as his term in office lasted scarcely more than two months. Additionally, within the company itself, there was a distinct turn away from candidates who could be associated with Parliament and the Army towards men like Samuel Sternell (Starnell),

¹⁰⁰ Chronological list of aldermen: 1651-1700, *The Aldermen of the City of London: Temp. Henry III - 1912*, Alfred P. Beaven, in British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=67242&strquery=brewer> (accessed 21 December 2013).

¹⁰¹ Aldermen of the City of London: Billingsgate ward, *The Aldermen of the City of London: Temp. Henry III - 1912*, Alfred P. Beaven, in British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=67192&strquery=Jaques> (accessed 31 January 2014). Aldermen of the City of London: Castle Baynard ward, *The Aldermen of the City of London: Temp. Henry III - 1912*, Alfred P. Beaven, in British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=67199&strquery=De Greate> (accessed 31 January 2014).

who would later be knighted, under his recently inherited surname of Starling, by Charles II. Starling would eventually become Lord Mayor and be best known for his persecution of Dissenters during Charles II's reign. During the high tide of the company's support for Parliament in the 1640s he had kept his head low. However, he rose to prominence in the company when he was elected as the master of the company in 1655.¹⁰² The election of a crypto-Royalist and high-Church Anglican, who would welcome Charles II back in 1660 with open arms, indicates just how far the company had swung away from its stance in 1642. The Brewers' strong support for Parliament had evaporated by the Restoration in 1660 and the company was to be known far more as a buttress of the King and Anglican Church in the coming years.

Status Quo: The Continuance of the Excise following the Restoration

When Charles II returned from exile abroad in 1660 many expected that he would undo the most egregious policies of the regimes of the Commonwealth and Protectorate. At the top of the list for many was the excise taxation introduced by Parliament during the crisis of the Civil War. Those individuals were to be sorely disappointed. Instead, the negotiations between Charles II and Parliament were to hinge upon excise taxation as a necessary part of the King's revenue. The *Act abolishing Feudal Tenures and Imposing Hereditary Excise* of 1660 was to grant Charles II largely the same excise taxes that were collected by the previous regime in return for his giving up of feudal dues.¹⁰³ Although the duty on beer was reduced from 2s. to 1s. 3p. in the Act, so too was the threshold

¹⁰² Ball, *The Worshipful Company of Brewers*, 128.

¹⁰³ 12 Ch II, c 24.

between strong and small beer lowered with 6s. a barrel, as opposed to 8s., being the price cutoff between the two.¹⁰⁴ The tax on small beer was also cut in half from 6s. to 3s. Nevertheless, apart from the abandonment of taxation on beer produced in the home, and some minor changes in the duty rates, little changed for the common brewers in terms of taxation. The *Act abolishing Feudal Tenures and Imposing Hereditary Excise* not only enshrined excise taxation as a permanent feature of British finance, but also helped to create, in London at least, attempts to form a more professionalized tax collecting force.

The deck was stacked against the excise officers tasked with collecting the revenues of the excise on beer and ale in London throughout the seventeenth century. Unlike in the later eighteenth century, when large firms dominated the market and excise officers could easily gauge the day-to-day production of a firm in a matter of just a few minutes, the excise officers of the seventeenth century were run ragged by having to visit the over 200 common brewers of the City of London.¹⁰⁵ The author of *Considerations touching his Majesties revenue of excise*, which was probably published in 1663, describes just how difficult the task of an excise official could be in London in the 1660s. “For it is to be considered, First that the Gager makes not his calculation from one single view or taking of the Inches of the Drink, but (by reason of the manifold Tricks and Device which Brewers have to deceive him, both in quantity and quality of the Drink) is compelled to come several times; and to take several Gages of the Drink in one and the

¹⁰⁴ David Charles Douglas and Andrew Browning (eds.), *English Historical Documents, 1660-1714* (London: Routledge, 1996), 300-306.

¹⁰⁵ Mathias, *The Brewing Industry in England*, 340-355. For the number of Common Brewers see: *Considerations touching his Majesties revenue of excise; humbly proposed and submitted to the right honourable the House of Peers*, [n.p.], [1663?], 11.

same Vessels during one and the same Brewing.”¹⁰⁶ The author takes the viewpoint that the task of an excise official was nearly impossible to accomplish due to the ability of brewers to hide or dilute their batches while the excise official was not present. It is further argued that the penalties against brewers for concealing batches are simply insufficient as excise officers had been able to discover “no less than one hundred and more” secret brewhouses and storehouses in and about London to which brewers would “convey their Worts and Drinks to be perfectly wrought, by secret Pipes, Pumps, and Conveyances.”¹⁰⁷

Legislation from Charles II’s government makes clear that while the number of over 100 secret brewhouses might be an exaggeration, the possibility of deceiving the government by hiding brewing facilities was taken seriously. The very first paragraph of the statute of 1663 regulating the excise bans both the usage of new tuns, vats, and coppers without informing the local excise officer and the concealment of those vessels. The punishment for the breaking of that statute was a fine of £50 and the forfeiture of all the ale or beer in the vessels which was to be “delivered to the Overseers for the Poore to be sold for the use of the Poore or distributed amongst them.”¹⁰⁸ To no small degree it was poor enforcement, and the ability of brewers to find easy ways to skirt the law, that explains the lackluster revenue that was obtained from the excise during Charles II’s early reign. Admittedly this problem was a national one as the collection of excise taxes was farmed well into the 1680s and there was “a strong undercurrent of local

¹⁰⁶ *Considerations touching his Majesties revenue of excise*, 11.

¹⁰⁷ *Considerations touching his Majesties revenue of excise*, 2.

¹⁰⁸ 15 Ch. II, c. 11.

opposition.”¹⁰⁹ The farming of excise taxes was discontinued in 1683 in favor of a permanent force of excise officers, who were supposed to meet a set standard for education and be paid a salary commensurate with their experience. Nevertheless these changes took time to implement and following the revolution of 1688-89 political infighting and factionalism marked the excise branch.¹¹⁰ It would not be until after the repercussions of the revolution had been sorted out and peace restored that the true beginnings of the efficient excise service of the eighteenth century could be seen.

Calamity and Catastrophe: The Fires of the Restoration

The catastrophe of the Great Fire of London in 1666 was not only a defining moment for London, but also for the Brewers' Company. The Fire destroyed much of central London including the Brewers' Hall located on Addle Street. The reconstruction of the hall is demonstrative of several features of the company in the late seventeenth century. First, the reconstruction of Brewers' Hall was a great financial struggle for the Brewers. The hall was constructed between 1670 and 1673 by Captain John Caine, who was a master bricklayer and was employed simultaneously on several other projects, including the construction of the Tallow Chandlers' Hall, at the time he was building Brewers' Hall.¹¹¹ Caine contracted with the Brewers to construct the hall for a price of £3,300 with £300 paid at the signing of the contract and the rest to be paid upon its

¹⁰⁹ Clark, *The English Alehouse*, 185.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Gordon Phillips, *Seven Centuries of Light: The Tallow Chandlers Company* (Cambridge: Granta Editions, 1999), 19.

completion.¹¹² The company envisioned raising this money from a subscription taken amongst its members, which was conducted between December 1669 and January 1674. The Brewers recommended that each member of the company give £5 to the subscription; however, even with some individual members giving between £100 and £150, the total collected from the members fell far short of the amount needed. Only £2,437 16s. 8p. was collected via the subscription, which was over £800 short of the contracted amount.¹¹³

To overcome that shortfall was to be no small feat, but it was exacerbated by the additional work that the Brewers contracted with Caine during the course of the build. In addition to the hall, the Brewers undertook to build a substantial gate and clerk's house adjacent to the hall, which cost a further £660. When that was combined with a significant bill for joinery work within the hall and normal overruns in materials and labor costs, the ultimate bill for construction was £5,296 10s. 10p.¹¹⁴ To cover those costs the Brewers were forced to turn to borrowing throughout the years of construction, which saddled the company with debts of more than £2,000. By October 1673, the company had raised £5,727 16s. 8p. through the subscription, borrowing, the pawning of the company's plate and pictures saved from the Fire, and more creative means like trading the fines due to the company from a Mr. Mason for the leases on two properties that

¹¹² GL, MS 5502, "The Agreement made with Captain Cane for building Brewers Hall."

¹¹³ GL, MS 5502, "The Account of Receipts and Payments relating to the Account of building the Hall, and other buildings contiguous thereto from the 24th of December 1669 to the 9th of January 1673."

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

amounted to £120.¹¹⁵ The valuable plate and pictures were supposed to be redeemed when the hall was completed; however, the financial straits of the company did not allow for their redemption upon the hall's completion.¹¹⁶ The amount collected was barely enough to cover the costs of construction through October 1673, with the company having a total of £54 2p. to carry over to pay for the finishing of construction in early 1574. Toward the end of construction, the company was forced to borrow a further £100 from one of its members, James Hickson, just to cover the final costs of construction.

Upon completion, the company accounts record that the Brewers finished the hall by the skin of their teeth with only £1 19s. 2p. left in the fund. Captain Caine was admitted as a member of the company for his diligence in the building of the hall; however, one suspects that his freedom was also a reward for completing the hall for less than what was actually due to him, as he settled for £60 on a debt of £70 at the end of construction to allow the construction account to finish in the black.¹¹⁷ Still, the company could consider itself fortunate as many of the smaller livery companies were not able to rebuild and had to resort to renting space in the halls of other companies. Yet, the company had placed itself deeply into debt to complete the hall, which forced it into money-making schemes to try to recoup some of the investment into the hall. By the 1690s the company was renting the hall for various purposes including hiring it out as a place of worship to a Paul Chaille and a Hector Vattomar, who were possibly Huguenot

¹¹⁵ GL, MS 5502, "The Accompt of Receipts and Payments relating to the Accompt of building the Hall, and other buildings contiguous thereto from the 24th of December 1669 to the 9th of January 1673."

¹¹⁶ Ball, *The Worshipful Company of Brewers*, 82.

¹¹⁷ GL MS 5502, "The Accompt of Receipts and Payments relating to the Accompt of building the Hall, and other buildings contiguous thereto from the 24th of December 1669 to the 9th of January 1673."

refugees.¹¹⁸ Even with those schemes it would be years before the company would once again be on a firm financial footing.

The fortunes of the company paralleled the fortunes of the company hall to a large degree in the late seventeenth century. The role of the Brewers expanded greatly in the late sixteenth century as their star was in the ascendant. They not only regulated the training of apprentices and maintained the quality standards of members, but also nominally had a monopoly on producing beer for the metropolis. Yet, with the introduction of the excise tax much of their role in maintaining quality standards within the city was made redundant. Instead of the Brewers calling individuals into the Brewers' court to enforce the standards agreed upon between the company and the City, as they had done in sixteenth century, it was instead the excise officers who increasingly had the legal responsibility to fine brewers who did not meet quality standards or did not pay the proper fees to the excise. With much of its function falling by the wayside, the company faced a crisis in the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries over its role within the city.

A Company Divided

Following the Restoration there was a positive flood of brewers serving as sheriffs, aldermen, and even as Lord Mayor for the City of London. During the decade of 1660 to 1670 no fewer than thirteen brewers were elected as aldermen for the city. Some did not serve, but among those who did serve in the 1660s and 1670s were major brewers like Sir Samuel Starling, Sir William Greene, James Hickson, Sir William Bucknell, Philip Jemmott, William Dashwood, and the brothers Dannet and John Forth. That list

¹¹⁸ GL MS 5504, "Articles of Agreement... Betweene the Master and keepers or Wardens and Cominalitie of the Mystery of Brewers of the City of London (and)... Paul Chaille."

corresponds very strongly with those who gave the most to the rebuilding of the Brewers' Hall with each, apart from Sir Samuel Starling, giving £40 or more. Starling did not contribute to the general rebuilding fund, but did pay £355 for the wainscoting in the courtroom.¹¹⁹ Politically what united most of the leadership of the company was their support for the King and, to a lesser extent, the Church. This can be seen in the rising political fortunes of those who were chosen to serve as wardens of company and as aldermen for the City. Underneath that leadership, who enjoyed the benefits of wealth and connections at the Court and in the City, there were many brewers who did not enjoy such associations. Many of them had contributed what they could to the rebuilding of the Brewers' Hall and most still managed their own breweries, quite unlike the elite of the company. Also quite unlike their leaders, most of these men chose to avoid politics during the high tide of Tory fervor in the 1660s and 1670s and, by doing so, left the company in the hands of dedicated Tories.

Although the leadership of the Brewers' Company was not entirely Tory and Anglican during the reign of Charles II, it was predominantly so. Three brewers contributed to the 1670 London Dissenting subscription: Philip Jemmott, Daniel Forth, and John Forth. Each of those three men were nonconformists; however, their dedication to the politicization of Dissenting causes largely ended with their contribution. John Forth was the son-in-law of the republican statesman and revolutionary, Sir Henry Vane, giving him a nonconformist pedigree few could match. Forth, while appearing to be a committed nonconformist in his personal life, however, did little to promote religious causes and

¹¹⁹ GL MS 5502, "The Accompt of Receipts and Payments relating to the Accompt of building the Hall, and other buildings contiguous thereto from the 24th of December 1669 to the 9th of January 1673."

politically, with his brother, was a backer of the King. John Forth, Dannet Forth, and Philip Jemmott each became farmers of excise revenues to the King in the 1660s and 1670s. They, along with partners like fellow brewers Sir William Bucknell and William Dashwood, purchased large excise farms in Kent, Essex, Norfolk, Suffolk, and Buckinghamshire from the King.¹²⁰ These farms were lucrative to the purchaser; however, the fact that some of the most important brewers in the land were tasked with extracting revenue from the excise might also help to explain the lackluster revenues from the branch during the time. The Forths, Bucknell, Dashwood, and Jemmott were also farmers for the King's revenues from Ireland from 1669 to 1675.¹²¹

What is consistent about the leading nonconformists in the Brewers' Company was their willingness to work with the King and to not rock the boat on religious matters. Both the Forths remained openly nonconformist throughout their lives. Yet, a contemporary description of John Forth demonstrates what was perhaps more important, with Forth being described in this manner "it is concluded by very many that his loyaltie consists much in his excise farmes, and the profit he makes by them."¹²² The Forths' and Jemmott's religious convictions were a private concern and making those concerns public in the company or the larger community did not serve their purpose. The same cannot be

¹²⁰ Entry Book: Miscellaneous, 1672, *Calendar of Treasury Books, Volume 3: 1669-1672*, William A. Shaw (editor), in British History Online, [http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=79772&strquery=Dannet Forth](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=79772&strquery=Dannet+Forth) (accessed 03 February 2014).

¹²¹ Notes on the aldermen, 1502-1700, *The Aldermen of the City of London: Temp. Henry III - 1912*, Alfred P. Beaven, in British History Online, [http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=67247&strquery=Dannet Forth](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=67247&strquery=Dannet+Forth) (accessed 03 February 2014).

¹²² *Ibid.*

said of some of the other leading members of the Brewers' Company, who would come to be some of the most prominent proponents of Tory ideals in Restoration London.

The Brewers' Company had come a long way from the days when a religious radical like Roger Quartermaine could find acceptance within the company. By the early 1660s the company was increasingly associated with what were to become the tenets of Tory political belief. This perhaps began with the election of the future Sir Samuel Starling as warden of the company in 1655. Starling was selected as a Commissioner of Militia for Tower Hamlets in the Militia Act of 1659 and was to be the first master of the company elected following the return of the King.¹²³ His star continued in the ascendant until he was eventually elected Lord Mayor in 1670. As Lord Mayor he was best known for his authorization of the persecution of Quakers under the Conventicle Act. In 1670, he was instrumental in the arrest of William Penn and William Meade and presided as judge at their trial. When the jury returned a verdict not to the liking of the mayor, Starling ordered that they should be imprisoned without food, water, or heat until they brought back a verdict that would convict Penn and Meade. Following two days of this treatment, the jury was still deadlocked and refused to convict Penn and Meade for unlawful assembly. Starling ordered that the jury should be fined and held in prison for contempt of court. This verdict was eventually to be overturned in the Court of Common Pleas in what came to be known as Bushel's Case, which made the point that Starling had acted improperly by imprisoning the jury simply for returning a verdict contrary to his view.

¹²³ March, 1659/60: An Act for Setling the Militia within England and Wales., *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, 1642-1660*, C.H. Firth, R.S. Rait (eds), in British History Online, [http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=56664&strquery=Samuel Starnell](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=56664&strquery=Samuel+Starnell) (accessed 03 February 2014).

Starling died in 1674, not long after his term as mayor had ended. Nevertheless, he was not alone in his support for the causes of the Court and the Church. William Dashwood was the cousin of Sir Samuel Dashwood, who was one of the most prominent civic Tories operating in London during the 1670s and 1680s. Samuel Dashwood served as an alderman, was heavily involved in the governance of Tory companies like the Royal African Company, and served as a Tory sheriff for London immediately after the contested shrieval elections of 1681-1683.¹²⁴ William Dashwood, although not as politically prominent as his cousin, was part of his circle and was also an investor in the Royal African Company and the excise farms.¹²⁵ Sir William Bucknell, one of the excise farmers associated with Dashwood, was a man of substantial means with lands in Yorkshire, Cambridgeshire, and Hertfordshire. In addition to his successful brewing business and excise farms he also owned a waterworks and was an investor in shipping. His wealth was assessed at £113,000 upon his death, which gave him the financial wherewithal to personally loan the King the sum of £100,000.¹²⁶

Perhaps the most emblematic case of how Tory the Brewers' leadership had become by the 1670s is the case of Philip Jemmott. Jemmott was one of the leading nonconformists in the company, but when it came to the marriage of his daughter he allowed her to marry a fellow brewer and alderman, Sir James Raymond, who was a

¹²⁴ Gary S. De Krey, *London and the Restoration, 1659-1683* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 319-323.

¹²⁵ Dakins - Dyer, *The Rulers of London 1660-1689: A biographical record of the Aldermen and Common Councilmen of the City of London*, J.R. Woodhead, in British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=31880> (accessed 21 December 2013).

¹²⁶ Backwell - Byfield, *The Rulers of London 1660-1689: A biographical record of the Aldermen and Common Councilmen of the City of London*, J.R. Woodhead, in British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=31878> (accessed 21 December 2013).

High Tory and an Anglican. Through this marriage Raymond obtained a “great estate”.

Although Raymond was known as a “very weak, silly man” he was a reliable High Tory who served as warden of the company and as Sheriff of London in 1679-1680, as alderman from 1681 to 1696, and as a Member of Parliament from 1690 to 1695.¹²⁷

Raymond’s service as warden and sheriff came during a heated political climate centered on London’s highly-contested shrieval and mayoral elections between 1679 and 1682. Raymond and the leadership of the Brewers’ company was reliably Tory; however, London’s contested elections demonstrated that the Brewers, along with most of the livery companies, were divided. In 1682 a poll of the membership of the livery companies on the election for Lord Mayor revealed that the Tory candidate, Sir William Pritchard, polled the largest number of brewers—29. However, the two Whig candidates, Henry Cornish and Sir Thomas Gold, polled 24 brewers each.¹²⁸ The even division between the Whig candidates, and the larger number of votes for the Tory candidate, has caused Gary De Krey to characterize the Brewers’ Company as predominantly Tory in 1682.¹²⁹ This characterization is certainly true for the leadership of the company and reflects the hold that Tories had on the company at that time. However, the strong showing for the Whig candidates also demonstrates that while the company was currently under the sway of the Tories; that support, just like London’s as a whole, was changeable.

¹²⁷ Railey - Ryves, *The Rulers of London 1660-1689: A biographical record of the Aldermen and Common Councilmen of the City of London*, J.R. Woodhead, in British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=31893> (accessed 21 December 2013).

¹²⁸ *A List of the Poll of the Several Companies of London for a Lord Mayor for the Year ensuing* (London: 1682).

¹²⁹ De Krey, *London and the Restoration*, 326.

Raymond's service as alderman coincided with the purging of London's aldermen by Charles II during the tense years of struggle between the King and the City.

Raymond's support, and the company's, could be counted on by the King. Raymond was one of the 17 aldermen who were hand-picked by Charles II to remain following the forfeit of the City's charter in 1683.¹³⁰ Shortly thereafter the Brewers were forced to surrender their charter to the King and received a modified form that gave the Crown the ability to interfere with the election of officers within the company.¹³¹ Even with the ability to pick and choose the officers of the company, the King did not interfere to any large degree. Unlike many of the major livery companies, the Brewers were among the least purged by Charles II and James II between 1684 and 1687.¹³² The charter of 1684 was to be superseded by the last charter issued to the company by James II in March 1685.¹³³ Although this charter retained many of the same powers that Charles II had inserted into the surrendered charter of 1684, its main importance was that it was to be the last charter that the company was to receive. That fact is indicative of two features of the future company. The first was that although the King could nominally interfere with the elections of the company that provision quickly fell into disuse. Secondly, although this charter was far from perfect it was not felt worthwhile to attempt to receive a new charter, but instead to make-do with a charter that was far from ideal.

¹³⁰ Chronological list of aldermen: 1651-1700, *The Aldermen of the City of London: Temp. Henry III - 1912*, Alfred P. Beaven, in British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=67242> (accessed 22 December 2013).

¹³¹ GL, MS 5431.

¹³² De Krey, *London and the Restoration*, 330.

¹³³ GL, MS 5432.

By the time of the revolution of 1688-89 long-standing problems within the Brewers' Company were coming to a head. The company had been transformed through the calamities of the Civil War and the Fire and shaped by the introduction of excise taxation. These external factors exacerbated existing problems within the company between those who owned breweries and those who worked in or managed them. That social problem was not created in the seventeenth century, but it was the shaping of the practice of brewing in London during that century that created an industrialized brewing trade in the eighteenth to twentieth centuries. Whereas a brewer of the sixteenth century was likely to have been brought up and trained within the craft in order to manage their own brewery, in the seventeenth century in many cases owners of breweries were non-members of the company who had bought into the trade. It is true that such cases were not unique to the seventeenth century as many non-brewers bought into the trade in the sixteenth century; however, in nearly all those cases those who did so became members of the company. By the mid-seventeenth century men like Sir Isaac Pennington and the Duppas were amongst the largest brewers in London, yet had no connection to the company that should have governed their actions.

An additional blow came with the introduction of the excise in 1643 as many of the functions of the Brewers' Company became redundant. The minutes of the company in the sixteenth century are voluminous in recording when brewers were brewing, what quantities they brewed, and what went wrong when brewers were called before the company court. After 1609 the company did not regularly keep track of which brewers were brewing and when. Furthermore, the number of brewers being called before the

court during the seventeenth century was far fewer than during the heyday of the sixteenth century.¹³⁴ The function of punishing those who were not meeting quality standards was within the purview of the company throughout the century, yet increasingly after 1643 it was the de facto role of excise commissioners to regulate those standards. That regulation through taxation was perhaps most important within the company as a divider between the “haves” and “have nots” within the profession. The wealthy brewers who were part of Tory political circles during the years following the Restoration were a signal of what was to come as the trade became more industrialized in the eighteenth century. They could easily afford the burden of excise taxation, while at the same time investing in other business ventures, their political careers, and improving their breweries. Most of their fellow brewers within the company could not do so. That division was to not only grow in the coming decades, but would grow ever more rapid with the coming of the revolution of 1688-89.

¹³⁴ GL, MS 5445/12 “Brewers’ Company Minute Book, 1603-1612”.

CHAPTER FIVE

“THE RUINED CONDITION OF THIS REVENUE ON BEER AND ALE”¹: THE EFFECTS OF THE EXCISE ON THE BREWING INDUSTRY IN LONDON, 1689-1750

On the night of June 29-30, 1688 Michael Arnold, former Member of Parliament for the City of Westminster and brewer to the King, found himself in an uncomfortable position. Since five o'clock in the afternoon he, and eleven other men, had been locked in St. Clement's Vestry to deliberate on the fate of seven bishops of the Anglican Church.² Arnold was part of the jury that was to decide whether or not the petition the seven bishops had sent to the King, protesting the King's dispensatory power to grant toleration to Roman Catholics and Protestant nonconformists, was libelous. While the jury deliberated on the petition of the bishops they were kept without food or water, which led them, after almost twelve hours of close confinement, to drink the water provided for them to wash their hands. Although Arnold was among three jurors holding out against the majority around midnight, by the early morning he was the only juror willing to define the petition as libelous.³ His intransigence in refusing to acquit the bishops has

¹ BL, Lansdowne MS 829-6 Fo. 108, “An account of the losse in the excise on beer and ale for severall yeares last paste, with meanes proposed for advanceing that revenue.”

² Basil Duke Henning, *The House of Commons, 1660-1690*, Volume I (London: Secker and Warburg, 1983), 547. Scott Sowerby, *Making Toleration: The Repealers and the Glorious Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), 190.

³ Sowerby, *Making Toleration*, 190-191.

been characterized as being personally motivated. During the deliberations he was reported to have said “Whatever I do, I am sure to be half ruined. If I say not guilty, I shall brew no more for the King, and if I say guilty, I shall brew no more for anybody else.”⁴ Eventually, near six o’clock in the morning Arnold gave in and agreed with the rest of the jury. The bishops were freed and the wheels had been set in motion for a revolution.

This is the traditional, Whig view of Michael Arnold. He was a Tory who was out to protect his own financial best interests, and while that is almost certainly partially true, he was also emblematic of the predicament James II had placed virtually all Tories in through his Declaration of Indulgence. Although little is known of the background of most of the jurors, Arnold was a well-known Westminster brewer and was a stalwart Tory involved in local and national politics. He was uncomfortable during the deliberations precisely because his financial and religious interests were in conflict with his political interests. Tory beliefs, particularly in and around London, had been shaped over the course of the last decade by the protracted struggle between the Crown and the City over the King’s right to interfere in municipal politics. As a Tory, Arnold supported, or at the very least acquiesced in, the King’s ability to do so. While Charles II had largely cowed the Whig and Dissenting opposition in London by 1683 through the re-modeling of the leadership of London’s municipal and company governments, his triumph was a fragile one reliant upon a thin, fungible majority.⁵ Whether or not Charles II would have

⁴ Henning, *The House of Commons*, 547.

⁵ De Krey, *London and the Restoration*, 387-399.

been able to hold together that thin majority is unknown; however, his death in 1685 left it in the hands of James II, who certainly could not do so. His attempt to ally with Roman Catholics and Protestant nonconformists on opposite sides of the religious spectrum created just such a wedge issue for Tories.

That wedge can be easily seen in the composition of the jury, where the three holdouts were Arnold, William Avery, a Baptist from Middlesex, and William Withers, a Tory linen draper. These jurors were a “microcosm of the king’s supporters in 1688: a Tory whose watchword was loyalty, an officeholder eager to please his master, and a dissenter alienated from the Church of England.”⁶ Arnold’s statement about being caught between the King and his London customers is emblematic of his financial straits; however, it is also symbolic of his choice. He and his fellow Tories were caught between a rock and a hard place. He could swim against the current and remain loyal to a king that was giving up on a majority, however fragile, or he could abandon his support for the Crown and take silent solace in his support for the Anglican Church. That is precisely what Arnold, and the majority of Tories, chose to do.⁷ In their, passive or active, deed they had become acceptors of the revolution of 1688-89. With the coming of that revolution the brewing industry would again be altered to its core.

⁶ Sowerby, *Making Toleration*, 191.

⁷ Arnold would die shortly after the revolution in 1690. His brewery was passed on to his son, another Michael Arnold. It appears, however, that the brewery struggled financially as the junior Michael Arnold was forced to recover debts owed to his father from the reign of James II from William III’s government. See: Henning, *The House of Commons, 1660-1690*, Volume I, 547.

The Revolution of 1688-89 and the Expansion of the Excise

The revolution of 1688-89 transformed many aspects of England: from its relationship with the rest of Europe, to its political institutions, to its religious settlement, to its economy. All saw tremendous change. The revolution also brought England into the first of a series of expensive wars. Much like the Parliamentarians of the English Civil War, the politicians of William III's reign were forced to experiment with ways to fund the ever-spiraling cost of war. Out of this experimentation, great financial instruments, such as the creation of the Bank of England in 1694 which helped to create a permanent national debt, were forged, and England would eventually experience a financial revolution.⁸ Borrowing gave financial flexibility to the English government; however, that borrowing eventually had to be repaid. There was no safer or surer source of revenue in England for that task than the excise taxes associated with beer.

The excise on beer had been a staple of government revenues since its introduction in 1643. Beer's ubiquitous nature and the steady revenues that came year-in and year-out meant that before the revolution few gave a second thought to this vast resource. It was expected to be just as steady as it ever was. From 1689, however, a very real fear that the excise revenue might be undermined would materialize. With that fear came tremendous pressure within the government to ensure that the excise revenues were maximized. Unfortunately, that fear led to a crippling period of indecision and infighting that would only exacerbate the problem before it got better.

⁸ P.G.M. Dickson, *The Financial Revolution in England: A Study in the Development of Public Credit, 1688-1756* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1967).

The greatest period of this fear was felt in the 1690s during the Nine Years' War. Data on the excise revenue for fifteen years from midsummer 1684 to midsummer 1699 bears out that there was a real issue with the number of barrels being taxed. The first trend that can be seen in the data is in the relationship between the number of barrels of small beer in comparison to the number of barrels of strong beer. From the beginning of the data in midsummer 1684 the trend was for the percentage of small beer to grow in relation to strong beer (See Table 1). From a low in 31% in midsummer 1684, the percentage grows steadily every year to a high in midsummer 1694 of 41%.⁹ The data also shows that the total number of barrels of beer rose from midsummer 1683, when the data begins, to midsummer 1690, when the taxation on both strong and small beer increased from 2s. 6p. to 3s. 3p. per barrel for strong beer and from 6p. to 9p. per barrel for small beer. By contrast, from 1690 the trend is for the total number of barrels of both kinds to fall. There were some small exceptions to this rule with a slight rise at midsummer 1694, which corresponded to a drop in the tax on both strong and small beer, and midsummer 1696, when the excise branch was blessed with a brief period of stability. Still, in just the space of a decade from midsummer 1689, when the high of 7,839,035 barrels of strong and small beer were taxed, to midsummer 1699, when a low of 4,894,274 barrels were taxed, the amount of beer assessed by the excised dropped nearly 38%.¹⁰

⁹ BL, Lansdowne MS 1215/108, "Grosse Quantities of Strong Beer and Ale and Small Beer in 15 years Ended 24th June 1698 with the Duty of Excise Ariseing from thence: Dec. 20, 1699."

¹⁰ Ibid.

The overwhelming reason for the drop in measured consumption was the increased taxation that was placed upon both strong and small beer throughout the 1690s. Excise revenues were increased by raising the rate on both strong and small beer several times throughout the decade as can be seen in Table 1. As the rates of strong and small beer were raised, consumption began to fall, seeing a sharp decline of nearly 1.4 million barrels in just the two year period between midsummer 1689 to midsummer 1691. Consumers increasingly shifted their buying preference from the more heavily taxed strong beer to the relatively lightly taxed small beer. That shift resulted in a major problem for the government and the excise officers in the mid-1690s. By 1693 they realized that while revenues continued to climb to midsummer of 1692 and hit a high of £1,178,456 12s. 9p. in that year, total consumption was falling. Furthermore, the drinking of small beer, which always produced far less revenue than strong beer, was on the rise. That change resulted in the government adjusting the tax rates on beer downwards in 1692-1693 in hopes of maintaining the consumption level. Yet, by that point brewers were already adjusting their brewing practices to avoid as much taxation as they possibly could. Those adjustments were to have profound effects for the industry, consumers, and the officers of the excise.

The revolution of 1688-89 brought many Tories into collusion with Whigs to facilitate the removal of James II and the accession of William III. The revolution had made strange political bedfellows. The issues that had created a fragile alliance between the Whigs and Tories in 1688-89 would also come to drive them apart. William III's uneasiness towards ruling with a dominant party led to a series of ministries alternately

Table 1. Lansdowne MS 1215/108: “Grosse Quantities of Strong Beer and Ale and Small Beer in 15 years Ended 24th June 1698 with the Duty of Excise Ariseing from thence”

Year	Strong Beer and Ale (Barrels)	Small Beer (Barrels)	Total Number of Barrels Taxed	Percentage of Small	Money raised on Strong Beer & Ale	Money raised on Small Beer	Total Money Raised on both
Year Ended 24th June 1684	4384093	1933924	6318017	31	£524286 7s. 6p.	£44711 4s. 0p.	£568997 11s. 6p.
Year Ended 24th June 1685	4654564	2102021	6756585	31	£557982 17s. 6p.	£48760 17s. 6p.	£606743 15s. 0p.
Year Ended 24th June 1686	4780097	2255062	7035159	32	£573884 2s. 6p.	£52561 19s. 0p.	£626446 1s. 6p.
Year Ended 24th June 1687	5044311	2435169	7479480	33	£606227 10s. 0p.	£57046 8s. 0p.	£663273 18s. 0p.
Year Ended 24th June 1688	4989000	2543856	7532856	34	£599505 7s. 6p.	£59751 4s. 0p.	£659256 11s. 6p.
Year Ended 24th June 1689	5134309	2704726	7839035	35	£616870 2s. 6p.	£63464 3s. 0p.	£680334 5s. 6p.
Year Ended 24th June 1690	4690711	2645656	7336367	36	£711331 2s. 3p.	£88697 7s. 3p.	£800028 9s. 6p.
Year Ended 24th June 1691	4069544	2374731	6444275	37	£958789 6s. 3p.	£129330 2s. 3p.	£1088119 8s. 6p.
Year Ended 24th June 1692	3796805	2378642	6175447	39	£1178456 12s. 9p.	£165295 19s. 0p.	£1343752 11s. 9p.
Year Ended 24th June 1693	3529498	2385996	5915494	40	£898433 14s. 7.5p.	£143924 11s. 0p.	£1042358 5s. 7.5p.
Year Ended 24th June 1694	3505470	2466323	5971793	41	£794342 0s. 6p.	£142967 16s. 3p.	£937309 16s. 9p.
Year Ended 24th June 1695	3344377	2212326	5556703	40	£758809 4s. 8.25p.	£128785 2s. 6p.	£887594 7s. 2.25p.
Year Ended 24th June 1696	3680478	2388703	6069181	39	£834879 3s. 6.75p.	£139287 11s. 6.75p.	£974166 15s. 1.5p.
Year Ended 24th June 1697	3258056	2162286.5	5420342.5	40	£736458 14s. 0.75p.	£125565 15s. 11.25p.	£862024 10s. 0p.
Year Ended 24th June 1698	3097225.25	2006678.25	5103903.5	39	£699348 5s. 4.5p.	£116467 17s. 6p.	£815816 2s. 10.5p.
Year Ended 24th June 1699	2973464	1920810	4894274	39	(£706197 14s. 0p.)	(£120050 12s. 3p.)	(£826248 6s. 3p.)

headed by Whigs or Tories throughout his reign.¹¹ William hoped to remain independent and not beholden to any one faction; however, these alternations also led to political infighting between the parties, which spilled over into excise branch. As the Whigs' star rose in 1693-1694 political infighting and bickering became more heated within the branch. It was rent by infighting between the two parties to such a degree that in the space of one year, from June 1694 to June 1695, no fewer than "121 excise officers—about ten percent of the total establishment—were discharged for political reasons."¹² At a time when every penny needed to be maximized from the excise, the branch was practically paralyzed by inaction.

From Charles II's restoration in 1660 to 1683 the excise had been farmed out to investors willing to pay the government a set fee for the right to collect it from a county or municipality. The farming of the excise tended to be inefficient and ineffective. The commissioners chosen to head the excise in 1683 were, however, not unfamiliar men. Most were former excise farmers, such as Sir Samuel Dashwood, the cousin of the London brewer William Dashwood and fellow investor in the excise farms. The commission, which, along with other revenue sources, came under the control of the Treasury Board, was more efficient than the tax farms. Yet, even with direct taxation managed by paid officials who were supposed to meet a set qualification of education, the Treasury was still reliant upon officials known as cashiers. These monied men were

¹¹ Henry Horwitz, *Parliament, Policy, and Politics in the Reign of William III* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1977). J.P. Kenyon, *Revolution Principles: The Politics of Party 1689-1720* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990). Steven Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009). Jonathan Scott, *England's Troubles: Seventeenth-Century English Political Instability in European Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

¹² John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money and the English State, 1688-1783* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), 74.

appointed by the Crown and made loans to the excise and customs branches, which smoothed the uneven flow of revenues from their collection to their ultimate arrival in the Treasury's coffers. Along that winding course, which could take months or even years, there were many opportunities for speculation. Charles Duncombe served in the post of cashier for the excise from 1680 to 1697 and profited handsomely from it. Although he was brought to trial and acquitted for falsely endorsing Exchequer bills in 1699, which helped to end his time at the excise, he died one of England's wealthiest men.¹³

The revolution of 1688-89 overturned the leadership of the excise branch. Of the seven commissioners of excise in office in February 1688 only two were to survive the purge that came following the revolution in April 1689—Francis Parry and John Wilcox.¹⁴ Six months later in October 1689 both Parry and Wilcox had been removed and only two of the seven excise commissioners from April remained.¹⁵ Most of the commissioners were removed for political reasons. In particular arch-Tories like Charles Davenant and Sir John Friend, who was to be executed as a Jacobite conspirator in 1696, were among those purged.¹⁶ When a remodeling of the department was again under consideration in June 1694, Sir John Somers, whose influence was rising as the Whigs ascended to power, recommended dismissal for virtually all of the commissioners. In particular he singled out Nathaniel Hornby and Thomas Aram, who “were such avowed

¹³ Brewer, *The Sinews of Power*, 93-94. T.B. Howell (ed.), *A Complete Collection of State Trials and Proceedings for High Treason and other Crimes and Misdemeanors from the Earliest Time to the Present Day*, Volume XIII (London: Longman, 1812), 1061-1106.

¹⁴ *The Court Register, and Statesman's Remembrancer* (London: 1782), 269.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Narcissus Luttrell, *A Brief Historical Relation of State Affairs from September 1678 to April 1714*, Volume 4 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 38-40.

Jacobites that there was nothing to be said for them”, and John Wilcox, Junior, who was “privately a partner in two brew-houses, which is directly against his oath, and tends greatly to the defrauding of the duty.”¹⁷ Somers was also not impressed with the efforts of Sir Samuel Dashwood, Sir Stephen Evance, or Sir John Foche. However, while they might “be left out of the commission without prejudice to the duty of Excise”, Somers hinted that this would be unwise as “Sir Samuel Dashwood is an alderman and Sir Stephen Evans and Sir John Foche are very considerable men in the city and very useful to you upon all occasions of loans.”¹⁸ Somers gave a list to the King of qualified replacements and counseled that it would be prudent to have an expert on the commission who could “give a satisfactory account in the House of Commons of what related to their proper business.”¹⁹ The man recommended by Somers to take up this expert position was his protégé Edward Clarke, who was a court Whig who sat for the Borough of Taunton from 1690 to 1710. Clarke was to be known as the martinet of the excise, becoming known as “Standard Clarke”, for his efforts as a commissioner and as an advisor for the Great Recoinage of 1696-1699.²⁰ Clarke was a polarizing figure and would be at the center of much of the department’s troubles in the coming years.

The pattern of poor management leading to purges within the department continued throughout most of the 1690s with commissioners leaving with alarming regularity. By 1694, however, not only was the leadership of the excise in disarray, so too

¹⁷ NA, SP 8/15 f. 58.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ “Clarke, Edward (1649x51–1710),” Mark Goldie in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/37290> (accessed March 21, 2014).

was the rank and file of the branch. In the year between June 1694 and June 1695 nearly one in ten of the officers in the department was removed, which amounted to more than a hundred officers being replaced in that twelve-month period alone.²¹ Although the removal of officers occurred across the country, the situation was most dire in London. At midsummer 1695 more than thirty officers employed in London quit en masse. In August a deputation from that group was called before the Lords of the Treasury to explain their actions. The deputation explained their complaints, which centered on “Mr. Everard (Thomas Everard), the general surveyor of London, who they said was absolutely unqualified for such a station; further that all vacancies in London were supplied with country officers, and they believed a thorough change was aimed at in the London Brewery, by bringing up country officers and sending the London officers to the country.”²² Everard was a stickler for efficiency, being a trained mathematician who had developed a slide rule to be used by the excise officers to aid their calculations, and an ally of Clarke. The former officers complained that he had ordered the members of the deputation to “keep office hours” from “6 a.m. to 8 or 9 p.m., ‘which makes them liable to commit many mistakes by writing ... when they are weary and sleepy.’”²³ The Lords’ recommendation to the excise commissioners on whether the officers should be re-employed was terse, stating that “my Lords think fitt to direct that none of ye said officers be hereafter imployed in ye Excise without particular direction of this Board.”²⁴

²¹ Brewer, *The Sinews of Power*, 66, 74.

²² Joseph Reddington (ed), *Calendar of Treasury Papers, 1556-7-1696* (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1868), 464.

²³ Edward Hughes, *Studies in Administration and Finance, 1558-1825* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1934), 187.

This crisis left the London brewery, the area of London within the Bills of Mortality surveyed by the officers resident in London, woefully understaffed. That understaffing goes a long way towards explaining the precipitous decline in revenues from the excise occurring in the years 1693-1694 and 1694-1695 as the revenue declined from £1,042,358 5s. 7.5p to £887,594 7s. 2.25p. in that span—a drop of more than 17%.

1695 marked a low point for the excise branch, but it was far from the end of its problems. Revenues were to rebound in 1695-1696 to above £900,000, but again fell to little more than £800,000 in the two years following. That drop was again associated with infighting within the branch. In July 1697, following the decline in revenues, William III ordered the Lords of the Treasury to examine the excise for mismanagement. On November 22 he called a meeting of the Privy Council to inquire into the report of the Lords. There was plenty of blame heaped upon all of the excise commissioners. The King concluded the meeting by stating that “The Commission must be altered.”²⁵ The Privy Council also agreed that the commissioners had to work in a unified manner, which was far from the case in mid-1697.

The commissioners in late 1697 failed to take the advice of the Privy Council. Instead, late 1697 and early 1698 mark the height of dysfunction among the leadership of the excise. There was a particular division between the commissioners who were brought onto to the commission as experts, specifically Edward Clarke and Thomas Everard, and those commissioners who had attained their positions through their influence in the City and at Court, such as Sir Stephen Evance. Politics played a role in this squabble;

²⁴ Hughes, *Studies in Administration and Finance*, 187

²⁵ *Ibid*, 185-187.

however, divisions between the two sides were also personal with mudslinging on both sides. Clarke, Everard, and John Danvers informed the King of the mismanagement of the excise in 1697 and blamed the failures of the branch on Evance and the other commissioners.²⁶ Evance and the other commissioners, Sir John Foche, Francis Parry, Foot Onslow, and Sir Philip Meadows, responded with accusations that Danvers and Everard were Jacobites.²⁷ In February 1698 Clark and Danvers ratcheted up the pressure on Evance by working with the Tory MP Sir Thomas Dyke, who persuaded a Thomas Webb to bring accusations of malfeasance on the part of Evance and the other commissioners. Furthermore, it was argued that Evance and some of the other commissioners had failed to take the oaths for their positions when they had assumed their duties.²⁸ Although Evance was able to survive the accusations, his service to the government was deemed to be expendable by early 1698. Clarke, Danvers, and Everard had defeated Evance, but their victory was a hollow one. Danvers would not be part of the new commissionerate in 1698 and the reputations of Clarke and Everard were blackened.

While the commissioners jockeyed to make sure that theirs was not one of the heads to fall on the chopping block, rumors swirled about the branch. In mid-September 1697 James Vernon wrote to the Duke of Shrewsbury stating that “If I could be thrust into a commission, I have heard more of vacancies like to be in the Excise than any

²⁶ D. Hayton, E. Cruickshanks, S. Handley (eds), “Evance, Stephen (c.1655-1712), of the ‘Black Boy’, Lombard Street, London” in *The History of Parliament: the House of Commons 1690-1715*, <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1690-1715/member/evance-stephen-1655-1712> (accessed March 13, 2014).

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

where else” and that he could accomplish more “than that fool Onslow.”²⁹ Foot Onslow had been brought in as a commissioner in August 1694 and had risen steadily in relation to his peers on the commission. He also served in Parliament as the Whig Member for Guildford from 1689 to 1700; however, his service was unremarkable and he confined himself primarily to financial matters.³⁰ During his service as a commissioner he had a particularly antagonistic relationship with Everard. Together they survived the purge of 1698, which removed four of the eight commissioners. Even then the two were irreconcilable and spent a good portion of their time engineering the other’s downfall. Everard’s downfall came in a further purge in mid-June 1699. The newly-minted commission was headed by Foot Onslow, he being the most senior of the commissioners and only one of two commissioners left standing from mid-1696, the other being Sir Philip Meadows.³¹ In the space of less than five years Onslow had risen from the lowliest of eight members on commission to its most senior member. He was a competent official, but not an imaginative or efficient one like Everard or Clarke. Nevertheless, he was a survivor. He had managed to straddle the divide within the leadership, keeping from being linked to Evance during his downfall. His competency in financial matters within Parliament and outside of it also made him a valuable civil servant, who did not have the

²⁹ James Vernon, *Letters Illustrative of the Reign of William III: From 1696 to 1708*, Volume I (London: Henry Colburn, 1841), 376.

³⁰ D. Hayton, E. Cruickshanks, S. Handley (eds), “Onslow, Foot (1655-1710), of London and the Friary, Guildford, Surr.” in *The History of Parliament: the House of Commons 1690-1715*, <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1690-1715/member/onslow-foot-1655-1710> (accessed March 13, 2014).

³¹ *The Court Register, and Statesman’s Remembrancer*, 269-270.

baggage of Evance, Clarke, or Everard.³² His ability to minimize his exposure to the issues within the department allowed for him to survive the purges of 1698 and 1699. Luckily for Onslow, change was on the horizon.

One of the most divisive issues within the excise branch was solved in mid-1700 and allowed Onslow to prosper as a commissioner. In early 1700 Robert Harley introduced an amendment to the Irish Forfeitures Bill, which would ban members of Parliament from serving both in Parliament and on the Board of Excise.³³ The amendment passed. No longer would men like Clarke and Onslow be able to sit in the House and also on the Board of Excise. Onslow, knowing his position as a commissioner was more valuable, decided to remain on the Board of Excise. The decision to ban members of Parliament from serving as commissioners helped to insulate the commissioners from the political rancor that was commonplace in the excise leadership in the 1690s.

Beginning with the accession of Queen Anne in 1702 the management of the excise branch also began to alter. Although politically motivated removals of individual excise officials did not entirely cease, the purges of the 1690s effectively ended. The two heads of the Treasury during Anne's reign, Sidney Godolphin and Robert Harley, valued stability and competence within the excise administration.³⁴ Onslow, for instance,

³² D. Hayton, E. Cruickshanks, S. Handley (eds), "Onslow, Foot (1655-1710), of London and the Friary, Guildford, Surr." in *The History of Parliament: the House of Commons 1690-1715*, <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1690-1715/member/onslow-foot-1655-1710> (accessed March 13, 2014).

³³ D. Hayton, E. Cruickshanks, S. Handley (eds), "Onslow, Foot (1655-1710), of London and the Friary, Guildford, Surr." in *The History of Parliament: the House of Commons 1690-1715*, <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1690-1715/member/onslow-foot-1655-1710> (accessed March 13, 2014)..

³⁴ Brewer, *The Sinews of Power*, 74.

continued in his post until his death in 1710. His fellow commissioners—William Strong, George Townshend, Philip Ryley, Sir Marmaduke Wyvill, and Edward Noell—were all in office by December 1703 and each served without interruption until 1712.³⁵ Neither did these men survive so long because they were apolitical. Townshend was a Whig who served during Tory administrations and Ryley and Wyvill were Tories, and in the case of Wyvill a High Tory, who served during Whig administrations.³⁶ Townshend, Ryley, Wyvill, and Noell all also continued in their posts after Anne's death and into the reign of George I. Townshend would eventually serve for more than a quarter of a century because of his expertise in handling the leather duty.³⁷ Such stability created an established leadership in the excise department; however, following the accession of George I political recriminations returned.

Between January 1715 and November 1717, 120 excise officers were dismissed for political reasons—most were accused of Jacobitism.³⁸ Fortunately for the excise it was now much more able to absorb this loss. There were approximately twice as many officers serving in 1715-1717 than there were twenty years earlier.³⁹ Furthermore, although there was a slight dip in the number of beer barrels excised in 1715-1717, that

³⁵ *The Court Register, and Statesman's Remembrancer*, 270.

³⁶ Hughes, *Studies in Administration and Finance*, 282. Brewer, *The Sinews of Power*, 76. D. Hayton, E. Cruickshanks, S. Handley (eds), "Wyvill, Sir Marmaduke, 5th Bt. (c.1666-1722), of Constable Burton, Yorks." in *The History of Parliament: the House of Commons 1690-1715*, <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1690-1715/member/wyvill-sir-marmaduke-1666-1722> (accessed March 13, 2014).

³⁷ Geoffrey Holmes, *Augustan England: Professions, State and Society, 1680-1730* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1982), 243.

³⁸ Brewer, *The Sinews of Power*, 74.

³⁹ Brewer, *The Sinews of Power*, Table 4.1 "Excise Establishment, 1690-1783", 104-105.

loss was quickly rectified in the years following.⁴⁰ Fortunately for the excise this was the last large scale purge of the branch. Similar accusations were made around the time of the Jacobite plot of 1723 and again in 1745; however, no similar dismissals were recorded.⁴¹ The painful lesson of allowing politics to poison the most important source of the country's revenue had been learned. Unfortunately, while the excise had been tearing itself apart during the "rage of party", brewers had begun to modify their practices to counteract the most onerous aspects of the excise. Their actions were to help lead to the creation of a new type of beer, the industrialization of the industry, and painful social changes in the community of London brewers.

An Imperfect Science: The Art of Gauging for the Excise

Since the inception of the national excise in 1643, brewers had always looked to circumvent it. Brewers had several tried and true methods of limiting their tax liability: concealment, bribery, and the mixing of beers after the excise had been assessed. The author of *Considerations touching his Majesties revenue of excise*, which was probably published in 1663, reflected the fears that an excise officer could be misled "by reason of the manifold Tricks and Device which Brewers have to deceive him, both in quantity and quality of the Drink."⁴² The issue of selling adulterated or weakened beer to avoid the excise was not limited to England either, as Richard Unger has demonstrated in his study on Dutch beer brewing. According to Unger some of the brewers of Amsterdam went to extraordinary lengths to defraud the government, resorting to passing off perfectly good

⁴⁰ Monckton, *A History of English Ale and Beer*, "Appendix D: United Kingdom Annual Production of Ale and Beer, 1684-1964", 220.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, 74-75.

⁴² *Considerations touching his Majesties revenue of excise*, 11.

beer as either *scharbier* (the Dutch equivalent of English small beer made from the last mashing that was tax free) or as beer gone sour. To put an end to the selling of good beer being sold as sour, the government of Amsterdam eventually resorted to employing a special taster who inspected every barrel being sent to vintners to assure that taxable beer was not slipping through the net.⁴³ Additionally in a striking parallel to the fears of the author of *Considerations touching his Majesties revenue of excise*, Unger relates an instance of “two workers at an Amsterdam brewery were found to have cut a hole in the back of the building to pass beer into an empty house which opened on to the next street, avoiding the tax collector on the way.”⁴⁴ To combat schemes such as this, the officers of the excise were authorized to break up the ground in any common brewhouse to search for secret pipes that were designed to carry worts, unfermented or partially fermented beer, from one vessel to another which could lead to an inaccuracy in the gauging of a wort by an excise official. The excise official did have to obtain the services of a constable who was to be present during the breaking of the ground, but could also at the same time turn every stop-cock that he could find in the brewhouse to be sure none were carrying something other than what was their intended purpose. Brewers who used secret pipes in this way were liable to pay a fine of £50.⁴⁵

It is clear that some brewers did their utmost to deceive the officers of the excise and that there was a good financial reason to do so. The practice of gauging, or determining the amount of beer that a brewer had in his vats or vessels, was still in its

⁴³ Unger, *History of Brewing in Holland, 900-1900*, 320.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 320-321.

⁴⁵ 8 and 9 W. III, c. 19.

relative infancy in the late seventeenth century. Gauging relied on an excise officer measuring the brewing vessel, and the amount of wort in a brewing vat or vessel, by taking a measurement of how high the wort came up the side of the vessel. The official would determine each of those numbers via a series of mathematical formulas that could be found in published texts.⁴⁶ Those formulas could be extremely accurate even when the tools being used were quite rudimentary—a measuring tape, a measuring stick, a slide rule and paper and pencil. Several factors, however, could significantly impact that measurement for either the benefit or detriment of the brewer. Because the calculations relied upon the estimation of the volume of beer that was being brewed, minus some allowances built into the law for wastage, it was to the benefit of any brewer to minimize what was gauged in the brewing vessel. Conversely, it was to the benefit of the government that as much volume be gauged to be filled with beer as possible. This was precisely the reason why excise officers were not just concerned with the concealment of brewing vessels, but also secret connections between vessels via concealed pipes. A dishonest brewer could transfer part of a wort from one vessel to another taking a calculated risk that a gauger was unlikely to measure every brewing vessel in the brewery every day. Any discrepancy between gauges could be explained by a host of excuses from leakage of the vessels, to evaporation, to the temperature of the wort.

When the wort should be gauged and the temperature of it was the biggest point of contention between gaugers and brewers because hot or warm wort would have a

⁴⁶ John Dougharty, *The General Gauger- 4th ed., corr. by the author* (London, 1727). Edward Hatton, *The Gauger's Guide; or, Excise-Officer Instructed* (London, 1729). Charles Leadbetter, *The Royal Gauger; or, Gauging made Easy, as it is actually practised by the Officers of his Majesty's Revenue of Excise* (London, 1739).

larger volume. It was in the best interest of the gauger to gauge the wort when it was as hot as possible, whereas it was in the best interest of the brewer to have wort gauged after it had cooled from the boil. Gaugers were forbidden from taking a gauge when the wort was warm from the 1660s to 1688 precisely because it put brewers at a disadvantage. In 1688 the officers of the excise were permitted to gauge worts while “warm”, provided they gave brewers an additional wastage of one-tenth for “wash and waste.”⁴⁷ From this point officers could gauge worts almost from the instant they were taken off of the boil because what constituted a “warm” wort was not defined in the 1688 act and it was a time when the thermometer was not in regular use. The volume of a hot wort would shrink on average four percent when cooling. Thus, it could be quite costly for a brewer to have their wort gauged when it was hot. In a thousand barrel vat that would amount to forty barrels, or 1,440 gallons of beer, being added to their excise assessment. Not all brewers had access to such large brewing vessels; however, vats of hundreds or thousands of barrels were not uncommon by the early eighteenth century and Peter Mathias records the use of 1,500 barrel vats in London by 1736.⁴⁸ Clearly much was to be gained, or lost, by the gauging of the wort.

Because so much could be lost in the gauging of a wort it should come as no surprise that brewers spent quite a bit of time defending themselves from the onslaughts of writers and officials who wished to blame them for all of the ills of the decline in excise revenue. Brewers did have some evidence to justify their claims that they were not as duplicitous and devious as many believed. Firstly, excise officials often did gauge

⁴⁷ 1 W. III (Session 1), c. 24

⁴⁸ Mathias, *The Brewing Industry in England*, 58.

worts while they were still quite hot, which according to a petition by several brewers in Edinburgh to the Scottish Parliament brought them great hardship:

The Surveyers do Survey all the Liquors in the Brewhouse, albeit the same is not come to the Perfection of Ale (when the wort could be legally measured for the excise in Scotland); That is, they Survey the Malt in the Fatts (vats), wort boiling in the Copper and in the Coolers upon the Dreg, and the new Ale working in the Tun, though the same be swelled up with the Froath and Barm a considerable height at a time, so that through said Liquor were Surveyable (as it is not) the Quantity thereof cannot be known.⁴⁹

By surveying in such a way, officers could generate a significant amount of additional revenue for the excise and they could do it legally from 1688 onwards. Excise officials of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries commonly gauged worts while hot; however, they also took several other gauges of the worts—one after “about three hours”, another “confirming gauge” of the wort after it had been send to the coolers, and several more gauges as it fermented.⁵⁰ Such successive readings would give a much clearer picture of the quantity of wort produced. In the London brewery of the 1690s worts were often gauged only once or twice at most, which could lead to an inaccuracy in the quantity of wort and a higher excise charge on the brewer.

Brewers could also suffer at the hands of excise officials from having to declare how much strong and small beer they intended to make from each batch of beer. From 1696 brewers were required to declare to an officer of the excise how much strong or small beer they intended from each batch of beer. If they failed to do so or the numbers of

⁴⁹ *Unto his grace his majesty's high commissioner, and the right honourable estates of Parliament. The petition of Alexander Biggar, John Davie, Thomas Young, James Watson, John Robertson Elder, James Henderson, John Robertson, John Finlayson, for themselves, and in behalf of other brewers, in and about the town of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1700).

⁵⁰ John Owens, *Plain Papers Relating to the Excise Branch of the Inland Revenue Department, from 1621 to 1878, Or, A History of the Excise* (Linlithgow, 1879), 80.

their prediction did not quite match to the satisfaction of the gauger “any such Brewer or his respective Servant brewing or making such Guile of Beer or Ale shall refuse to make such Declaration as aforesaid such Gauger or Gaugers shall charge and rename the whole of such Guile to be Strong and such Brewer shall pay the Duties thereof accordingly.”⁵¹

By charging an entire batch of beer as strong, officers could proportionately increase the tax on that batch by 3s. 6p. on every barrel gauged (using the 1696 excise rate), which increased the tax on whatever amount the brewer had declared as small by 380%. The advantage for excise officers to gauge an entire batch in such way was obvious. A broadside titled *The Case of the Brewers* makes plain how disadvantageous this could be to a brewer and how there was little a brewer could do to prevent an excise officer from charging the whole of a batch as strong. It states:

the Gauger, by a General Order of the Commissioners of Excise (even against the intent of the Law) charges the whole as Strong, upon every Brewer just or not, suspected or not: which he cannot discharge himself of, but by carrying a great number of his Servants to the Excise Office to Swear off the same; which is to his very great and unnecessary Charge and Trouble, the Law having taken sufficient care of his Majesty’s Duty, many and great Penalties and Forfeitures.⁵²

There was little recourse for the redress of grievances against excise gaugers as the word of the excise official was almost sacred. For instance, in 1703 Thomas Warren, an excise gauger working near Bow, was brought to trial at the Old Bailey for making “a false return of his Account, whereby he cheated the late King William of divers Sums of Money.” Warren had apparently been working with the clerks at Prisca Coburnes brewhouse for years, repeatedly falsifying his accounts and sharing in the profits of his

⁵¹ 8 and 9 W. III, c. 19.

⁵² *The Case of the brewers, in relation to some unjust constructions of the law, and other exactions and hardships practised on them by the Commissioners of excise and their inferiour officers* (c. 1700).

false accounts with the two clerks at the brewhouse. By falsely reporting the quantities of beer he had:

Cheated the King above 60l. which was shared as followeth, the Prisoner had 30l. 10s. and 11d. for his Share, one Bradley, one of the Brewer's Clerks, had 15l. 5s. and 5d. half penny; and the other Brewer's Clerk had the rest. It further appeared, that he had made it a common Practice for many Years to do it, and he also confest the whole matter when brought before the Recorder; which the Jury considering, found him guilty.⁵³

Although Warren had engineered a scheme where he shared in the profits of gauging worts for less than their actual worth, excise officers could just as easily claim a wort was larger than they gauged. Because there was generally only one official that regularly visited a brewery, a scheme of extorting bribes from brewers for gauging worts in their favor would have been an easy one. Such a scheme would likely have been lucrative, Thomas Warren was fined £300—far more than a junior official made in a year. Excise officials could and did practice upon the patience of brewers. There is no doubt that some brewers had just claims of their mistreatment at the hands of some of the officers of the excise. Far more individuals of the last decades of the seventeenth and early decades of the eighteenth century, however, would have felt very little sympathy for the claims of the brewers.

The Brewers' Handbook: Deceit, Bribery, and Concealment

Whether justly or not, brewers were often viewed as dishonest craftsmen who would stop at nothing to avoid taxation. Blaming the shortcomings of excise revenue on the dishonesty of brewers was a convenient excuse and became a standard trope in both the hands of polemicists and government officials of the day. The author of *Reasons Most*

⁵³ *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* (www.oldbaileyonline.org, version 7.0, 12 March 2014), January 1703, trial of Thomas Warren (t17030115-21).

Humbly Submitted to the Wisdom of Parliament for the taking off the present Duty of Excise upon Beer and Ale certainly believed that the task of excise officers catching brewers “red-handed” with the proof of the perfidy was nigh impossible. For “The Skillful and Cunning Brewer knows full well that, that as long as the Duty is continued upon the product of the Malt (i.e. beer or ale as opposed to the malt itself), it is impossible for any Officer, though never so Diligent and Vigilant, to prevent all of his Mysterious Practices, which as soon as one is discovered, another is contrived and set on foot, to make him easie under the burden of this Duty.”⁵⁴

When one compares what an excise officer was required to do on a daily basis to catch brewers who chose to cheat the system, it is easy to see the distinct possibility that a brewer who chose to operate in such a manner could succeed. The orders issued in 1710 by the Excise Commissioners under the title *The Orders and Instructions for the Management of the London Brewery* stipulate that all officers of the excise on their daily six-hour rounds were required to visit every brewery on their round twice and were to be especially vigilant and diligent for frauds when the brewery was cleansing its tubs, vats, and equipment. This appears to have been a serious issue as a draft of a presentment to the Lords of the Treasury in the British Library makes clear. The presentment charges that the officers of the excise had failed to make regular gauges of batches of beer in the London brewery. It states:

our General Officers has Intirely omitted that part of takeing Regular Gauges for in nine Months time has not Trac'd one Brewing from the beginning to the End as their Duty is, And has Connived at it in the Supervisors; that the Inferior Officers would make the Charge has been

⁵⁴ *Reasons Most Humbly Submitted to the Wisdom of Parliament for the taking off the present Duty of Excise upon Beer and Ale and Laying the Duty upon the Original Malt* (London, 1695), 10.

without any manner of Check, and they have turn'd: that Certain way of making a Charge on the Brew'r; by Gaugeing, by Putting men to Watch them at their Cleansing, so the Brewers Pay as are well Watch'd: or can get favour with the men set over them, by this meanes the King may be Deprived, of great part of his Duty⁵⁵

As if that were not enough, the Commissioners demanded that “every Officer do make himself acquainted with all the Store-houses belonging to every Brew-house in his Walk.”⁵⁶ Considering that even a modest brewery would likely have several outbuildings to house raw materials, barrels, and the horses that would take their product to the consumer, in addition to the cellars where beer would be properly aged before being sent to market, this would have been a monumental task to undertake on a daily basis. It is small wonder that the thirty excise officers in London resigned their posts in 1695 when they encountered these conditions. Conducting a great amount of work for little pay, little hope of advancement, and virtually no security in their position meant that many excise officers could easily be tempted into collusion with brewers.

The commissioners of the excise foresaw the possibility of underpaid and overworked officers choosing an easier way to get the data they needed from breweries. As early as 1663 Parliament had prescribed a penalty for officers being bribed by brewers. A fine of £10 was set for any gauger who had taken “any Money Fee or other Reward whatsoever” from a brewer.⁵⁷ By 1707 the commissioners ordered the supervisory officers to carefully “examine and compare every Gauge that hath been taken

⁵⁵ BL, Lansdowne MS 1215/38, “Draft of a pibsentment [*sic*] (presentment) to the Lords of the Treasury concerning the mismanagement of the London Brewery.”

⁵⁶ Great Britain, Commissioners of the Excise, *Orders and Instructions for the Management of the London-Brewery* (London, 1710), 8.

⁵⁷ 15 Ch. II, c. 11.

upon every Wort” to prevent the inferior officers from cheating the system by using data and samples provided by the brewers to supplement or replace their own.⁵⁸ Above all else, however, the commissioners wanted to prevent the most obvious method of cheating the system, and the most lucrative for the inferior excise officers, bribery. Specifically they desired that “no Officer do Quarrel with the Brewer, or any of his Servants, nor acquaint any BREWER, which of his Partners made the Charge, nor Borrow any Money, nor Accept of any Treat, Gratuity, or Reward directly or indirectly of any Brewer, nor any other Person imployed by him.”⁵⁹ In a society where subtle graft and even outright larceny was sometimes tolerated with a wink and a nod, this problem was taken seriously enough to place an outright ban on the practice in its many and varied forms.

Even with that ban it appears that bribery and graft was a rather widespread practice amongst the officers in London in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. *The Cheating Age Found Out*, a broadside condemning all manner of different sins with helpful woodcuts illustrating each, shows an excise (or customs) officer at a table with three other individuals having coffee or perhaps punch. The officer’s right hand has dipped below the table and the individual seated immediately to his right appears to be placing something in his hand. The other two gentlemen at the table appear to be looking away at the moment the presumed bribe is being delivered. Should the image of the excise man taking a bribe not be entirely clear the text makes sure the point is not missed as:

⁵⁸ *Orders and Instructions for the Management of the London-Brewery*, 7.

⁵⁹ *Orders and Instructions for the Management of the London-Brewery*, 9.

Tho' the Excise-men struts, and looks so Great
 Yet all the World can tell that he's a Cheat
 The Customs-Officers have the same Fate
 The Checks of Conscience they do both deride
 And does unlawfully support his Pride.
 Of Yellow-boys present but half a Score,
 You may then Run a 100 pounds a Shore:
 Such a like Sum will make the Exciseman Blind
 He no Concealment in your House will find:
 Brew Fifty Bushels of good Malt a Week,
 Shew him but three he will no further seek;
 Or if by chance there any more appear,
 He sets it down and Rates it as Small-Beer.⁶⁰

The Cheating Age Found Out is not the only source to make such a claim and the unprofessional behavior of excise officials at the time was remarked upon by many.⁶¹ Many officials likely accepted bribes from time to time. In 1704 a W.T., who is perhaps the same Thomas Warren that was fined in 1704, was tried for scheming with a clerk in the employ of Prisca Coberns, almost certainly the same Prisca Coburnes cited in 1703, to defraud the excise. The clerk employed by Prisca Coberns in 1704, however, was located not at the brewhouse in Bow cited in the 1703 case, but instead at a brewhouse in Bromley to south of Bow. The exciseman, W.T., and the clerk, H.J., were both brought to

⁶⁰ *The Cheating age, found out; when knaves was most in fashion. Wherein is truly described the many frauds, cheats, abuses, and vast sums of money that England has been cheated off, in this long, bloody and expensive war* (London, ca. 1710).

⁶¹ For just a sampling of the accused perfidy of brewers between 1695 and 1715 see: Lover of his country, *Reasons Most Humbly Submitted to the Wisdom of Parliament for the taking off the present Duty of Excise upon Beer and Ale, and laying the Duty upon the Original Malt* (London, 1695). Anthony Burnaby, *An Essay upon the Excising of Malt: as Also, the Present Case of Tallies consider'd* (London, 1696). *An Essay Upon Excising several Branches that have hitherto Escaped the Duty of the Brewing-Trade, to make good the Deficiency of the Malt Tax...* (ca. 1699). *A Letter directed to the Honourable Robert Harley, Esq., Speaker to the Honourable House of Commons, relating to the great Abuses of the Nation* (1701 *Remarks on the Frauds and Abuses of the Brewery, Touching the Queen's Revenue of Excise; With the Remedy propos'd: In a familiar Conference between A Country Justice and a Country Brewer* (London, 1707). *A Proposal to Raise Four Hundred Thousand Pounds per Ann. Without any Imposition or New Tax, by Amending the Deficiency of an Old One, Namely, the Excise on Beer and Ale* (London?, ca. 1698). E. Denneston, *A Scheme for Advancing and Improving the Ancient and Noble Revenue of Excise upon Beer, Ale, and other Branches...* (London, 1713).

trial and each was fined and sentenced to three months in prison.⁶² Such cases only confirmed the beliefs of many, like the author of *The Cheating Age Found Out*, that excise officers and brewers were corrupt. Few, however, dared to offer a solution to make the excise system better, instead preferring to throw the inefficiencies of the excise system on the shoulders of brewers and the excise officers that chose to take the “yellow-boys” the brewers offered.

One plan for the restoration of the revenue of the excise for the London brewery from 1713 did offer a solution to the excise system. E. Denneston’s *A Scheme for Advancing and Improving the Ancient and Noble Revenue of Excise upon Beer, Ale, and other Branches...* observed that the young officers of the excise were most susceptible to bribery as they were not paid the full seven shilling a week rate until they had been practicing the art of gauging brews for at least two years and sometimes as many as five years.⁶³ These young officers often supplemented their meager salary by taking not only offers of money from brewers, but also other forms of compensation. This compensation could come in many forms and one such instance that Denneston observed in London did not involve direct bribery, but instead giving excise officers free room and board. Or as he explains “it was customary in every, or most of the Divisions within the Bills of the Mortality, to have a certain Tavern or Alehouse appointed by the Brewers, where the Surveyors or Officers lived at Discretion, their Expenses being paid at the Charge of the

⁶² *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* (www.oldbaileyonline.org, version 7.0, 12 March 2014), June 1704, trial of W - T - H - I - (t17040601-14).

⁶³ E. Denneston, *A Scheme for Advancing and Improving the Ancient and Noble Revenue of Excise*, 5-6.

Brewers.”⁶⁴ This situation was serious and some officials were weeded out in London for this offense. Yet, no sooner had one of these havens been shut down, another would soon be opened as a replacement. Denneston put the problem in stark contrast by saying “I think, without Offence, I may say it remains a Mystery, that notwithstanding the many Surveyors and Officers that have been detected of Bribery, and other Corruptions, both in City and Country, some of them being prosecuted for the same, and others having forfeited their Places, according to the Letter of the Law, yet some of them have been and now are employed.”⁶⁵

Denneston’s solution to the problem was not to concentrate on prosecution of offenders, but instead to attack the problem of poor pay that led to a lack of professionalization in the London brewery. By the time Denneston was writing an excise commissioner might expect to have a reasonable chance to carve out a career of several decades within the excise or one of the other revenue departments, like customs. The expertise of an individual, such as the intricate knowledge of the leather duty that George Townshend had acquired, could protect them from political purges and provide the financial means to live quite comfortably. Other managers, like the afore-mentioned James Vernon, would embark upon careers that would span decades, and in the case of Vernon, see his son rise through the same career path that he had pioneered.⁶⁶ Yet, for the inferior officers of the excise, there was not a similar professionalization during the first two decades of the eighteenth century.

⁶⁴ E. Denneston, *A Scheme for Advancing and Improving the Ancient and Noble Revenue of Excise*, 11.

⁶⁵ *Ibid*, 13.

⁶⁶ Holmes, *Augustan England*, 249-250.

This trend can be seen in the breakdown of excise officers during decade of 1690-1700. In that decade 75 new gaugers were added to the roll of the excise, a modest growth of 7.3%; whereas the number of supervisors grew from 58 to 89, a growth of 53%.⁶⁷ Queen Anne's reign saw tremendous growth in the establishment as the number of gaugers nearly doubled, from 1,088 to 2,101, but the number of supervisors more than doubled, from 86 to 208.⁶⁸ London, as the capital and hub of government, always had more than its fair share of excise officials from the highest ranks. However, their presence seems to have held back growth in the number of inferior officers in London. About one-third of the excise officers in London in 1690, 51 of 164, were attached to the excise's central office, leaving only 113 field officers to police the metropolis. The number of gaugers surveying in London grew at a much smaller rate than the rest of the country throughout Queen Anne's reign as the number of field officers was only 173 in 1714, a growth rate of 53% compared to a rate of 107% for the rest of the country.⁶⁹ The relatively small numbers of gaugers required to police such a large, and rapidly expanding market, goes a long way towards explaining Denneston's testimony of such an unprofessional force at work in the capital. Denneston's vision of a well-paid, professional force of excise officers was not to become a reality until well into the eighteenth century.

Beginning in 1717 the number of gaugers assigned to the London market began to expand rapidly, growing from 173 in 1714, to 310 in 1717, to 528 in 1735, to 684 in

⁶⁷ Brewer, *The Sinews of Power*, Table 4.1 "Excise Establishment, 1690-1783", 104-105.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

1763, to eventually 883 in 1783.⁷⁰ That growth also came as the number of breweries in London and their overall production declined across the first 75 years of the eighteenth century.⁷¹ Fewer breweries and a growing number of excise officers in the capital after 1720 combined to make the task of excise officials easier and made them more efficient. Along with those growing numbers came stability in office as many junior excise officers could look forward to eventually staffing senior offices given enough time. Unfortunately for the governments of the 1690s and first decades of the eighteenth century, while the London excise branch became professionalized, London brewers had been experimenting. Their experiments would bring about profound changes in the industry and the rise of a new beers in the market.

Stout, Three-Threads, and Double-Beer: The Rise of Strong Beers in London

The chaos that characterized the excise branch throughout the last decades of the seventeenth century and the first two decades of the eighteenth provided brewers with a free hand to develop strategies to counteract the rising taxes on their product. Since 1643 brewers had attempted to mitigate the effects of taxation using the time-tested methods of bribery, deceit, and concealment. Yet, the unique conditions of the 1690s, which included rapidly rising excise taxes and a London excise branch in turmoil, gave London brewers an opportunity to test a new method of cheating the excise—the brewing of extraordinarily strong beer that avoided taxation through its sheer potency. This beer, which went by the names of stout, three-threads, and double-beer, would dramatically alter the landscape of the London brewing trade. It was brewed by many smaller brewers

⁷⁰ Brewer, *The Sinews of Power*, Table 4.1 “Excise Establishment, 1690-1783”, 104-105.

⁷¹ Mathias, *The Brewing Industry in England*, “Table 38: Number of Common Brewers and Beer Paying Duty in London, Annually, 1700-1830”, 544-545.

almost as a last-ditch attempt to avoid what they considered to be an onerous tax that was to be their undoing. Yet, their production of it opened a Pandora's box as the beer they produced would eventually become the key to industrializing the trade and the consolidation of London's many breweries into the hands of only a few.

Ale and beer had from the medieval period been categorized according to its strength, which was gauged by the ale-tasters or ale-conners in medieval English communities. Although the strength of beer would come to be gauged by the ultimate price of a barrel of beer, as no brewer would knowingly sell strong beer as small beer if he could avoid it, rather than by ale-tasters, the system in place since the 1643 excise relied on the categorization of beer into two types—strong and small. The issue with this system was that while it put a lower limit of what could constitute strong beer, albeit unscientifically until the late eighteenth century, it did not place a true standard on what could be the upper limit of strength for strong beer. This led some brewers to push the envelope on the strength of beer as they attempted to provide the most alcohol for the imbiber for the highest price, while at the same time minimizing their tax liability.

Brewers had attempted to brew high-alcohol ales and beers for centuries, precisely because they fetched the highest prices on the market. The brewing of small beer, which likely had an alcohol content of 2.5%, was always less profitable than brewing strong beer, which had an alcohol content of about 5%.⁷² Brewing a premium beer with a higher alcohol content could be even more profitable. Elizabeth I had, for instance, banned the wickedly strong double-double beer of the mid-sixteenth century, which was reputed to be four times the strength of a strong ale. Double-double beer was

⁷² Unger, *Beer in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, 186. Meacham, *Every Home a Distillery*, 22.

probably made with four times the amount of malt as a strong beer; however, it likely contained an alcohol content of 12-15% rather than 20% because most brewer's yeasts slow or stop fermenting once that 12-15% threshold is reached. Although the alcohol content of double-double beer was not likely quadruple the strength of strong beer, it did command a premium price. The problem with banning a particularly strong beer or ale was problematic, however. While the banning of double-double beer was a success if one measures success by the disappearance of a name, it was never a success in practice as brewers found it was quite easy to simply change the name of a beer to avoid the force of the law behind the ban. That problem was to remain throughout the seventeenth century and would reappear with a vengeance in the debate over reasons for the collapse in excise revenues in the latter seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

The rate of excise taxation varied throughout the seventeenth century. However, following the revolution of 1688-1689 and the entrance of England into the Nine Years' War the excise rates were particularly volatile. In 1690 the duty rate on both strong and small beer was doubled, which brought the tax on a barrel of strong beer 6s. 6p.⁷³ That taxation represented approximately one quarter of the final cost of a consumer's pint as an average barrel of strong beer sold for around 18s. in the 1690s.⁷⁴ Not only was this taxation burdensome, it was also highly variable. Within just the year that lasted from Midsummer 1692 to Midsummer 1693 there were three different rates for both strong and small beer as Parliament struggled to create the best formula to squeeze as much revenue

⁷³ 2 William and Mary (Session 2), c. 3.

⁷⁴ BL, Lansdowne MS 829/6 Fo. 108, "An account of the losse in the excise on beer and ale for severall yeares last paste, with means proposed for advanceing that revenue."

from the beer excise.⁷⁵ To counteract this uncertainty brewers learned to create a high-strength beer, stout, that had a much higher content of malt than the average strong beer. The higher malt content would create a higher specific gravity, which in turn would produce a brew that would have significantly higher alcohol content. The high-alcohol beer would also fetch more on the open market, helping to mitigate the excise.

The production of this high-strength beer saved the brewer in the production of it in two ways. The first was that the brewer could brew one-third of the quantity of stout because the product would be “watered-down” by the addition of two more parts of small beer, or even water, when the final product was vended. By producing a much smaller quantity of this beer the brewer could only be held liable for the tax on the quantity that was produced. This often meant, because it was taxed at the same rate as common strong beer, stout paid one-third the excise of a batch of common strong beer—a tremendous cost savings. The second way the brewer saved was in the production of small beer made from the second, or sometimes the third or fourth, running of the malt in the mash tun. Because more malt went into the mash tun at the beginning of the process a brewer could expect to extract several batches of small beer, which could conveniently be sold to vendors to mix with the high-strength beer in a one-to-three or one-to-two ratio. The amount of small beer would certainly be more than would normally be produced from a second running during the production of a common strong beer; however, because small beer was taxed at a much lower rate throughout much of the period, 1s. 3p. as opposed to 4s. 9p. for common strong beer, the brewer could produce a large amount of small beer for relatively little cost.

⁷⁵ BL, Lansdowne MS 1215/108.

The practice of mixing beers was banned in the common law, however. By 1663, just three years after the continuance of the excise by Charles II's government, Parliament had legislated that brewers should not mix different batches of wort together without informing an excise official, with the punishment for not informing the gauger being a fine of 20 shillings.⁷⁶ Despite the forbidding of the mixing of different worts or batches of beer the regulations were not very effective. Successive English governments reissued bans on the practice in 1670-1, 1688 (1689), 1696-97, and 1702.⁷⁷ The height of the bans corresponds precisely with the rising taxation associated with the Nine Years' War. The trend towards increasing the duty on beer, especially the strong variety, caused the general decrease in the consumption of strong beer and the rise in the consumption small beer in the 1690s. Certainly some consumers shifted their consumption from strong beer to small beer due to relatively large price difference between the two; however, it is also certain that large amounts of small beer was being mixed with beer that was taxed as strong beer, but was in actuality stout of much higher potency.

An idea of how lucrative the practice of mixing different worts or brews could be is given by an anonymous accounting of the lost revenue from 1690s contained in the collection of the eighteenth century antiquarian James West. The account details the profitability of the practice in this way:

Consider which That a Barrell of very strong Drinke of £3 per Barr price, pays no more Duty as the Law now is , than a Barrell of Common Standard Strong Drinke of 18s. per Barrell. By Brewing and Vending whereof tis safely to Contrive what Duty may bee saved, That the Brewers and traders in Drinks have not omitted (of late especially) to make the best

⁷⁶ 15 Ch. II, c. 11.

⁷⁷ 22 and 23 Ch. II, c. 5; 1 W. III (Session 1), c. 24; 8 and 9 W. III, c. 19; 1 Anne (Session 2), c. 3. See also: Mathias, *The Brewing Industry in England*, 352.

use of this advantage, very strong Drinke being now Commonly a parte of the Brewers Guiles, and the whole of many who Brew nothing else. That the Conumption of it is everywhere, which you have under several odd names, as Two Threades, 3 Threades, Stout or according as the Drinker will have it in price, from 3d. to 9d. the quarte. That the notion thereof and Profitt thereby has been of late & now is generally knowne, And that the traders therein have turned themselves more and more to the practice of Brewing it , & skill doe as they can prevaile upon their Customers to vend it, when wee have bestowed a few Thoughts on those particulars wee may Conclude without being Stopt or Interrupting ourselves Concerning the very small sums Charged to have been the increase by means of Strong Drinke as before recited. ... That a very great parte of the Losse aforesaid has arisen & does arise by the Brewing & vending of Drinke of Extraordinary strength more than formerly.⁷⁸

The possibility of selling a barrel of beer for the sum of £3, as opposed to the normal going rate of 18s. per barrel, and only paying a tax rate of 4s. 9p. left a tidy profit for any brewer who would create such a brew.

Brewers who would craft the high-alcohol-content brews described by writers as stout, three-threads, or double-beer could expect a high rate of return for their trouble. They would have to use more raw materials in the form of more malted barley and more hops; however, the margins for producing these stronger beers more than made up for the additional raw materials. In 1696 Anthony Burnaby placed the amount of malt for these strong stouts and double-beers at “5 times the Malt in proportion to every Barrel of Common Ale and Beer.”⁷⁹ Batches of common strong beer were generally reckoned to contain four bushels of malt per barrel, of which the strength of three bushels of malt would be obtained from the first running and would go into the production of common strong beer. The second running, when small beer was produced, was reckoned to contain

⁷⁸ BL, Lansdowne MS 829/6 Fo. 108.

⁷⁹ Burnaby, *An Essay upon the Excising of Malt*, 44.

the strength of the remaining one bushel of malt.⁸⁰ When the beer called stout, three-threads, or double-beer was being produced a batch might require as many as 15 to 20 bushels of malt per barrel, which on the face of it would not allow the brewer to make a profit from a price that was just slightly more than three times the going rate for common strong beer.

Brewers minimized their costs by producing a much smaller quantity of strong beer, which would be sold with a much larger quantity of lightly-taxed small beer to be mixed with it. The ratio of one part of stout or three-threads to two parts small beer seems to be borne out by the example of a brewer, one John Browne, brought before the justices of the peace in Norwich in 1712 for not paying the excise on his beer. The case recorded the stocks of Mr. Browne in 1712 at exactly thirty barrels of strong beer and sixty barrels of small beer, which would work out to the preferred ratio of a one-to-two mixture. The strength of Mr. Browne's strong beer was not recorded, but having stocks of small beer that amounted to two times the amount of strong beer would be unusual as small beer was almost invariably made from the second running of the mash.⁸¹ The mixing of worts or finished beers had been banned in 1663; however, this did not prevent brewers and publicans from regularly doing so. In 1708 a brewer was brought to trial for reputedly "carrying on a corrupt Confederacy to defraud the Queen of her Customs of Excise."⁸²

⁸⁰ Burnaby, *An Essay upon the Excising of Malt* 42. *Remarks on the Frauds and Abuses of the Brewery, Touching the Queen's Revenue of Excise*, 9.

⁸¹ John Ellis, *Instructions for Collectors of Excise, in Prosecutions before Justices of the Peace, for Forfeitures incurred, or Offences committed against the Laws relating to the Duties of Excise, and other Duties under the Management of the Commissioners of Excise* (London, 1716).

⁸² *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* (www.oldbaileyonline.org, version 7.0, 12 March 2014), October 1708, trial of T - J - R - C - (t17081013-34).

The brewer in question, T.J., supposedly gave “40s. a Week among 4 Officers of the Excise to connive at his mixing of Small Beer with Strong.”⁸³ T.J. was to be acquitted for lack of evidence, but his scheme was a tried and tested one employed by many brewers at the time.

The practice of beer mixing had two important impacts on London brewing trade at the end of the seventeenth century. The first was a shift in the tastes of London consumers away from a multiplicity of different types of strong ales and beers in the seventeenth century to a single dominant beer type, at first stout and later porter, in the eighteenth century. The second shift was a dramatic decrease in excise revenues across the 1690s, which would eventually result in a shift towards taxing both the end product and also the raw materials that went into it—malted barley and hops. The movement away from a multiplicity of different forms of strong beer and ale in London was a direct result of brewers and consumers reacting to the rising taxation of the 1690s. Brewers reacted to the taxation by creating the high-alcohol stout that would be mixed with relatively cheaper small beer. The main issue that London brewers encountered in creating stout was finding an inexpensive malt suitable to its production.

The London and country brewer, written in the 1730s by the brewer William Ellis, makes it quite clear that London brewers had long preferred the cheapest of brown malts for their beers. In his experience it was “a common saying, that there is brought to London, the worst of Brown Malt.”⁸⁴ Wood-dried brown malts, as opposed to more gently roasted brown malts done over straw-fired kilns, were too harsh for most brewers

⁸³ *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* (www.oldbaileyonline.org, version 7.0, 12 March 2014), October 1708, trial of T - J - R - C - (t17081013-34).

⁸⁴ William Ellis, *The London and Country Brewer*, 3rd ed. (London, 1737), 15.

to use because they had a “most unnatural taste, that few can bear with.” However, London brewers used thousands of quarters of wood-dried brown malts because they were “two shillings per Quarter cheaper than the Straw-dryed Malt” and the harsh tang of the wood-dried brown malt would be lost in the maturation process and be covered up by the great quantities of hops used by London brewers.⁸⁵ The use of smoky, heavily-roasted wood-dried brown malts certainly was believed by Ellis to be a mistake in brewing and could be a contributing factor in foxing, the infection of a beer by wild yeast or bacteria. However, the cost advantages of using wood-dried, smoky brown malt was too much of a temptation as Ellis explains:

a Mismanagement in some Brewers, who for Cheapness sake will buy Wood-dried brown Malt, commonly made on Kilns without a Hair cloth, for brewing the common Butt Brown-beers, sometimes at sixteen Shillings per Quarter, when the Pale Sort is at two and twenty Shillings, or four and twenty Shillings. As believing the smoky Tang, by Time and the great Quantity of Hops will be overcome. But I have known many Instances, where the Hop has overcome such Drink by the Smallness of its Body.⁸⁶

Because the unsuitableness of the lesser kinds of brown malt could be overcome with a judiciously large dose of hops and proper aging it made these malts the perfect brewing material for the beer that was common in the London in the last decade of the seventeenth century and the first decades of the eighteenth century.

The London Brewers’ Crisis

The production of stout by London brewers was a reaction to the uncertainty of the excise in the 1690s. It was a reaction that worked for some time, but was to come with harsh repercussions for London’s smallest brewers. The excise crisis of the mid-

⁸⁵ William Ellis, *The London and Country Brewer*, 2nd ed. (London, 1736), 69.

⁸⁶ William Ellis, *The London and Country Brewer*, 4th ed. (London, 1742), 178.

1690s fostered the conditions for the rise of stout as London's preferred beverage. At the same time, however, the chaos of the mid-1690s was not to last. Once some semblance of order was restored in the reign of Queen Anne, smaller brewers would find themselves squeezed by conditions that were, at least partially, of their own making.

The production of stout was a solution for the conditions of the years immediately following the revolution of 1688-89, when the taxation of beer fell entirely on the produce of brewers rather than their raw materials. Beginning in 1697 that situation altered when a malt duty of 6s. was placed upon every bushel of malt.⁸⁷ The taxation of hops, which had been discontinued at the Restoration in 1660, would also resume in 1710. The taxation of raw materials was a direct result of the catastrophic collapse of revenues in the mid-1690s, which was due to the chaos in the excise branch and the rise of stout. The response of taxing the raw materials of brewing, combined with a more effective excise branch, would restore the revenue levels to the early 1690s and eventually supersede them. However, that process, as has been demonstrated in the case of the excise, took years to accomplish and as late as 1707 one pamphlet was still commenting that it was certain that "there is five times more double Drink Brew'd in the Nation now than was in the Year 1690."⁸⁸ The brewing of stout, like the time-tested tricks of concealment, deceit, and bribery, could be advantageous to a small brewer in that it avoided much taxation; however, the brewing of stout was also a double-edged sword because larger brewers saw even greater advantages in brewing it.

⁸⁷ 9 W. III, c. 22.

⁸⁸ *Remarks on the Frauds and Abuses of the Brewery, Touching the Queen's Revenue of Excise*, 11.

A glimpse of the advantages that larger brewers held in the brewing of stout can be seen in an anonymous essay from 1699 addressing the deficiencies found in the newly created malt duty of 1697. In 1699 the author was already describing a division between two different sub-sets of brewers, larger brewers that brewed between 200 and 300 quarters of malt per week and smaller brewers who brewed with around 20 quarters of malt per week.⁸⁹ A quarter of malt was estimated to contain eight bushels on average and a barrel of average common strong beer was reckoned to contain three to four bushels of malt.⁹⁰ The difference in the scale of production between those two types of brewers was, if each barrel is assumed to contain three bushels of malt, between 2,000 to 3,000 barrels per year for a small brewer and 40,000 barrels per year for a large brewer. The number of 40,000 barrels per year is improbable even for the largest brewers of the time. Yet, if stout is assumed to contain between two and three times the malt of a common strong beer, their production was likely in the range of 15,000 to 20,000 barrels per year for the largest brewers. The breweries of Sir Jonathan Raymond, the Calvert family headed by Felix Calvert at the turn of the eighteenth century, and the successive owners of the Anchor Brewery—James Child, Edmund Halsey, and Ralph Thrale, would all have counted themselves amongst these great breweries. Such breweries could produce beer “Two shillings in the Pound cheaper” than their smaller competitors. This caused great

⁸⁹ *An Essay Upon Excising several Branches that have hitherto Escaped the Duty of the Brewing-Trade, to make good the Deficiency of the Malt Tax...*, 30.

⁹⁰ A quarter of malt was a unit of volume which could vary depending upon the size and quality of individual grains. Excise officers and brewers, however, commonly assumed that each quarter of malt was equivalent to 8 bushels of malt on average. See: Hatton, *The Gauger's Guide; or, Excise-Officer Instructed*, 14.

hardship for those unwilling or unable to adopt the methods of their successful competitors, or as the author eloquently puts it:

So as the greater Fish still devours the lesser, the able Brewer by affording a better Commodity, as well he may, having several Opportunities which the small Brewer has not, of defrauding the King, and every other Person he deals with... purely to inhance the price upon the poor Brewer, who can buy no more than from Hand to Mouth.⁹¹

The author further argues that smaller brewers were driven out of the trade not only through their inability to compete, but also through the political influence of their large competitors. For the great brewers pursue them “by their Warrants (for debt), of great numbers of their Trade, under a Pretence that their Charter can Justify their Proceedings; which extends yet another piece of Cruelty: for whilst they flie from their Power, the great Brewer breaks in upon their Trade.”⁹² The argument that larger brewers used the Brewers’ Company to limit their competition just simply is not borne out in fact. However, using the King’s courts to pursue smaller brewers who had perhaps fallen into debt to the wealthier members of the company would have been a useful tool in limiting competition. The pamphlet argues that using the courts in this way was just the first of many indignities that the large brewers heaped upon their smaller brethren, and was not even the most successful of them. Instead the most successful tactic the larger brewers employed was using their Parliamentary influence to continue the current excise system that was especially detrimental to their small competitors.

The author’s purpose in chronicling the size of breweries near the turn of the eighteenth century was to make a point that the taxation currently enforced by the English

⁹¹ *An Essay Upon Excising several Branches that have hitherto Escaped the Duty of the Brewing-Trade, to make good the Deficiency of the Malt Tax...*, 11-12.

⁹² *Ibid*, 12-13.

government tilted the playing field towards larger brewers. In this regard the author's viewpoints cannot be taken for gospel truth as the piece was likely written by one of those brewers being driven from the trade. Yet, the narrative does give insight into the clear division between the "haves" and "have nots" in the trade. That division had been simmering for at least a generation by the turn of the eighteenth century; however, the dramatic shift in excise taxation inaugurated by the revolution of 1688-89 exacerbated tensions between smaller and larger brewers. Instead of encouraging the trade, and growing the excise revenues so desperately needed by the government, those taxes forced smaller brewers from the industry. To counteract this problem the author of the piece argued for the protection of smaller brewers by creating a tiered system with an exemption for brewers brewing fewer than eighty barrels per week. This solution would:

Not only set all Persons already concern'd upon an equal Footing, but also encourage hundreds of People to come to re-inhabit those Brew-houses that are shut up, finding they shall not be liable to this Tax till their Trade is raised and settled; otherwise, whilst they lie under the same Tax, a Man may be striving to raise a Trade, soon sink himself; for we may as reasonably expect Rent out of House before its finish'd, as Profits out of a Trade before its Established, especially while the great Brewers have such vast advantages over them: For we may with the same possibility expect, that a little Child of Five Years old should carry an equal share of a Burden proportion'd to the strength of a Man of Thirty, as the small Brewer to bear up under a Tax of that nature of the Malt-Tax with the great Brewer.⁹³

Such an exemption was never enacted. Instead, the malt duty would, along with the beer and hop duties, become the backbone of British government revenues throughout the rest of the eighteenth century and would be a leading cause of smaller brewers being driven from the trade.

⁹³ *An Essay Upon Excising several Branches that have hitherto Escaped the Duty of the Brewing-Trade, to make good the Deficiency of the Malt Tax...*, 31.

Increased excise taxation was a positive benefit for the largest of London's brewers. Brewers like Sir Jonathan Raymond, the Calverts, and the Thrales had all of the benefits that the anonymous author of *An Essay upon excising several branches that have hitherto escaped the duty of the brewing-trade* claimed the larger brewers had. Each had a large brewery capable of brewing tens of thousands of barrels of beer. Each also had political influence on both a national and local scale. Sir Jonathan Raymond was an alderman and a Member of Parliament. His nephew and successor, John Raymond, was also a Member of Parliament for Weymouth and Melcombe Regis in the 1740s. Sir William Calvert would serve as a London alderman and its Lord Mayor in 1748-49 in addition to being a Member of Parliament for the City. Ralph Thrale served as Member of Parliament for Southwark in the 1740s and his son, Henry Thrale, would follow in his footsteps by serving as MP for Southwark from 1765-1780. All were either Tories, as in the case of Sir Jonathan Raymond, or were lukewarm Whigs. John Raymond was an opposition Whig and Henry Thrale was, albeit briefly, a Rockinghamite Whig. Sir William Calvert and John Raymond would also serve a turn as the master of the Brewers' Company. Not coincidentally by the 1740s, John Raymond, Sir William Calvert, and Ralph Thrale were considered the "leading brewers of their generation."⁹⁴

These men were the beneficiaries of a taxation system that prized stability and safety in revenues above all else. The stability in the excise branch after 1717 and the absolute constancy of the excise duties on beer and its ingredients, which were to remain the same from 1711 to 1760, speaks to the government's desire to maintain the revenues from this important stream. From 1720 and throughout the rest of the eighteenth century

⁹⁴ Mathias, *The Brewing Industry in England*, 116.

the watchwords of the excise were to be safety and stability. The tripling of the number of excise officers in London between 1714 and 1760, from 274 to 902, is demonstrative of the government's concern with revenues from London and the desire to ensure that another crisis like the one precipitated by the brewing of stout did not occur again.⁹⁵ Larger breweries that brewed one type of beer were helpful in this quest as excise officers could visit more frequently and assess each batch relatively quickly. Together the government and the large brewers were shaping the brewing trade of London and pushing it towards industrialization.

The Rise of the Industrial Brewer

In 1959 in *The Brewing Industry in England, 1700-1830* Peter Mathias explained how the rise of porter beer and the industrialization of the English brewing industry went hand-in-hand in the eighteenth century. Mathias saw the industrialization of the English brewing industry as being shaped by, among other factors like technology, the shift to porter brewing and the consolidation of firms until just a dozen dominated most of the market. Each of those threads caused the industrialization observed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; however, many of those threads were observable long before 1700 and indeed can largely be traced to impact of the excise tax of 1643 and its subsequent extensions. Just as stout was the solution to an industry racked by uncertainty caused by the chaos of the excise branch in the 1690s, porter would become the solution to the new status quo of safety and stability in the excise branch.

Mathias has credited the London market with shaping the creation of the beer that was to become most suited for industrialized production—porter. Porter's precise origins

⁹⁵ Brewer, *The Sinews of Power*, Table 4.1 "Excise Establishment, 1690-1783", 104-105.

are unknown; however, there is no lack of possibilities as to when and by whom it was first brewed. The man most usually cited as porter's inventor is Ralph Harwood, a brewer in Shoreditch, who supposedly brought the drink to market in 1722. The claim that Harwood invented porter in 1722 has been proven to be incorrect, as there is at least one mention of porter that pre-dates 1722.⁹⁶ While it is currently impossible to ascertain exactly where porter was first brewed and who brewed it, what can be proven is that porter was an outgrowth of the forces of the London market.

John Tuck, writing in 1822, stated that "Brown beer, or Porter, was introduced about the year 1720" and was "generally used among the labouring class of men."⁹⁷ Tuck further explained that:

brown beer became almost general. ... But many persons were so attached to pale beer, particularly in the country, that the consumption of brown beer became confined to London; however, even then pale beer was drunk, as the brown was considered heavy and glutinous; a mixture of stale (beer aged long enough to clarify), mild, and pale, which was called three-threads, was sold at four pence per quart as far back as 1720.⁹⁸

Three-threads was sold long before 1720, but what Tuck was describing was the process of mixing beers that was at the heart of making stout. Porter was a brown beer like stout that was brewed with low-cost brown malts, but unlike stout it was not mixed with other beers, ales, or water. Instead it was brewed from either one or several mashings of malt and was sent out to publicans in a ready-to-use form, which explains why one of the first

⁹⁶ Martyn Cornell, "Porter Myths and Mysteries" in *Brewery History* 112 (2004), 31-40.

⁹⁷ John Tuck, *The Private Brewer's Guide to the Art of Brewing Ale and Porter* (London: W. Simpkin and R. Marshall, 1822), 2-3.

⁹⁸ *Ibid*, 4-5.

names for porter was “entire-butt” or “intire”.⁹⁹ It was certainly not to everyone’s tastes because it was brewed with a large amount of hops and smoky, tangy brown malts. Londoners who could not stomach porter had many other choices, including “amber; double beer; stout; “humming stingo”; oat ale; October; Dorchester (at eight pence a quart, twice the price of twopenny); “pale Hocky”; Burton ale; Oxford ale; “York’s pale ale”; and “Bull’s Milk Beer”.¹⁰⁰ What is instructive in those names is how many came from other brewing centers in England with their own local brewing traditions—Yorkshire, Oxfordshire, Dorchester, and the famed Burton on Trent. Porter, on the other hand, was London’s native beer and perhaps even more importantly a quart could be purchased for 3d., which made it a half penny per pint cheaper than all of its competitors. What stout offered in the 1690s and first years of the eighteenth century was a cost savings for brewers and publicans alike: they could vend a mixture of stout and small beer that was the least expensive strong beer at the time. By the 1720s that advantage was being eroded by the introduction of porter, which offered the same price advantage that stout did without all of the trouble.

With the stabilization of the excise branch and the spreading of excise taxation over both the final product and its components, most of the merits of stout suddenly became detriments. It became more costly to brew due to the large amount of malt and hops that went into it. Additionally, it was dangerous to vend because the mixing of beers was banned. Although this statute was only relatively lightly enforced, it was just one more headache for the publican. It is no small wonder that the first dated reference to

⁹⁹ Mathias, *The Brewing Industry in England*, 14.

¹⁰⁰ Cornell, “Porter Myths and Mysteries”, 31-40.

porter, from the Whig political journalist Nicholas Amherst, is from May 1721.¹⁰¹

References to it as the preferred beer of London increased across the 1720s and by the 1730s and between 1730 and 1748 all of the greatest brewers had switched to producing porter.¹⁰² Between 1721 and 1748 porter had taken London by storm; however, it was far from unfamiliar. Instead it became the most cost-effective manner of giving Londoners a beer that was similar in flavor and taste to the mixtures of beers, like stout, that had been London's preferred beverage for a generation. In effect, excise taxation had created the conditions for this transition and the rise of the industrial brewer.

The consolidation of firms over the eighteenth century described by Mathias in *The Brewing Industry in England* was the definitive step towards the industrialization of the brewing industry in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The consolidation of brewing firms from around 200 in London in the 1690s to twelve large firms dominating the production of beer in the London market by the end of the eighteenth century explains much of why the London market developed in the way it did. The 200 breweries in London in the 1690s fell precipitously to 133 in 1712, confirming the worst fears of the author of *An Essay upon excising several branches that have hitherto escaped the duty of the brewing-trade*.¹⁰³ Although the number of common brewers would rebound considerably across the eighteenth century, reaching as high as 191 in 1732, their production did not.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ Cornell, "Porter Myths and Mysteries", 31-40.

¹⁰² Mathias, *The Brewing Industry in England*, 22-23.

¹⁰³ Mathias, *The Brewing Industry in England*, Table 38 "Number of Common Brewers and Beer Paying Duty in London, Annually 1700-1830", 544.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

The 1720s mark the rise of the first great porter brewers, the Calverts and Thrales among them, who, along with ten other great breweries, held 41.9% of the London market by 1748. That growth was extraordinary. Yet, the largest brewer in 1748, Sir William Calvert, brewed 55,700 barrels of beer, all of which was porter, and the Thrales brewed only 35,600 in that year.¹⁰⁵ Mathias estimates that porters contained between 1 ½ to 2 barrels per quarter of malt in the early eighteenth century and were brewed with 2 ¼ and 2 ¾ barrels per quarter by 1762 when more definitive data was available.¹⁰⁶ Using that estimate Sir William Calvert's brewery likely used between 428 and 714 quarters of malt per week and the Thrale's likely used between 274 and 456 quarters per week. Those numbers, even on the high-end, are not much greater than the 200 or 300 quarters per week reportedly being used by the largest breweries in 1699. Yet, Mathias has stated that the scale of production in London's greatest breweries was "probably not much in excess of 5000 barrels yearly or 10,000 barrels at most" in 1696.¹⁰⁷ That led him to conclude that these breweries were "large, no doubt, when one considers the number of transactions to be accounted for over the year, the number of customers regularly served, or even the relative standing of other trades; but nevertheless still insignificant in relation to their later triumphs."¹⁰⁸ That assessment, however, is, at least partly, based upon inconsistent data.

¹⁰⁵ Mathias, *The Brewing Industry in England*, Table 43 "Annual output of individual London breweries, 1748-1829", 551.

¹⁰⁶ Mathias, *The Brewing Industry in England*, 17.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 38.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

The excise tax provides to the historian the first comprehensive evidence of exactly how much beer was being taxed, if not produced, throughout England. That data has to be treated with great care, however. To compare the records of the excise from the 1690s and the first decades of the eighteenth century one-for-one with excise records of the mid- to late eighteenth century provides, at best, a flawed picture of the London brewing trade. Before 1717 the excise branch was often a chaotic place, the avoidance of taxation by brewers was rife, and excise numbers were skewed by the brewing of smaller batches of stout. The excise branch of the mid- to late eighteenth century was fully professionalized and the sheer number of gaugers in London, which had risen from one-tenth of the excise establishment to a quarter of the branch's strength, meant there was little chance of employing similar tricks to the ones used by brewers in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. To compare those sets of data on a one-to-one basis, without nuanced interpretation, is misleading. By Mathias' own admission brewers of stout at the turn of the eighteenth century brewed beer to the strength of one quarter of malt per barrel, whereas brewers of the mid-eighteenth century brewed porter with between one-half and one-quarter as much malt.¹⁰⁹ Yet, Mathias is happy to compare the number of barrels across the eighteenth century on a one-for-one basis. Without taking into account that the main purpose of stout was to brew as little as possible, to avoid as much tax as was feasible, and to later dilute that mixture when vended points to a misleading interpretation of the starting point of the industrialized production of beer in London. Mathias' assessment of the industry from a starting point of 1585 was that "no great advance came to the leaders of the industry in the next 150 years, apart from a very

¹⁰⁹ Mathias, *The Brewing Industry in England*, 17.

slow growth in the size of individual plants.”¹¹⁰ That assessment was borne out of a belief that the production of London brewers could not compare to that of the growing firms of the captains of industry in the mid-eighteenth century.

When one takes into account the practices of brewers at the turn of the century and their scale of production, measured in their raw materials rather than the number of barrels counted by the excise, a fuller picture of the industry can be grasped. The industry did not start from square one in a great leap from the 1720s when porter was introduced. Instead of a great leap forward there was much continuity in the industry between the end of the seventeenth century and the mid-eighteenth century. The largest brewers were, for the most part, part of long-established firms and their scale of production grew steadily, rather than explosively, at least in the first half of the century. That steadiness went hand-in-hand with the government’s desire for safe and stable revenues coming from the trade. That desire had been fulfilled, but it came at a great cost.

The London Brewing Trade, 1700-1750

The great fear of the author of *An Essay upon excising several branches that have hitherto escaped the duty of the brewing-trade* that the big fish in the London brewing trade would come to swallow the smaller fish had begun to come to pass by 1750. The largest brewers of the late seventeenth century had, by and large, continued to grow, whereas smaller brewers found it increasingly hard to keep their doors open. Large brewers, like the Raymonds, Calverts, and Thrales, were able to afford to grow their firms, while at the same time paying the increasing demands of the excise. Smaller brewers could not do so. Perhaps the greatest example of this is the famed inventor of

¹¹⁰ Mathias, *The Brewing Industry in England*, 6.

porter, Ralph Harwood. Harwood has long been associated with porter's invention and popularizing it. Although it is unlikely that he had a hand in its invention, he was one of the first brewers in London to switch to brewing only porter and should have had a first-mover advantage. Although he had some success as one of the leading brewers of the 1720s, later in his life his firm had fallen by the wayside due to an inability to keep up with the leading firms.¹¹¹ Most of the major firms in the industry had been built with profits from their operation. For instance, Ralph Thrale was able to purchase the Anchor Brewery from the executors of Edmund Halsey's will for the price of £30,000 and within the space of eleven years he had made good that debt from the profits of the firm.¹¹² Brewers like Thrale had the finances to not only pay their fair share of the excise, but also to industrialize in the manner that Mathias has described. Even relatively prosperous brewers like Harwood simply could not keep up that pace. For smaller brewers it was an impossibility that they would be able to compete with larger brewers. The division, between large and small firms, that had become clear at the turn of the eighteenth century was to only widen throughout that century.

The twelve largest London breweries were to grow their share of the market from 41.9% to 85% between 1748 and 1830.¹¹³ Those twelve great firms controlled not only the market, but also opportunities within that market. Becoming an apprentice to a well-established brewer had always been a coveted opportunity for those who wanted to break into the trade. However, by the mid-eighteenth century the families of young men

¹¹¹ Mathias, *The Brewing Industry in England*, 22-23.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 258-260.

¹¹³ Mathias, *The Brewing Industry in England*, Table 1 "Production of strong beer in London, 1750-1830", 26.

attempting to become part of the trade were paying the large brewers fees as great as £500 to have their sons apprenticed to one of these firms.¹¹⁴ Being apprenticed to one of the great firms was viewed as the only way to become successful in the trade, and examples like Samuel Whitbread only confirmed such beliefs. Whitbread paid £300 to be apprenticed to John Wightman, a leading brewer of the 1730s, and he was to become London's leading brewer and a national figure.¹¹⁵ Unlike in the sixteenth century, when a boy like Richard Platt from a modest background could rise to be one of London's leading brewers through his connections in the Brewers' Company, the apprentices of the eighteenth century looked to the great brewers for their start.

Not only were the fortunes of apprentices to the Brewers' Company in decline, so too was the company itself. The Brewers' Company had long held the right to govern the training of apprentices, but even that right was being encroached upon by the mid-eighteenth century. In all other respects the company's ability to enforce the powers it had been given in the charters it had obtained in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries was nonexistent. In June 1700 the company sought a legal opinion on the feasibility of enforcing the statute of 5 Elizabeth, c. 4, which concerned the proper training of apprentices. Specifically the Brewers wished to use the clause stating that all practitioners of a trade had to have served a full seven-year apprenticeship. The opinion of the Brewers' legal counsel in 1700 advised the Brewers not to pursue interlopers in the trade who had not met the seven-year apprenticeship, as those who had experience serving a brewer or another tradesman for a period of seven years would be considered

¹¹⁴ Mathias, *The Brewing Industry in England*, 23-24.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

exempt from the act.¹¹⁶ That legal advice might have summed up the whole of the Brewers ability to enforce the privileges in their charter in the eighteenth century. Their charter “was impotent.”¹¹⁷ The largest brewers, while they might be members of the company, went out of their way to avoid association with it. In the case of the Thrales and the Calverts, members of the family avoided service as one of the company’s officers.¹¹⁸ The politics of the City and Parliament were far more important to the survival of their profitable businesses. The company was an afterthought at best.

Not only was the company an afterthought, so too were their fellow brewers. The company hardly represented an equal fraternity at any point in its history, but it was an institution that had, at its heart, sought to protect the interests of all of its members. The political and social influence of the heads of the twelve great breweries were hardly a replacement. They might use their influence to protect fellow brewers and allied trades, such as in 1743 when they helped petition against the proposed pot tax on publicans, but that influence was wielded only when it was in their best interest to do so.¹¹⁹ The larger brewers might join with their smaller brethren in railing against mutual competitors like gin, tea, and coffee. They might also both enjoy the trouncing that Mr. Swell-Gut gives Mr. Scorch-Gut in the satirical pamphlet titled *The Tavern Scuffle*.¹²⁰ They might use their parliamentary influence to seek the curbing of gin consumption; however, the

¹¹⁶ GL, MS 7294. Mathias, *The Brewing Industry in England*, 219.

¹¹⁷ Mathias, *The Brewing Industry in England*, 258.

¹¹⁸ Ibid, 220-221.

¹¹⁹ Ibid, 116.

¹²⁰ *The Tavern Scuffle: Or, the Club in an Uproar; Occasion'd by a hot Dispute, between Mr. Swell-Gut, a Brewer, and Mr. Scorch-Gut, a Distiller, concerning Geneva, the Reigning Liquor now in Vogue among the common People* (London: 1726).

protection that larger brewers were seeking in the Gin Acts of the 1730s to 1750s was for their own benefit rather than those most threatened by the rise of gin, the small brewers. The influence of the great brewers could be immense, but that influence was to be wielded for their own ends. That power was just one of the multitude of advantages the great brewers had over their competitors by the middle of the eighteenth century. They were to use those advantages to industrialize the trade, which would bring them great wealth and a high quality product to the masses. Yet, to accomplish that the small brewers, brewing in the modest brewhouses that had been spread throughout the city for centuries, had to be pushed to the wayside. What had once been a trade for marginalized populations, in the form of women and strangers, had now become the preserve of an industrialized elite.

CONCLUSION

THREE HUNDRED YEARS OF CHANGE

Beer seems almost timeless. That timelessness, however, hides a history of nearly constant change. The production of beer has never been static, it has evolved continuously from its discovery to the present day. The hands that brewed it, the ingredients that composed it, and those who drank it all shifted over the course of the early modern period. That change was not unique: the medieval and modern brewing industries in London were just as dynamic; however, the results of that change were anything but ordinary. The brewing trade of London between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries was to pioneer significant changes in brewing and would provide a pathway towards modern industry.

Medieval brewing was dominated by marginalized populations, which included both women and strangers. It was a trade that required little capital investment, needing little more than household cooking utensils, and could be taken or left with few adverse consequences. Still, even in the medieval period economies of scale were pushing the industry to grow. Some women became by-industrial brewers who brewed much more regularly than their predecessors and made brewing, if not a profession, a regular habit. Judith Bennett's study of these women has demonstrated that they were a vital element in growing the industry in the late medieval period. However, that study has also demonstrated that while they became part of the guilds, such as the Worshipful

Company of Brewers, their membership was at best a second-class one with no hope for advancement or influence within their ranks. These guilds tended to combine with the powerful forces of “royal and local officials” to encourage the “development of a restricted trade controlled by a small number of highly reliable brewers.”¹ Bennett’s analysis of the Oxford market bears this conclusion out as the brewers there worked closely with the town and university authorities to ensure a steady supply of ale from professionalized, male brewers.

Yet, London did not follow the path of Oxford or any other English market. Rather than being the doom of female brewers, the Worshipful Company of Brewers fought a century-long struggle with City authorities over the protection of its most marginal female members—hucksters. Their struggle with the City was not to remove females from the trade, but instead to protect them. If removing women from the trade was the aim of the guild it would have been far easier to acquiesce to the demands of Richard Whittington in 1419-1420, rather than continuing the fight until the last quarter of the fifteenth century. That struggle was eventually won by the City, and hucksters, who along with female by-industrial brewers, were largely removed from the trade. Still, while the guild would acquiesce to the City’s demand for the removal of most women from the trade by the turn of the sixteenth century, it was only a reluctant partner of the City and not the driving force behind the transition.

The key to that transition was to be the new technology and methods brought to the capital by strangers. The use of hops as a preservative in ale created not only beer, but

¹ Bennett, *Ale, Beer and Brewsters in England*, 10.

also a stable product that could be kept for months rather than days or weeks. The immigrants from the Netherlands, Flanders, and Germany who brought this technology at first found a limited market in London. Their beverage was not suited to English tastes. However, their product was suited to larger scale production because of its ability to be kept for extended periods of time. That stability not only made it a favorite of the Crown and English armies, but also less expensive in comparison to its English counterpart, ale. Still, beer might have remained a beverage for strangers and soldiers, except that the City needed a counterweight to the Brewers' Company in its struggle for good order. The City's allowance of beer brewers to sell beer in the city in 1477 was designed to bring the Ale Brewers to heel; however, it also had the unintended consequence of dividing the city between two rival camps, beer brewers and ale brewers. The City's plan to bring the Ale Brewers under their control was successful, but it came at a cost. The Ale Brewers had lost their preeminence in the London market and strangers were to become the dominant force in brewing for the next half century.

The heyday of ale was on the wane in the sixteenth century. Its popularity was falling and the natives who brewed it were unable to compete with their stranger rivals. Ale could not compete with beer and soon the name "ale" would be recycled to describe a type of beer, which was generally brewed with pale malts and was less-heavily hopped than most beers brewed in London. In the early sixteenth century it appeared that native brewers would follow their product. Stranger brewers had many advantages—a better product, a larger and better trained workforce, and the protection of a guild. Yet, they had one disadvantage that outweighed all of the others: they were not subjects of the Crown.

Without the protection of being a subject, strangers could not enjoy the protection of the common law and in most cases could not join a guild. Denizenship represented one pathway towards eliminating those issues and the Crown was, in general, willing to grant denizenship to a fairly large number of strangers. The Crown might be able to protect strangers within the common law; however, it ran into the opposition of the City and the guilds. The Brewers' Company, in particular, saw the benefit of circumscribing the rights of strangers to the advantage of its members. The City also saw the advantages of keeping its membership, which came from the guilds, exclusive and in the hands of not just natives, but native Londoners. The Brewers gained much from this covenant with the City, as the wealth and influence of men like Richard Platt can attest. Strangers, their children, and grandchildren were excluded from citizenship within the London community, leaving natives to take over much of the brewing trade. The Brewers had benefited by their agreement with the City; however, they had also made themselves prime targets for the force that would change the industry yet again in the seventeenth century—the excise.

No other force changed the brewing industry in London more than the excise. The adoption of hops in the trade was a titanic change, but the shaping of the modern industry was largely the result of the excise. Brewers were a prime target for the excise because of their wealth and the ubiquity of their product. The tremendous growth the industry had sustained in the sixteenth century also created a great problem for brewers, the need for capital to continue that growth. Brewers turned to partnerships to supply that financial need. Men of great means, like Jeffrey and James Duppa and Sir Isaac Pennington,

bought into the trade. Nominally these men were brewers operating under aegis of the guild throughout their partnerships with trained brewers. In actuality, however, they operated largely outside of the hindrance of the guild relying on their Court and City connections to keep them safe.

Whereas the guild had been the driving force behind the industry in the sixteenth century, performing the functions of training organization, governing body, and social club, the driving force behind the growth of the industry in the seventeenth century was the deep pockets of investors and the excise. The Brewers' Company that emerged from the Civil War and the Great Fire of London was increasingly divided between "haves", brewers like Sir Samuel Starling, William Dashwood, and Sir Jonathan Raymond, and "have nots", brewers like Benjamin Felton and John Farmor who could only manage half of the £5 the company had requested from members in the rebuilding of Brewers' Hall.² Starling, Dashwood, and Raymond became aldermen and Starling would become Lord Mayor of London, a post that was outside the reach of anyone associated with the trade in previous centuries. These men had great advantages in the trade in the form of Court and City connections; however, what set their brewing concerns apart were the financial resources that allowed them to expand their breweries, modernize them, and pay the excise at the same time.

Peter Mathias identified that advantage in his landmark study of the brewing industry in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Brewers like Sir Samuel Whitbread and the successive generations of the Thrale and Calvert families were great

² GL, MS 5502, "The Accompt of Receipts and Payments relating to the Accompt of building the Hall, and other buildings contiguous thereto from the 24th of December 1669 to the 9th of January 1673."

capitalists who grasped the tremendous opportunities presented by the industrializing trade of the eighteenth century. Little can be criticized within Mathias's analysis of the industry in the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, when the changes in technology, methods, and capital raising that he describes were in full bloom. Yet, his characterization of the industry in the first decades of the eighteenth century is not as robust and attempts to examine the starting point of industrialization without much reference to what came before. The increasingly industrialized brewing trade in London after 1750 did not spring forth fully formed. Instead the Thrales and Calverts both built their breweries on successful firms from the seventeenth century. These seventeenth-century breweries were small compared to the industrialized breweries of the nineteenth century; however, their size was not as small as Mathias believed.

Mathias's implicit trusting of the excise records from the turn of eighteenth century, when the excise branch was in complete disarray and unable to efficiently perform its duties, is a major issue. The amount of beer avoiding the excise in the first decade of the eighteenth century, the basis or start-line of Mathias's analysis, is estimated to be 65% of the total brewed in that decade.³ Contemporary evidence from Gregory King's estimates of England's agricultural production also argues that more than more than half of the malt made into beer in the country was not caught by the excise.⁴ Using those records to compare with the records of the London excise in the mid- and later-eighteenth century paints a false impression that the trade was starting from a point of

³ Monckton, *A History of English Ale and Beer*, 219.

⁴ Chalmers, *An Estimate of the Comparative Strength of Great Britain... To which is now annexed, Gregory King's Celebrated State of England*, 43-55.

zero. When the malt employed in brewing is used as a basis of comparison the picture is quite different. Instead of the largest breweries leaping ten-fold in production between 1700 and 1750, the growth was in the range of two- to three-fold. This was still a tremendous growth and emblematic of the quickening pace of the industrialization of the industry in the latter eighteenth century. Yet, that growth was also more organic within the industry and was the result of the emergence of larger, capital-intensive breweries in the seventeenth century.

Those larger, capital-intensive breweries required changes within the industry that resulted in a tremendous demographic change in those who brewed. In the sixteenth century brewers could largely grow their firms with the resources harvested from their brewing efforts. Occasionally a partner, often a family member, might be brought into the business to help provide capital, but the prime ingredient in expansion at that time was the profits from an ever-expanding industry. In the seventeenth century breweries reached the level where these simple partnerships between members of the brewing community just could not meet the demands of the industry. Instead investors, like the Duppas and Sir Isaac Pennington, who had no connections to the trade and had no desire to become part of the guild that nominally should have governed their actions, became the prime movers in the industry. Their wealth gave them, and the brewers who partnered with them, the resources to grow their firms across the seventeenth century.

The breweries of the seventeenth century were built upon the success of these firms. Still later, the Raymonds, Thrales, and Calverts became successful because they continued to invest in firms built on such a foundation. At the same time, however,

breweries headed by men like Benjamin Felton, John Farmor, and the anonymous author of *An Essay upon excising several branches that have hitherto escaped the duty of the brewing-trade* were being pushed aside. Whereas in the sixteenth century these men could have survived side-by-side with the big brewers of the day, by the late seventeenth century they simply could not do so. They were being pushed to the wayside by the combined forces of the industrialization identified by Mathias, but also the expansion of the excise across the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

The excise changed the playing field dramatically for brewers in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Although the cost of the beer excise was relatively small to the brewer during the reigns of Charles II and James II, especially in comparison to what would come following the revolution of 1688-89, and enforcement was inefficient, it helped to exacerbate differences between the “haves” and “have nots” within the industry. Larger brewers, such as Sir William Bucknell, William Dashwood, Philip Jemmott, and John and Dannel Forth, were not only wealthy brewers, but were also making money from the farming of the King’s excise revenues. Smaller brewers, caught between these titans of the industry and disasters like the Great Fire of 1666, were increasingly marginalized. The expansion of the excise following the revolution of 1688-89, which more than doubled in the space of a few years, was the death knell for many of these smaller brewers. As smaller brewers were eliminated from the industry in London, larger brewers gained their market share. Aiding that transition was competition from spirits and other beverages, like coffee and tea. The price of each of those fell in comparison to beer across the early eighteenth century, leading to the gin craze of the

1720s to 1750s and the proliferation of coffee and tea houses across the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. That transition helps to explain the general decline in the number of barrels brewed, as measured by the excise, and the number of brewing firms across the eighteenth century.⁵ A smaller industry benefitted the larger brewers. They became the big fish in an increasingly smaller pond, giving them the resources to manage the forces of industrialization, the excise, and competition from other beverages.

By 1830, when the excise on beer was removed, the domination of the twelve great firms of the industry in London was complete. In that year they brewed 85% of the beer produced in London.⁶ The great brewers had complete domination of the trade and in the nineteenth century would take the opportunity to expand their operations on a national, and even international, scale. Yet, that process, which might be said to have culminated in 1830, was a long one that dated far back into the early modern period. The breweries that came to dominate in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in London were largely the result of changes adopted by, or forced upon, the brewers of early modern London. The hallmarks of industrialization in the forms of the use of the non-organic fuel of coal, an increasing division of labor between those who owned and managed and those who worked in breweries, and the masculinization of the industry were results of changes within the early modern trade. If those changes did not begin the process of industrialization, they certainly paved the way for it in the eighteenth century.

⁵ Mathias, *The Brewing Industry in England*, Table 38 “Number of Common Brewers and Beer Paying Duty in London, Annually 1700-1830”, 544-545. Monckton, *A History of English Ale and Beer*, Appendix D “United Kingdom Annual Production of Ale and Beer, 1684-1964”, 219-223.

⁶ Mathias, *The Brewing Industry in England*, Table 1 “Production of strong beer in London, 1750-1830”, 26.

That change, however, came at a cost. What had been an industry composed of thousands of occasional and by-industrial brewers in the medieval period had, by 1830, become one dominated by twelve firms with a few partners in each. The industry had transitioned from one open to nearly everyone to one closed to virtually all. Perhaps this was a necessary process to meet the increasing demands of what had likely become the world's largest city by 1830. Yet, the cost of that, perhaps, necessary transition was a lack of opportunity for all in the trade with the exception of the brewing elite. Rather than a trade that could accommodate natives and immigrants, women and men, and people of various socioeconomic backgrounds, the process of industrialization drove wedges between all of those different groups until a single elite, in the form of wealthy, native men, rose to the fore. As that elite drove the trade towards industrialization in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, not only would so many of the hands in the brewing trade change, so too would beer itself. It would become an industrialized commodity, suitable for production on a massive scale. Just as the people who brewed it, beer would be winnowed into a single type suitable for that type of production. What had once been a trade where many hands produced ales and beers as various as the maker, beer and those who made it had now entered the age of industrialization.

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