Chapter 2. The Liberties and the City of London

Modern readers can be forgiven for thinking that the liberties posed a constant and perpetual threat to the safety of those living in London. Antagonistic contemporaries recorded their objections to these small, self-contained precincts for a posterity that continued (and even expanded) the tradition of scapegoating them for a wide variety of civic problems, from crime to plague. The Repertories of the Court of Aldermen show clearly enough that other issues (ensuring adequate supplies of grain in times of dearth, responding to outbreaks plague, and enforcing the assize of bread and ale) were treated with greater urgency by the Court of Aldermen. Tensions were bound to arise from the demographic changes that affected early modern London. Civic governors and religious reformers alike complained loudly about the 'ill-rule' of the suburbs and the liberties (or exempt places) within the City.[57] Apart from inflammatory, ideological printed tracts, however, contemporary sources fail to support the notion that post-monastic liberties posed a unique threat to metropolitan order. The civic government, it is true, regularly challenged their franchises. The royal government, though desperately afraid of disorder (and quick to act when it sensed danger) consistently refused to help the City meddle in the liberties.

In the decades after the dissolution the City treated the franchises of exempt places with newfound jealousy. Previously, civic leaders had resisted interfering except in cases of egregious abuse, such as the fifteenth century use of sanctuary in St Martin le Grand. The City's vehement opposition to the liberties grew from its increasing conception of itself as a geographically coherent authority and the severing of the liberties' franchises from their religious origins.[58] The City, whose privileges were granted by the Crown, depended on royal favour to establish its territorial ambitions. It is understandable that the City's quest for coherence manifested itself in the language of public order: the royal government was more interested in keeping the peace than in augmenting the authority of an already-powerful corporate entity. When the *Acts of the Privy Council* and the State Papers Domestic are considered alongside the Repertories of the Court of Aldermen and the Journals of Common Council, it becomes clear that the post-monastic liberties were a nuisance, but not a serious threat.

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[57] Ian Archer warns against the uncritical acceptance of such complaints, suggesting that aldermanic rhetoric was both self-serving and based on unrealistic expectations of suburban government. I W Archer, 'The Government of London, 1500-1650', *London Journal*, 26:1 (2001), p. 25.

[58] A trend that reflected the ongoing efforts of the royal government to assert the fundamental authority of the English crown throughout the realm (to religious precincts, the counties palatine, and to the Scottish and Welsh marches).

The early modern capital included the City of London, the borough of Southwark, and the ever-expanding suburbs, with liberties scattered throughout.[59] While the entire area was increasingly urbanised, the City remained the centre of the metropolis, and its structures of government were the standard against which other areas, including the liberties, were judged. The City's interlocking administrative units—precinct, parish and ward—were overseen by the common council and the Court of Aldermen, while the hospitals, livery companies and the bishops of London exercised their particular powers over a broader part of the conurbation. This complex administrative network affected the City's expectations for the government of areas beyond its control, and it provides a background for the battles which civic officials fought against them. Civic governors were hesitant to assume authority over large new tracts of land, but they almost certainly recognised that the most difficult issues they faced were of a metropolitan nature, and that no matter how effectively they governed their square mile, metropolitan issues were bound to effect life there.[60]

The liberties existed within a specific historical context; it was the continuity of their jurisdictional franchises after 1540—not their novelty—that aggravated City fathers. Over the course of centuries, the City had come to an understanding with most (though certainly not all) of the religious foundations situated within or adjacent to its borders. The obstinacy of St Martin le Grand in exercising its privilege of sanctuary had permanently alienated it from the City, but most other religious houses had more cordial relations with the civic government. When fire destroyed several buildings at the Minories in 1518, for example, the City donated £200 toward the cost of rebuilding.[61] By the early sixteenth century, all of London's monastic precincts housed laypersons alongside the religious. In some cases that population included little more than the servants of the foundation, but other precincts were home to much larger communities.[62] The cooperation that existed between civic and monastic authorities could extend to their lay tenants. An entry in the Repertories concerning the 1533 lay subsidy does not bother with the question of whether lay residents in Blackfriars would contribute alongside the City; the aldermen clearly assumed that they would. Instead, they wondered whether 'the Inhabitantes within the precynct of the sayd freres owght to be chargyd

[59] From 1550, Southwark constituted the City's new Bridge Ward Without, and from 1585 the City of Westminster extended from Temple Bar along the riverbank to the Palace of Westminster and beyond.
[60] Pearl, *London and the Outbreak of the Puritan Revolution*, p. 17.
[61] CLRO Rep 5, fos 15v, 80; The Royal Government also donated £200. *LPFD*, 3(2), no. 1536.
[62] Blackfriars was known for its gentry and noble residents, St Martin's for its aliens and St Katherine by the Tower for its sailors, brewers and coopers.

with the inhabitantes of the warde of Faryngdon Within or ellce withyn the warde of Castell Baynard'.[63] In the list of subsidy collectors for May 1535, the collector for St 'Anne withyn Black freres' is listed alongside those of the City's other parishes, and there is no evidence that the residents resisted the arrangement, although they would in later decades.[64]

After 1540, the City of London made a concerted effort to secure the post-monastic liberties, either by purchasing their lands itself or by establishing its authority over those lands. The City addressed its advances to both the royal government and the owners of individual liberties, according to its expectations of success. In neither case, however, was success forthcoming. Before the 1590s, the City's only real achievement was preventing the destruction of the medieval hospital system that provided relief to London's ill and incapacitated. The hospitals faced the same fate as other religious foundations. The dissolution of religious houses forced the civic government to consider the needs of the poor displaced 'by the disruption of the traditional alms-distributing system' that they had operated for centuries. It was, however, the loss of the hospitals which posed the most acute threat to urban stability, since it left many of the most vulnerable (and therefore, in the eyes of contemporaries, most dangerous) members of the urban community completely outside the existing networks of support.[65] By April 1538 London's major hospitals, aside from St Mary Bethlehem, had been surrendered to the Crown. In August lord mayor Richard Gresham wrote to the king to request that the City be given control over three hospitals (St Mary Bishopsgate, St Bartholomew and St Thomas Acon), which, according to Gresham, were 'founded and endowed for the aid of poor and impotent people, not to maintain canons, priests and monks to live in pleasure.'[66] The request was repeated six months later, when the aldermen sent a petition asking that the three hospitals, together with their endowments, be granted to the City 'onely for the relyeff, comforte and ayde of the poore and indigent people…lying yn the streetes offending every clene person passing by the way with theyre fylthye and nastye

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[63] CLRO Rep 9, fo 23. 25 September 1533. They settled, incidentally, on Farringdon Ward Within, into which the precinct would be absorbed after its annexation by the City in 1608.

[64] CLRO Rep 9, fos 157v-167v. 7 May 1535.

[65] C T Daly, 'The Hospitals of London: Administration, Refoundation and Benefaction, c. 1500-1572' (U of Oxford DPhil thesis, 1993), p. 70. When Professor Woodward claims that it is 'impossible to assess with any certainty how seriously the dissolution aggravated the problem of poverty by depriving the unfortunate of the aid and comfort of the religious houses', he is speaking of England generally. In London, the direct effects of religious foundations on the poor of the metropolis are much clearer. G W O Woodward, *The Dissolution of the Monasteries* (London, 1966), p. 167.

[66] *LPFD*, 13(2), p. 194, no. 492.

savors'.[67] After meeting with several aldermen on 26 February 1538/9, the king gave his consent to part of the proposal, granting the City control over St Bartholomew and St Thomas Acon, and over the patients in St Mary's for the remainder of their lives.[68] The grant was not a complete success for the City, but in the fifteen years that followed the aldermen oversaw the establishment of two new hospitals, Christ's and Bridewell. Under civic management, the hospitals achieved new standards of medical care and initiated a systematic attempt to meet the challenges they saw in vagrancy, poverty, and moral incontinence.[69] After securing the hospitals—the motives and effects of which were social rather than jurisdictional—the City spent the next several decades in a fruitless quest to procure other post-monastic precincts.

The liberties existed in an historical context, but they also stood at a single point on a spectrum of jurisdictions that existed in the capital. At one end stood the City itself, where the lord mayor and aldermen exercised their full authority. At the other stood the royal palaces, from which civic authority was wholly excluded.[70] In between were those places that the City was practically or prescriptively unable or unwilling to exercise complete control. These included the precincts of St Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey, the suburban parishes that ringed the City, and the townhouses of prominent noblemen and bishops. In the mid sixteenth century, the City's most pressing jurisdictional concern was not the liberties but the borough of Southwark. Southwark had been London's first suburb—evidence of development there dates back to the Roman era.[71] In the intervening centuries, the settlement had thrived by catering to the needs of travelers, pilgrims, and tradesmen entering and leaving London. Aside from the bridgehead itself, however, Southwark had always been independent of the City, standing in the county of Surrey and the diocese of Winchester. London had long taken an active interest in affairs there, but as late as the 1530s it had failed to assert its authority decisively.[72] When Edward VI took the throne, the City made a new attempt, and in

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[67] CLRO Rep 10, fo 79v; Jo 14, fo 129v.

[68] CLRO Rep 10, fo 82. The site of St Mary's was granted to Sir Richard Morison in April 1540. *LPFD* xv.613(3).

[69] Archer, *Pursuit of Stability*, p. 154. The survival and expansion of the London hospital system was, as W K Jordan describes it, 'a proud and human accomplishment in which the burghers of London were pioneering, not only for England, but for the western world'. W K Jordan, *The Charities of London, 1480-1660: The Aspirations and the Achievements of the Urban Society* (Hamden, CT, 1960), p. 186.

[70] The battles between the Court of Aldermen and the Lieutenant of the Tower of London illustrate the tension generated by jurisdictional disputes between civic and royal officials. See A Keay, *The Elizabethan Tower of London: The Haiward and Gascoyne Plan of 1597* (London, 2001), esp. pp. 1-8.

[71] H Sheldon, 'Roman Southwark', in I Haynes, H Sheldon and L Hannigan (eds), *London under Ground, the Archaeology of a City* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 121-35.

[72] H Miller, 'London and Parliament in the Reign of Henry VIII', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, 35 (1962), p. 145.

March 1550 it paid the king nearly a thousand pounds for the Crown's lands and franchises in Southwark.[73]

Despite the apparent eagerness of the aldermen, the borough of Southwark was never fully integrated into the City's administrative framework. The aldermen tried and failed to move a bill through Parliament confirming its rights in the newly-created Bridge Ward Without,[74] but the real problem was the administrative reluctance of the aldermen themselves. Their first priority in establishing a system of governance in the new ward was not thoroughness but expedience. The first alderman for the new ward was chosen by the court in May 1550.[75] That July the Common Council declared that Southwark's aldermen should be chosen in the same way as in the City's other wards, where the Wardmote nominated a shortlist of four to the aldermen, who made the final choice.[76] When the seat opened again in 1553, however, it was the aldermen themselves—not the freemen of Southwark—who drew up the short list of nominees. David Johnson demonstrates that the aldermen chosen for Bridge Ward Without were socially and administrative equals to the rest of the court, concluding that 'the Court of Aldermen co-opted Southwark's representative simply because they could not be bothered to make arrangements enabling the people of the ward to nominate their own aldermanic candidates'.[77] Interference by Surrey officials further muddled the City's jurisdiction in Southwark, but for now it is enough to recognise that the relationship between the governors and the governed that existed in the twenty-five wards north of the river was never implemented in Southwark.

Southwark was not a liberty, of course, but it should remind us that jurisdictional ambiguity and frustration were common features of early modern local government, especially in London. Ambiguity and frustration were likewise caused by the growth of suburban Middlesex and Surrey. Between 1550 and 1650 the population of the metropolis grew from around sixty-five thousand to nearly four hundred thousand. Over the same period, the percentage of the metropolitan population living within the City fell from over seventy percent to around thirty percent.[78] The change shocked

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[73] CLRO Rep 12, fo 219; Stow, *Survey*, ii.68. They City paid £647/2/1*d* for the lands and a further £333/6/8*d* for jurisdiction there.

[74] CLRO Rep 12, fo 448v. See also Rep 10, fo 242v and S E Lehmberg, *The Later Parliaments of Henry VIII, 1536-1547* (Cambridge, 1977), p. 162.

[75] CLRO Rep 12, fo 231v.

[76] CLRO Jo. 16, fo 82v; D Johnson, *Southwark and the City* (Oxford, 1969), p. 142.

[77] Ibid., p. 147.

[78] V Harding, 'The Population of London, 1500-1700: A Review of the Published Evidence', *London Journal*, 15:2 (1990), p. 112.

contemporaries.[79] Elizabeth and her successors attempted to stem the tide of metropolitan growth, but without success. In a 1596 letter to Middlesex JPs, the Privy Council wondered at its failure:

> As wee have bin many times informed of the great abuses that grow by the multitude of base tenements and howses of unlawfull and disorderly resort erected in the suburbs and owt places of the citty of London, so have wee also from time to time given direccion by our letters…to stay or suppress such buildings…Howbeyt wee have not found such success and effect of our direccions as wee expected?[80]

Suburban government was a cobblework of medieval manorial jurisdictions and parochial administrations, overseen by county justices of the peace. It never approached the administrative complexity of that in the City, and the traditional structures used to govern England's rural counties were ill-suited to the demands of the large, dense and relatively poor population of London's suburbs. The aldermen, however, consistently opposed moves to expand the City's jurisdiction into suburban Middlesex.[81] City officials, though always willing to complain loudly about the suburbs, refused to take responsibility for their governance. As with so many of the issues facing the sixteenth century metropolis, the City's concerns about the suburbs reflected its uneasiness with demographic changes it was powerless to stop.

In comparison to Southwark and the suburbs, the post-monastic liberties represented a fragmented jurisdictional nuisance. Smaller and less populous than either, they were also more intimately linked to the City. Residents of most liberties north of the Thames could not leave their precincts without passing through the lord mayor's jurisdiction. In principle, the City opposed the franchises enjoyed by liberties *en masse*, but the varied history and ownership of the liberties forced the City to challenge the franchises of each separately. In Southwark, aldermanic authority met only the reluctance of individual residents and the intermittent bureaucratic meddling of Surrey JPs. In the liberties each franchise-holder (individual or corporate) had a stake in resisting civic meddling, and the residents of the precincts proved generally knowledgeable about their rights and eager to defend them against unwanted interference. Even if the City had succeeded in its piecemeal challenges to the liberties, the dilemmas that the annexation of

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[79] John Stow lamented that in the suburbs of London 'there hath been of late, in place of Elme trees, many small tenements raysed'. Stow, *Survey*, ii.71. Three decades later, Thomas Dekker wrote wistfully: 'How happy…were cities if they had no suburbs sith wence they serve but as caves where monsters are bred up to devour the cities'. Thomas Dekker, *English Villainies*, 1632, sig. F. 3v.

[80] *APC*, vol 25, pp 230-1. 23 February 1595/6. For more on building restrictions, see p. 41, below.

[81] Archer, 'Government of London', p. 25; R Ashton, *The City and the Court, 1603-1643* (Cambridge, 1979), pp.165-7.

Southwark had forced on the city (taxation, military service, and integration with civic structures of office-holding) would have to have been answered for each liberty individually.

The City's quest to appropriate the liberties met with royal ambivalence. In January 1545 the aldermen offered to purchase the London Charterhouse from the king, who denied them, only to grant the site to Sir Edward North, the chancellor of the Court of Augmentations, three months later.[82] In February 1538/9 the king flatly refused to consider the City's request that it might 'please your highnesse to gyve to the sayd mayre and comonalty the churches and scituacions and all the landes and tenemantes withyn the precinct of the sayd howses lately called the Grey, Blak, Whyte and Augustyne freers'.[83] Henry VIII is famously quoted for responding with an angry outburst: 'Are not we as well able to keep our privileges and liberties as the friars did keep their privileges always beforetime, free from the City?'[84] Henry's position, however, was more a result of financial necessity than of principle. When the City offered Henry £200 for the same four friaries eighteen months later, the offer evoked his derision.[85] In a meeting with former mayor Richard Gresham, 'the kinges highnes reported unto hym…that the Citezens of this Citye were pinche pence'.[86] The Court of Aldermen agreed amongst themselves that the price offered was more than fair, considering 'the charges of the mayntenance of the same howses shalbe so gret'.[87] To put the City's offer in context, when the Court of Augmentations finally granted away *part* of one of the four friary sites in 1550, it did so to satisfy a royal debt of over £600.[88]

The 1540 act that secured 'all and singular the…liberties, franchises, privileges and temporal jurisdictions' of the late religious houses 'to the possession of the King's Highness' explicitly confirmed the right of royal officials to intervene in formerly religious liberties, but it also allowed the Crown to grant their franchises, privileges and temporal jurisdictions to any person or corporate entity.[89] By preventing the absorption of religious sites into neighbouring jurisdictions, the king kept a valuable bargaining chip for future negotiations with civic corporations, the City of London in particular. Henry's

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[82] CLRO Rep 11, fo 159; G S Davies, *Charterhouse in London: Monastery, Mansion, Hospital, School* (London, 1921), p. 113.
[83] CLRO Jo 14, fo 129. 27 February 1538/9.
[84] J Stow, *A Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster*, ed J Strype, 2 vols (6 bks), (London, 1720), iii.184
[85] CLRO Jo 14, fo 216v. 1 August 1540.
[86] CLRO Rep 10, fo 200. 17 August 1540.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Folger MSS L.b. 379, 381, 410.
[89] 32 Hen VIII, c. 20 §§I, IV.

financial needs forced him to sell, barter, or grant away much of his newly-acquired monastic property: two-thirds of monastic estates were disposed of between 1543 and 1547.[90] In retrospect, it is not surprising that the Court of Augmentations proved unable to extract enough income to satisfy royal demands.[91] Religious houses were, by and large, lax landlords who were unlikely to fully exploit the financial potential of their estates. Whispers of a general dissolution, which grew louder throughout the 1530s, did little to motivate them toward greater vigilance. Neighbours frequently helped religious houses hide moveable property, while friends and relatives of monks joined local populations in securing favourable leases on monastic lands.[92] The sites of most religious houses, moreover, were ill-suited for immediate lay occupation, requiring substantial modification for residential use. In need of ready money, the king began to sell off his newly-acquired lands at a rapid pace. At the time, the City balked at paying the prices demanded by the king, and so the sites of London's religious houses found their way into other hands.

In response, the City developed a two-pronged approach to the liberties. On the one hand, it tried to purchase individual precincts (or the bulk of the land therein) from their owners. On the other, it challenged the liberties' jurisdictional franchises through statute or litigation. In October 1545 the aldermen encouraged their MP, Edward Hall, to work diligently for the passage of a bill then before Parliament to ensure 'that all exempte places of all Cyties burghes & townes…be under the rule of the governours of the same Cytyes burghes & townes'.[93] A second bill was introduced in the same session 'that all the inhabitantes of this Cytie may be compelled to be contrybutors to all the charges of the same.'[94] Neither bill was enacted, but the City's eagerness to support them is itself meaningful.

During Mary's reign, the City was understandably reluctant to challenge the independence of the post-monastic liberties, but Elizabeth's accession gave it new hope. In October 1559 the aldermen asked the Privy Council to demand more coherent government in the liberties and suburbs. In addition to their request that 'the Justices of the peace of the counties of Surrey & Middlesex may be admonished…to loke diligently to the good & quyet ordering and governance of all the inhabitantes within the confynes of these two counties', the aldermen pressed the council to entrust 'the liberties

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[90] Woodward, *Dissolution*, p. 124.
[91] See Cunich, 'The Administration and Alienation of Ex-Monastic Lands by the Crown, 1536-1547', ch. 2.
[92] 'As the end grew near,' Professor Savine observes, 'the English monks took steps to conceal all that could be concealed'. A Savine, *English Monasteries on the Eve of the Dissolution* (Oxford, 1909), pp. 188-93.
[93] CLRO Rep 11, fo 227v. 1 Oct 1545.
[94] Ibid.

belonging to Saint Martens and…the Blackfryers' to the City.[95] The council never acted on the latter request. Westminster Abbey (which had controlled St Martin le Grand since 1503) almost certainly objected to the City's proposal. Two weeks later three aldermen were sent 'to declare unto my lord Treasurer that the Cytie neyther ys hable nor intendeth any further to meddle with the purchasynge of great St Martyns'.[96] Lord Treasurer William Paulet had close links to the City—his wife's father had been lord mayor—but it seems likely the aldermen contacted him to appease then-secretary-of-state William Cecil, a great defender of the Elizabethan abbey.[97] Its dean was his former chaplain, and from 1561 until 1598, he served as steward, escheator, bailiff, and clerk of the abbey's Westminster manor.

By January 1567, however, the aldermen had forgotten their promise, and they ordered the City's learned council to inquire into 'all the good ways and meanes they can devise for the obteyninge and conectinge of great St Martyns into the governing rule and order of this Cytie…either in fee simple or by lease as they can best compasse and obteyne the same'.[98] Later in the century, still frustrated in its efforts to purchase St Martins, the City made an abortive attempt to pursue its jurisdictional claims in court.[99] Under Cecil's protection, the abbey continued to rebuff the City, and St Martin's remained independent until the whole precinct was razed in the 1820s to make room for the General Post Office.[100]

The aldermen had agreed to avoid meddling with St Martin's in 1559, but they continued to pursue Blackfriars, which had no protector as powerful as Cecil. The bulk of Blackfriars (including its jurisdictional franchises) had been granted to Sir Thomas Cawarden in 1550.[101] When he died in August 1559 it passed to his wife. In October the aldermen made their request to the Privy Council, but in December they approached Lady Cawarden directly 'for the purchasynge of her landes at the late Blackfryers to the Cyties use'.[102] Negotiations continued for two months; on 8 February 1560 the aldermen considered an offer to purchase 'all the landes & lyberties' there 'after the rate of 14 yeres purchase for asmuch thereof as they nowe have in possessyon & after the rate of 7 yeres

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[95] CLRO Rep 14, fo 227v. 16 Oct 1559.
[96] CLRO Rep 14, fo 240. 1 Nov 1559.
[97] G D Ramsay, *The City of London in International Politics at the Accession of Elizabeth Tudor* (Manchester, 1975), pp. 146-50.
[98] CLRO Rep 16, fo 154. 14 Jan 1566/7.
[99] A 24 November 1586 entry in the Repertories (16, fo 307) recorded that 'yt was this daye ordered by the courte here that Mr Salvyner shall dyne with Mr Walbraham in the matter now depending in sute…wherein the lybertyes of greate St Marytnes are to be putt in tryall &c'.
[100] See 55 Geo III, c. 91, §§71-3, 75.
[101] *Cal Pat Rol Edw VI*, iii.336.
[102] CLRO Rep 14, fo 258v. 4 Dec 1559.

purchase of all the resydue whereof they have but only the reversyon'.[103] The aldermen agreed that they should wait to make a final decision at their next meeting. On 13 February they authorised a committee to close the deal, but Lady Cawarden died the following day.[104]

Blackfriars' next owner, Sir George More, was not only unwilling to part with the precinct, but he also worked actively to maximise his franchises there and tenaciously resisted interference by the City. More supported Blackfriars' residents when they refused to cooperate with civic officials, a policy that resulted in a six-year legal battle between More and the City. The aldermen tried to use the lawsuit to challenge the independence of the liberties generally, but the judges involved chose to consider only the franchises of Black- and Whitefriars. In the end, the Privy Council ordered that 'that all matters betwene the Cittie and them concerninge the liberties of the saide Fryers shold remaine in *statu quo prius*, and the Lord Maior of London not to intermeddle in any cawse within the saide liberties'.[105] When several freeholds became available in Blackfriars in the 1590s, the City again failed to capitalise on the opportunity and it (like St Martin's) remained out of reach.[106]

While most of the City's attempts to undermine the liberties' franchises were fruitless, it met with notable success in the precinct of Christ Church (or Holy Trinity Priory) at Aldgate. In February 1532 Holy Trinity became the first London religious house to meet its end under Henry VIII.[107] For centuries Holy Trinity's prior had been *ex officio* alderman of the City's Portsoken Ward.[108] When the site passed to Lord Chancellor Thomas Audley in April 1534, the City encountered the stubbornness of post-monastic owners for the first time. Audley claimed the rights of the prior both within the precinct and in the civic government. The aldermen finally paid Audley two hundred marks in 1537 to relinquish his claim to the aldermanship.[109] After Audley's 1544 death, the precinct passed to his daughter Margaret, who in 1558 married Thomas Howard, fourth duke of Norfolk.[110] Norfolk made the precinct his London home for a period, from

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[103] CLRO Rep 14, fo 292. 8 Feb 1559/60.

[104] CLRO Rep 14, fo 294. 13 Feb 1559/60; TNA PROB 11/43/4.

[105] *APC*, vol 12, pp. 19, 21. 15 May 1580.

[106] CLRO Rep 24, fo 321v. 16 Nov 1598. For a more detailed account of the suit, see pp. 134 -137, below.

[107] E Jeffries Davis suggests its suppression was a convenient way for the royal government gauge public opinion before pursuing a wider policy of dissolution. Whether or not that was Henry's motive, no one raised any great objection to the priory's closure. E J Davis, 'The Beginning of the Dissolution: Christchurch, Aldgate, 1532', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 4th ser, 8 (1925), pp. 127-50.

[108] Ibid., p. 130.

[109] Ibid., pp. 144-5; CLRO Rep 9, fos 46, 53v, 146v, 254-7, 262-4, 270.

[110] *Repertorium Ecclesiasticum Parochiale Londinense. An Ecclesiastical Parochial History of the Diocese of London*, ed R Newcourt, 2 vols, (London, 1708-10), i.558.

which it earned a third name, Duke's Place. Norfolk also purchased the London Charterhouse from Lord North in 1565 and renamed it Howard House.[111] After Norfolk's conviction for treason in 1572, his sons were allowed to keep much of the estate. Philip (later earl of Arundel) took Howard House while his brother Thomas (later earl of Suffolk) inherited Duke's Place. Philip was convicted of treason and attainted in April 1589,[112] but Thomas survived to become 'one of the most extravagant courtiers at the extravagant Jacobean court.'[113] In January 1586 several aldermen met with him 'towchinge the sale of Christe Churche within Allgate',[114] which finally occurred in July 1592. Afterwards, the Corporation of London governed Duke's Place as landlord and as holder of the precincts' franchises, but it had to wait until 1608 for its jurisdiction there to be regularised.[115] Duke's Place nevertheless represents a rare success in the City's efforts to compromise the franchises of post-monastic liberties.

When James took the English throne, London's centrality to his new kingdom was obvious. As a centre of wealth and population it was unrivalled by anything in Scotland, and James understood the practicality of keeping its elite among his allies. In 1605 the king responded to confusion over the City's jurisdiction on the River Thames by issuing a new charter that spelled out its maritime authority and established its right to measure certain goods throughout the metropolis.[116] The charter did not, however, include the traditional beginning-of-reign confirmation of the City's longstanding privileges. The king soon found himself in need of London's financial resources. James obtained a loan of £63,000 in May 1607 and soon afterwards granted the City a second charter that both confirmed its previous rights and extended its jurisdiction of the Corporation over Duke's Place, St Bartholomew the Greater and Less, Black and White Friars, and Cold Harbour.[117] Why did James grant these powers, when his Tudor predecessors had resisted the same for seventy years? London's population continued to swell, defying all efforts at containment, and the royal government was increasingly worried about maintaining order there. After the discovery of the gunpowder plot (whose conspirators had links to crypto-Catholics in Blackfriars), the extension of civic

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[111] L Hendricks, *The London Charterhouse: Its Monks and Its Martyrs* (London, 1869), p. 248.

[112] His execution never took place, but he died attainted in 1595. J G Elzinga, 'Howard, Philip [St Philip Howard], thirteenth earl of Aurndel (1557-1595)', *ODNB.*

[113] P Croft, 'Howard, Thomas, first earl of Suffolk (1561–1626)', *ODNB.*

[114] CLRO Rep 21, fo 253. 13 Jan 1585/6.

[115] CLRO Let Bk AB, fo 106.

[116] *The Historical Charters and Constitutional Documents of the City of London*, ed W D G Birch, (London, 1887), pp. 132-8.

[117] Ibid; J Noorthouck, *A New History of London, Including Westminster and Southwark* (London, 1773), p. 147.

control to the liberties must have seemed to the lesser of two evils to the king and council, especially since it also secured to the Crown a hefty sum of ready money.[118]

The new charter extended the City's authority over only six liberties. Others in the capital continued unabated. While the charter declared that the residents of the six newly incorporated precincts 'shall be, and every of them is…under the rule, government, jurisdiction, oversight, search, correction, punishment, precepts and arrests of the said mayor…of our city of London', residents of Black- and Whitefriars continued to enjoy certain exemptions.[119] They were 'quit and exonerated of and from all taxes, fifteenths, and other burdens of scot, and of watch and ward, through or within the city'.[120] They were also exempted from the offices of constable and scavenger within the City's system of precincts. Those functions continued to be arranged within each liberty; the charter declared that residents of Blackfriars and Whitefriars were required to serve in locally-orchestrated offices and to pay charges for 'pavements, and cleansing the lanes, ditches, ways, watercourses, and sewers' there. The City, however, gained the right to escheated property in all six of the liberties, and to collect Parliamentary taxes from their residents. The 1608 charter was largely concerned with defining responsibility for keeping order within the formerly exempt places. The City was newly empowered to 'keep, or cause to be kept and executed, all ordinances and statutes of this our realm' within the newly annexed areas, 'and to chastise and punish those who…within the limits, franchises, and places aforesaid, are found to offend'.[121]

The charter changed the way the City approached issues in the liberties, but it also affected the how liberty residents resolved problems within their communities. In May 1610 Sir Bernard Whitstone, the owner of several houses in Whitefriars, wrote to the Court of Aldermen to complain 'of greate and intollerable abuses comytted there by the owners of howses adjoining', who had subdivided their buildings so that 'it is like to prove very dangerous in tyme of infeccion'.[122] In previous instances the aldermen had forwarded similar complaints to the Privy Council, which either took direct action or authorised the City to do so on its behalf. Confident of its newly-established jurisdiction in Whitefriars, the City used its own administrative machinery to address the issue. It

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[118] Further historical attention to the details surrounding the 1608 charter would be very welcome.
[119] *Historical Charters*, ed Birch, p. 144.
[120] Ibid.
[121] Ibid., p. 147.
[122] CLRO Rep 29, fo 227v. 22 May 1610.

instructed the Wardmote inquest for Farringdon Without to investigate and make 'such order…for reformacion thereof as shalbe thought fytt'.[123]

A similar trend is apparent in Blackfriars, whose residents had never hesitated to appeal to the Privy Council in cases of unwelcome civic interference. After 1608, however, Blackfriars residents began to look to the aldermen for help when problems arose. In April 1612 the court received a petition from 'divers inhabitants of Blackfryers' complaining of 'the stopping of a watercourse passing from the Glashowse yard toward Brydwell-dock, the which time out of mynde…hath been continued a general watercourse and is nowe stopped upp by one Edward Matthewes a Cutler'.[124] The aldermen acted promptly, ordering an investigation into the blocking up of what was essentially an open sewer. When a similar complaint arose from a resident of Duke's Place, the City took the opportunity not only to investigate the problem there, but also to consider 'the liberties of the Dukes Place and how the same may be reduced to a better forme of governance as the rest of the Cittie is governed'.[125] Later that year the City began a process that would leave it even more intimately involved in the administration of Duke's Place.

The City had taken a particular interest in matters in Duke's Place since the 1580s. In 1584 the aldermen had ordered an inquiry into the City's rights in (or at least at the periphery of) the liberty. They wanted to know whether the ground 'by London wall from Bevys Markes to Allgate…be thys Cyttyes or not and whether the Lord Maior ought to have jurisdiccion theare'.[126] Thomas Howard, who owned the liberty, had complained that one of the precinct's gates had been walled over by the City, and the aldermen sought to discover whether the gate had been constructed before or after the dissolution of the priory. The following month the lord mayor and Lord Howard appeared before the lord chief justice and the master of the rolls to present their dispute.[127] Their decision is unknown, but soon afterwards the City made its first offer to buy the liberty from Howard.[128]

In 1614 the residents of the Duke's Place—by their own count, four or five hundred strong—approached the aldermen for help setting up a new parish. Reminding the City of the vacant ground where a public chapel had stood 'within the memory of

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[123] CLRO Rep 29, fo 227v.
[124] CLRO Rep 30, fo 311. 23 Apr 1612.
[125] CLRO Rep 31, fo 302v. 4 May 1614.
[126] CLRO Rep 21, fo 89v. 1 Oct 1584.
[127] CLRO Rep 21, fo 111. 12 Nov 1584.
[128] CLRO Rep 21, fo 253. 13 Jan 1586/7.

man', the inhabitants prayed that the court 'would graunt unto them the said parcell of ground…and thereon they will at their own chardge edefie a churche or chappell'.[129] The aldermen, 'always willing to further religious & pyous workes' forwarded the request to the committee that administered the City's property and asked them to determine whether such a grant would be feasible.[130] The committee's decision has not survived, but seven years later the topic reemerged. By then, the land for the church had been allocated, and the City had reconsidered its role in the new parish. The aldermen—who had previously insisted that the new structure would be built at the charge of the parishioners—were now prepared 'to consider of *all things* for and concerninge the new erectinge of a Church in the Duke's Place'.[131] According to the 1633 edition of Stow's Survey, the City came around only after Duke's Place residents petitioned the archbishop of Canterbury 'to make their desire and intention known to the King's most excellent majesty…And the king finding the case so truly honest and religious…not onely gave the Lord Archbishop and the sutors both thankes and commendation, but also under his Hand and broad Seale authorized warrant for their proceeding.'[132]

In February 1621/2 the aldermen directed the City's chamberlain to 'satisfie and pay all such monie as in the bill of charges is contained…for and about the building of the said Church'.[133] Over the following year, the chamberlain made three payments of £100 each to the inhabitants of Duke's Place.[134] The City also made order for an annual payment of £13/6/8*d* 'for the endowment of the Church lately built in the Dukes Place'.[135] Despite civic support, the parish faced early challenges. In the first week of December 1622 the City learned that 'Mr Doctor Houghe hath sent an appeale to the Lordes Grace of Canterbury and obteyned an inhibicion of consecration of the church'.[136] Unsure what to do, the aldermen decided that 'nothinge be further donne therein by this Court untill that appeale be ordered and decreed'.[137] Houghe's obstructionism, however, did not significantly delay the consecration of the church. A note in the Repertories on 28 December 1622 indicates that it was to take place the next

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[129] CLRO Rep 32, fo 44v. 26 Jan 1614/5.

[130] CLRO Rep 32, fo 44v. 26 Jan 1614/5.

[131] CLRO Rep 36, fo 76. 28 Feb 1621/2. See also Noorthouck, *New History of London*, pp. 547-8. *Italics mine.*

[132] J Stow, *A Survay of London* (London, 1633), p. 147.

[133] CLRO Rep 36, fo 76. 28 Feb 1621/2.

[134] CLRO Rep 36, fos 249, 280v; Rep 37, fo 108.

[135] CLRO Rep 37, fo 26v. 20 Nov 1622.

[136] CLRO Rep 37, fo 33. 3 Dec 1622. For more on the ecclesiastical status of the parish, see *Repertorium Ecclesiasticum Parochiale Londinense. An Ecclesiastical Parochial History of the Diocese of London*, ed Newcourt, i.368.

[137] CLRO Rep 37, fo 33. 3 Dec 1622.

week, on 2 January, 'in the presence of the Bishop of London and the Archbishop of Canterbury'.[138] The City paid £22/13/4*d* for the consecration.[139]

The City's central role in the establishment (and funding) of St James Duke's Place complemented its other roles within the precinct. As landlord and government, it had investigated construction in the precinct and handed down uncontested decisions on various issues.[140] From 1622 the City also became patron of the curacy in the new parish, giving it ongoing influence over the tone of religious life there. In February 1622/3 the aldermen exercised their advowson for the first time, naming Mr Thomas Woode to the rectory, subject to the approval of the common council.[141] The City also took an active interest in the functioning of the parish in its first years. An April 1623 inquiry into its finances found that its first quarterly tithe brought in £15/10/3*d*. For a parish of four or five hundred, this was a reasonable sum.[142] After learning the details of the St James's financial situation, 'this court well approving, thereof doth think fitt that the said some of money be duly paid every quarter unto the said Mr Wood'.[143]

The following month, however, Hugh Hammersley, the alderman for Aldgate Ward, complained to the court that 'the officers and inhabitants of the parishe of St James [have] refused to doe suche services and other thinges as other the inhabitantes within that warde doe performe conceivinge or desiring to have a priviledge and Goverment among themselves'.[144] The assembled aldermen declared that 'the Inhabitantes of the said parishe of St James, ought att all tymes hereafter, upon any occation to be subject to the rule and commande of the Alderman of the said warde for the performance and execution of all suche thinges as are by him required of other the inhabitantes in other the parishes'.[145] The City entertained no doubts about its jurisdiction over Duke's Place and did not bother with an appeal to the Privy Council for confirmation of its authority there. The completion of the parish extended the strength

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[138] CLRO Rep 37, fo 57v. 28 Dec 1622.

[139] CLRO Rep 37, fo 85v. 23 Jan 1622/3.

[140] CLRO Rep 32, fo 356v; Rep 37, fo 26; Rep 42, fo 46.

[141] CLRO Rep 37, fo 69. 1 Feb 1622/3.

[142] Dr Archer's summary of tithing in sixteenth-century London shows that small City parishes like St Helen Bishopsgate and St Mary Colechurch had annual tithe income in 1535 amounting to £19/9/6*d* and £26/7/11*d* respectively. That increased several times over (to £66/13*s* and £44, respectively) by 1638. This does not compare unfavourably with the equivalent annual tithe collected in St James Duke's Place in 1623: £62/1*s*. I W Archer, 'The Burden of Taxation on Sixteenth Century London', *Historical Journal*, 44 (2001), p. 602.

[143] CLRO Rep 37, fo 144v. 8 April 1623.

[144] CLRO Rep 37, fo 169v. 15 May 1623; *The Aldermen of the City of London, temp. Henry III-1908*, ed A B Beaven, (London, 1908), p. 18.

[145] CLRO Rep 37, fo 169v. 15 May 1623.

of its case from primary freeholder and civic governor to ecclesiastical patron: a solid position by any measure.

Taxation

From almost the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, one of the greatest sources of friction between the City and the liberties centred on the responsibility of the latter to contribute to Parliamentary subsidies and military levies demanded of the former by the central government. While liberty residents and City leaders alike took other issues seriously, these contributions had an immediacy that other disputes lacked. They also had a tangible impact on those living in both jurisdictions. In the case of military levies, the Privy Council normally set the City's contribution at a certain level, the meeting of which would be made considerably easier by the inclusion of men and money from the exempt places. Inhabitants of those precincts, meanwhile, were eager to avoid such charges if at all possible. Despite unsympathetic responses from the royal government and a lack of any real precedent for their claims, liberty residents tenaciously argued that their jurisdictional franchises exempted them from liability to taxation by the royal government.

Before the dissolution, lay residents within religious precincts had contributed to the financial demands of the royal government. The residents of Blackfriars contributed to the 1522 loan to the king,[146] and a May 1535 list of parish subsidy collectors preserved in the Repertories of the Court of Aldermen includes collectors for the lay populations in Blackfriars and Bartholomew the Less.[147] A decade later, the City put forth a bill in Parliament 'that all the inhabitantes of this Cytie may be compelled to be contrybutors to all the charges of the same'.[148] It is clear that the City's intent was to reduce the freedoms enjoyed by liberty residents. The bill never passed into law, but that did not mean that the City was wholly unable to collect taxes from the exempt places. In 1587 the aldermen, concerned that the fifteenth was not being properly collected at St Bartholomew's, ordered that residents there would be assessed by 'the assessors of the same 15th in the ward of Farringdon without'.[149] There is no evidence that the residents resisted the new assessment procedures: the matter is not mentioned again by the aldermen, and the City certainly did not petition the Privy Council for further help.

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[146] *LPFD*, 3(2), p. 1053, no. 2486.
[147] CLRO Rep 9, fos 157v-167v. 7 May 1535.
[148] CLRO Rep 11, fo 227v. 1 Oct 1545.
[149] CLRO Rep 21, fo 472v. 3 Oct 1587.

Things did not always go so smoothly, and the City relied on the support of the Privy Council to induce compliance among the residents of the liberties. When the royal government demanded the impress of ten thousand men from London in March 1587/8, the liberties refused to contribute. The City appealed to the council for support, and it duly sent letters to 'the cheefe officers and others inhabitinge the Lybertyes of St Martyn's, Great and Lyttle St Barthollomewes, Black Fryers, White Fryers, the Mynoryes and Chryst Church [Duke's Place], within the Cyttie of London,' requiring them 'to contribute unto the chardge'.[150] The following year, when another thousand men were required of the City, the Privy Council headed off a similar problem by laying the contributions it expected from the each exempt place: 'St Martin le Grand 12, Black Fryers 10, Whyte Fryers 6, Chryst's Church [Duke's Place] 8, St Bartholemewes 6, St Katherine's 10.'[151] Such specificity was necessary; in its absence, liberty residents were likely to resist any assessment made at the discretion of the City. In 1591, the Privy Council addressed the liberties' continued reluctance. They wrote to the lord mayor asking him to inform the officers of the exempt places that

> by her Majesty's comandement…they will cause, not onlie at this tyme but hereafter whensoever their shalbe any imprestes, such convenient numbers to be leavyed within the said priviledged places as upon conference with you shalbe thought conveniente to make up the whole nomber allotted to the Cittie, and likewise to cause such somes of money to be collected on the inhabituntes in the said precincts as shalbe proprcionable to that which is leavied in other places of the Cittie.[152]

The council went even further, ordering that 'any persons at the tyme of imprestes, not ordinarily dwellers in the said exempt and priveledged places, shall retire themselves into those places, thereby to avoyde the service [were to be] severely punished for their lewd behaviour'.[153] The Privy Council continued to admonish the liberties to cooperate with the City on matters of taxation throughout the 1590s.[154] Their orders supporting the lord mayor, frequent as they were, did not represent a fundamental change in the relationship between the City and the liberties. The royal government was primarily concerned with maximising tax income. Its support therefore hinged on self-interest, and it did not expand the City's inherent authority over the liberties. Indeed, the frequency with which the Privy Council intervened suggests that the City could not consistently exercise even the limited administrative responsibility granted to it by the council.

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[150] *APC*, vol 15, p 428. 24 Mar 1587/8.
[151] *APC*, vol 17, p 118. 28 Mar 1589.
[152] *APC*, vol 21, pp 269-71. 11 July 1591.
[153] *APC*, vol 21, pp 269-71. 11 July 1591.
[154] *APC*, vol 24, pp 30-1 (28 Jan 1592/3); vol 29, pp 414-5 (29 December 1599).

The residents of Blackfriars, for example, refused to make payments to help in equipping three hundred men in 1599/1600.[155] The aldermen and the Privy Council together nominated three men 'to take some indifferent reasonable course for the indifferent and equall assessmentes to be imposed upon the inhabitantes of the Blackfriers to contribute ratably with the citizens of this Cittie in all paymentes'.[156] The men were authorised to charge the residents of Blackfriars 'for the arrearages by them heretofore owing for the like service', and were charged to certify their doings to both the Court of Aldermen and the Privy Council.[157] The City encountered similar resistance from St Martin le Grand in July 1601. Unlike in previous cases, the City did not appeal to the Privy Council. Instead, the aldermen named a committtee of prominent City merchants and aldermen to consider the matter in conference with the principal residents of the precinct.[158] Westminster Abbey's close ties at court had previously helped St Martin's rebuff civic appeals to the Privy Council, so the City may have hoped for greater success by approaching the liberty's residents directly.

The City's 1608 charter did not necessarily convince the residents of the annexed liberties to contribute to Parliamentary taxes levied on the City. In response to general resistance from those precincts in 1615, the lord mayor complained to the Privy Council. The council authorised him to confer with 'some discreet persons from every libertie…for the settling of some order howe the inhabitants of the sayd liberties may be assessed for those occasions of publique service at all tymes hereafter, as shall be required'.[159] The meetings must have proven fruitful. When the residents of several liberties refused to contribute again in 1624/5, the City had a ready answer:

> Forasmuch as the inhabitantes of the precinct of the Blacke Friers, and of Great and Little Bartholomewes do denie to paie or contribute to any assessment or taxation made by this Cittie for the publique good of the same, [seven aldermen were assigned to] consider of what they shall find in the Cittie Charter, and of what hath bin heretofore declared by the lordes of his Majesties Privie Councell and of some Judges touching privilledged places. And thereupon to advise what is fitt to bee done to bringe those places clayminge privilledge under rule, and government of this Cittie.[160]

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155 I W Archer, *Gazetteer of Military Levies from the City of London, 1509-1603*, no 101, <http://senior.keble.ox.ac.uk/fellows/extrapages/iarcher/levies.htm>.
156 CLRO Rep 25, fo 60. 13 Mar 1599/1600.
157 CLRO Rep 25, fo 60. 13 Mar 1599/1600.
158 CLRO Rep 25, fo 253. 16 Jul 1601.
159 *APC*, vol 34, pp 153-4. 14 May 1615.
160 CLRO Rep 38, fo 89. 1 Feb 1624/5.

The decision of the aldermen to investigate the constitutional and legal bases of its relationship with the liberties was a significant development. By shifting away from its traditional reliance on the Privy Council to provide relief on an *ad hoc* basis, the City assumed a more central role in the disputes. It was, in many ways, the practical application of the principles set forth in the City's 1608 charter. By the time Charles I began to exact ship money from the metropolis in 1634 the responsibility of the liberties to contribute to public charges alongside the City was well-established.[161] When the residents of St Martin le Grand asked to be assessed for ship money with Middlesex instead of London, even the advocacy of the Dean and Chapter of Westminster failed to affect the resolve of the Privy Council.[162]

Building Control and Environmental Regulation

As in the case of taxation, the City could often count on the backing of the royal government when it attempted to regulate construction in the liberties. In order to secure the support of king or council, the City cited the detrimental effects of unwanted development on social order. The City's involvement in regulating construction should also remind us that London's religious houses did not all give way to liberties after the dissolution. Only ten of the seventeen religious foundations within or adjacent to the City in 1530 continued to claim privileges in the decades that followed. Five of those were annexed by the City in 1608 (Blackfriars, Whitefriars, St Bartholomew the Greater, St Bartholomew the Less, and Holy Trinity Aldgate), the privileges of two others were never asserted coherently (Charterhouse and Crutched Friars). Only those liberties whose franchises were protected by a corporate entity with ties to the royal government continued to enjoy their franchises after 1608. The hospital of St Katherine was able to protect that liberty until its development as docks in the 1810s. St Martin le Grand remained under the protection of the Dean and Chapter of Westminster until the 1820s, and the Minories continued as part of the liberties of the Tower of London until its jurisdictional privileges were ended by the Local Government Act, 1888.

In 1548 the City became concerned about a wall under construction in Greyfriars, which had been turned over to the City two years earlier as the site of Christ's Hospital. The aldermen sent the lord mayor to 'vewe the grounde at Christchurge [Greyfriars] for the which the varyance ys nowe arrysen'.[163] A week later, the aldermen

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[161] CLRO Rep 53, fo 309v.
[162] TNA SP 16: 306/75-6, 320/68, 341/54, 367/20, 428/54, 433/9.
[163] CLRO Rep 11, fo 499v. 2 Oct 1548.

agreed that 'the Chamberlenn shall cause the walle lately erected…to be caste down to morrowe erlye in the morninge by 2 good & honest strong laborers' and that he should have 'some constables secretly in a redynes to see the kinges peace kepte yf nede shall requyre'.[164] The lord mayor asserted his authority in Greyfriars early on; in the century that followed, there is no evidence that residents there ever resisted the City or its officers.

The relationship between new building and social order was a frequent source of concern for the royal government. After 1580 Elizabeth and her successors attempted to regulate the growth of the capital through a series of royal proclamations. These regulations prohibited both construction on new foundations and the subdivision of existing dwellings into smaller tenements. Although the geographical scope of the proclamations varied—restricting building within as few as three or as much as ten miles of the City of London—there was no system of supervision 'sufficiently rigid to ensure obedience even in the smallest of these areas'.[165]

The first proclamation was addressed to 'the Lord Mayor of the city of London, and all other officers having authority in the same, and also all justices of the peace, lords and bailiffs of liberties not being within the jurisdiction of the said Lord Mayor' in July 1580, but the vigilance of local authorities was relatively futile, since only the attorney general could prosecute offenders, and then only before Star Chamber.[166] The second Elizabethan proclamation, which was also addressed to both the City and local officers in suburbs and liberties, created an automatic mechanism for referring offenders to the Privy Council: 'And if any shall henceforth offend [they] shall be committed to prison until they find sufficient sureties for their appearance in the Start Chamber to answer their contempts there, and for their good behavior in the mean season.'[167]

Although strictly worded, the proclamations were applied flexibly. It was clear from the beginning that no amount of regulation would stop new construction in London, and so enforcement focused on slowing growth and prosecuting particularly egregious transgressions. By James's accession it was already becoming evident that if prosecution of violators did not stop new construction, it could at least bring some revenue to the Crown. The first Jacobean proclamation, issued in 1605, included building

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[164] CLRO Rep 11, fo 503. 9 Oct 1548.

[165] Brett-James, *The Growth of Stuart London*, p. 91.

[166] *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, eds P L Hughes and J F Larkin, 3 vols, (London, 1969), ii.466-8, Proclamation 649 (7 Jul 1580).

[167] Ibid., iii.245-8, Proclamation 815 (22 Jun 1602).

standards for new development in addition to reiterating previous restrictions.[168] James went on to issue eleven further building proclamations. It was not until April 1615—in advance of James's eighth proclamation—that the Privy Council named a standing body of men to act as commissioners for building, part of a self-conscious effort to combat the inconsistent enforcement of the proclamations.[169] In November 1619 the commissioners for building made a concerted effort to enlist the help of constables in Middlesex and Surrey, and they asked the lord mayor to do the same for the constables within the City.[170] By the time Charles I took the throne, the proclamations had become little more than a revenue tool.[171]

In the end, government action was totally unable to stem the influx of 'foreigners' (as English-born non-Londoners were known) into the capital. William Baer argues that Tudor and Stuart attempts to limit the growth of the capital neither stemmed the flow of immigrants nor improved conditions in the metropolis. Instead they actually worsened the problems, since they resulted in housing shortages, over-crowding and increased rents.[172] In 1565/6 the Court of Aldermen attempted to ban foreign beggars from the streets of London.[173] Local authorities also tried to use the poor laws enacted by Parliament in 1597 and 1601 in conjunction with anti-vagrancy statutes to force poor migrants back to their parishes of origin for relief, turning 'honest immigrants into vagrants by denying them residence rights'.[174] In retrospect all these restrictions— reasonable responses to the dramatic increase in metropolitan population by the standards of the day—were doomed to failure. Despite the February 1595/6 complaints of the Privy Council to Middlesex JPs, building restrictions were not totally irrelevant.[175] For all their strong words, the Privy Council was pragmatic in its application of proclamations and statutes barring new construction. In August 1591 a Blackfriars

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[168] T G Barnes, 'The Prerogative and Environmental Control of Building in the Early Seventeenth Century: The Lost Opportunity', *California Law Review*, 58 (1970), p. 1545.

[169] *APC* 1615-6, pp. 121-2. The commission included 'the whole body of the Privie Counsell, the Lord Maior, the Lord Hobbard, the Lord Cheife Baron, the three other learned Barons, the Attorney Generall, the King's two Sargeantes, the Solicitor General, Sir Henry Wotton, Sir George More, the two Chamberlains of the Exchequer, Sir Thomas Benet, Sir William Craven, Sir John Swinarton Sir Lionel Cranfield, Sir Arthur Ingram, Mr John Dacombe, Mr John Calvert, Mr Francis Cottingham, Mr Francis Mingay, Mr Henry Spillar, Mr Edmund Dobleday, Mr Thomas Fanshaw, Mr Thomas Watson, Mr John Mayle and Mr George Lowe, or any five of them, and in case of discharge Mr Secretary Winwood, Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Master of the Rolls, Sir Thomas Lake, the foure Barons and the Kinge's Counsell or any two of them to be two.'

[170] *Rememb. Index*, p. 47.

[171] Barnes, 'Prerogative and Environmental Control of Building', p. 1350.

[172] W C Baer, 'Housing the Poor and Mechanick Class in Seventeenth Century London', *London Journal*, 25:2 (2000), p. 13.

[173] CLRO Rep 16, fo 1.

[174] Beier, *Masterless Men*, p. 11.

[175] See p. 28, above.

goldsmith applied to the council for a dispensation from the regulations. In granting his request, the council observed that the land on parcel of land had 'greate heapes of soil and filth laid there, which in hot weather is very daungerous to breed infection' and to order him 'to inhibit such common cariadge of soile and rubbish to the place'.[176] Occasional, regulated development posed less of a threat to public order than the accumulated filth posed to public health.

There is no evidence that the City seized on the new regulations to interfere in the liberties. When the first proclamation was issued in July 1580, the City had just been reprimanded by the Privy Council for attempting to assert authority over the Blackfriars. So when Henry Naylor erected a set of small tenements and a narrow road through the old cloister at Blackfriars in July 1581, the City did not move to challenge him—his neighbours did so themselves. Worried that the development would pester their neighbourhood with 'sundry poore people' and increase the danger of disease there, they appealed to the Privy Council. The council set up an inquiry, suggesting not only that 'the cottages maie be put downe and the highe waye barred uppe, but also [that] Nailour or any other pretendinge title in any part of the said Cloister maie be bounde hereafter not to erecte or practise anything to the offence of the inhabitauntes'.[177] Naylor was an ongoing nuisance in Blackfriars, but the inhabitants of that liberty had a long history of inviting outside authorities to arbitrate matters of concern there. Even in the absence of a formalised system of government, the communities within liberties could press for compliance within their borders

The City became more confident in its ability to control illegal building after it received its 1608 charter. Even then, however, the aldermen tended to act through appeals to the Privy Council rather than on its own initiative. In July 1613 the 'Recorder and divers Aldermen of the cittie of London' complained to the council that a man by the name of Sturgis had recently leased a large house in Whitefriars, only to subdivide it into three or four small tenements, 'to the great pesteringe and inconvenience of that place'.[178] The Privy Council immediately authorised the aldermen to 'take present order, aswell for the stay of anie newe buildinge to bee there erected, as alsoe for devydinge of the house into anie more tennementes then hath ben heretofore used there' and to refer Sturgis and other future offenders to the council to 'aunsweare their contempt'.[179] The

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[176] *APC*, vol 21, pp 367-8. 7 August 1591.
[177] *APC*, vol 13, pp 76-7. 14 Jun 1581.
[178] *APC*, vol 33, pp 165-6. 29 Jul 1613.
[179] *APC*, vol 33, pp 165-6. 29 Jul 1613.

City even began to report development in areas that remained outside its jurisdiction. In 1618 it submitted to the council a 'list of such principall buildinges as have ben erected contrary to his Majesty's proclamacions' which included two tenements under construction in the Minories.[180] After investigating, the council declared that on account of the new development 'the passage for carrages necessarylie required for the Office of his Majesty's Ordinance is stopped and hindred'.[181] We should not, however, assume that the decision to raze the illegally-built structures in the Minories represented a recognition of the City's role in enforcement there. The Ordnance Office in the Minories had recently suffered under a corrupt administrator, and the Privy Council spent the latter part of the 1610s attempting to re-establish regularity there. The council ordered that 'the foresaid building be forthwith pulled downe to the ground and utterly demolished so as the example thereof…may deterr others from presumeing to offend in the like kinde hereafter'.[182]

When the Privy Council intervened to halt Henry Naylor's 1581 development in the Blackfriars, it cited two motivations. One was the fear that it would bring in 'verie lewde personnes, to the breache of all good order and peril unto the dwellers within the said Fryers'; the other was the 'danger that may followe if the infection of the Plage or other disease might come amongeste them'.[183] The aldermen harboured similar fears. In the eyes of civic and royal governors alike, the incessant growth of the capital posed a threat to public order in itself, but it also increased the likelihood of destabilising pandemic disease. The two concerns were united by what Thomas Barnes describes as 'an almost pathological fear of rebellion' among the elite.[184] It is important to understand that the regulation of building in the capital was underpinned by these fears.

While historians disagree on the stability of London (and England generally) during the early modern period, most scholars acknowledge that the rapid social and economic changes of the sixteenth century accentuated tensions and (especially in the eyes of governors) threatened the traditional order in new ways. The fear was particularly well-developed in London, where 'a few could raise many, rumour turn to action, and

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[180] *APC*, vol 36, p 245. 15 Aug 1618.
[181] The Ordnance Office had relocated to the Minories under Elizabeth, and its operations coexisted there alongside a thriving lay community.
[182] *APC*, vol 36, p 458. 23 May 1619.
[183] *APC,* vol 13, pp 76-7.
[184] Barnes, 'Prerogative and Environmental Control of Building', p. 1341.

threats to violence'.[185] Wat Tyler's 1381 Peasants' Revolt and the apprentices' uprising on May Day 1517 continued to haunt the capital. The 1601 Essex Rebellion and the later events of the Civil War underlined London's potential as a tinderbox, but the century after the dissolutions is remarkable for the absence of violent unrest in the face of the rising population and prices, religious tensions and social dislocation. If the Repertories and the *Acts of the Privy Council* offer any surprising evidence in such matters, it is that the liberties were a relatively minor source of worry in the context of metropolitan order generally. The regular supply of food—the assize of bread and preparation for and reaction to grain shortages—receives, by multiples, more attention between 1540 and 1640 than do the exempt places.[186] Moreover, these sources make it clear that fears about order in the liberties were almost always linked to similar fears for the metropolis as a whole, including the City of London itself. Especially in the view of the royal government, the liberties were no more likely to be the source of unrest than any other part of the capital. Occasional incidents were a minor nuisance to the aldermen, but major concerns were rare. When they did surface, the Privy Council was more than willing to intervene. This required administrative cooperation, and it may even have pricked the City's pride, but it had, at most, a marginal effect on the quest for order in the metropolis.

The City was trapped in a difficult position. Its leaders were sincerely committed to maintaining a safe and orderly community, but where their authority was questioned, in the liberties and the suburbs, they relied almost entirely on the cooperation of franchise-holders and local residents. This was particularly true when the City was dealing with liberties that continued to be controlled by religious organisations. When the aldermen became aware of a series of offences within the cathedral precinct, for example, they authorised a representative to 'goe to the deane of Powles, and to gyve him notyce of that dysorder, and to praye him to gyve suche remedye therein…as he shall see meete, for Christian religion and good order'.[187] Without the cooperation of the dean, however, the lord mayor was powerless. Appeals to the Privy Council were unpredictable when liberties maintained ties to the Church. The dean and chapter of St Paul's cathedral—like those of the collegiate church at Westminster and the directors of St Katherine's hospital—jealously protected their franchises.

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[185] S Brigden, *New Worlds, Lost Worlds: The Rule of the Tudors, 1485-1603.* (London, 2000), p. 174.
[186] CLRO Reps 9-56, *passim.*
[187] CLRO Rep 19, fo 18v. Nov 1575.

Southwark offered further complications to the City, since its authority there was challenged not only by residents of liberties like Paris Garden and the Clink, but also by the Surrey authorities. In 1587 the residents of Southwark complained to the Privy Council—not the City—that the playhouses on the south bank of the Thames, 'especiallie within the Libertie of the Clincke', were ignoring the ban on Sunday playing.[188] The council ordered the Surrey JPs to 'take such stricte order for the staying of the said disorder as is allreadie taken by the Lord Maiour within the Liberties of the Citie'.[189] A similar order was sent to the justices for Middlesex, but it did not name specific areas of concern. Although the moral opposition of City fathers to playing is well-documented, we should also remember that the crowds assembled in playhouses spurred the authories' very real concerns about crime and public health. As David Johnson points out, City authorities 'were against playhouses because playhouses attracted what, in the absence of a police force, was most difficult to control—an excited crowd'.[190] Civic authorities and Surrey justices vied for precedence in keeping peace in the borough. While battles were largely spurred by the jealousy with which officials guarded their spheres of jurisdiction, there were also financial incentives to claim such a time-consuming responsibility.[191] When public order was at stake, however, the City was often willing to compromise. In January 1604/5 the lord mayor and his justices for Southwark met with the Surrey JPs 'to conferre together for reformacion of certaine abuses in the said boroughe'.[192] Such cooperation may not have prevented future tensions, but it was a necessary expedient for keeping order in the short term.

The City's position was strengthened when concerns about unrest ran high. In such circumstances, the Privy Council relied on civic officials to spearhead efforts to keep the peace throughout the capital. In April 1570 the aldermen appealed to the council for 'there ayde and assistence for th'executing of politique orders and policies, as they have use to do for keepinge the people in good order within this Citie'.[193] In other instances, the Privy Council took the initiative. Fearing that 'certaine apprentices and other idle persons' planned to 'renew their lewd assemble together…for some bad and miceivous intencion' at Midsummer 1592, the council sent letters to the lord mayor and

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[188] *APC*, vol 15, pp 271-2.
[189] *APC*, vol 15, pp 271-2. 29 October 1587. A similar letter was sent to the Middlesex JPs, though it did not mention any specific playhouse.
[190] Johnson, *Southwark and the City*, p. 224.
[191] Ibid., pp. 234-46.
[192] CLRO Rep 26, fo 497v. 15 Jan 1604/5.
[193] CLRO Rep 17, fo 10. 27 Apr 1570.

to representatives in seven liberties and a number of suburban areas.[194] The letters' recipients were charged to 'send for the constables and some of the chiefest and discreetest inhabitauntes…that there maye be a stronge and substancyall watche kepte'.[195] Through its action in this case the Privy Council identified those in positions of authority in each liberty. Several of the recipients held no office in their precincts; they were merely men of stature there. The council's charge reinforced their personal authority and made clear their responsibility for maintaining order in their respective neighbourhoods.

The City was in a more authoritative position after 1608. After successfully carrying out an arrest in Duke's Place in 1611, the aldermen contemplated its importance as precedent. Conscious of its expanding authority within the liberties, the City sought to articulate that authority in a coherent way. They asked the City's 'learned counsell' to formulate a policy explaining the City's recently-established rights in such cases. Specifically, the aldermen asked the counsellors to 'consider what direcions are fitt to be given to the said Inhabitantes for orderinge & demeanynge of themselves in matters of arrest made within the said place & in other thinges concernynge the privileges of this Citty'.[196]

Concerns about sanitation and its effects on public health were central to the City's relationship with the exempt places in its midst. They reflected not only the desire to avoid pandemic disease, but also a fear that outbreaks could push social tensions to the breaking point.[197] While contemporaries did not understand the precise causes of disease, they understood that epidemics took no account of jurisdictional boundaries, and that an outbreak anywhere threatened the entire conurbation. They were also aware of the severity with which plague struck impoverished, overcrowded and dirty parts of the capital. Paul Slack demonstrates that the intensity of plague outbreaks in alleys compared to main streets 'in some of the inner city parishes can be plotted; and the same picture of social and hence topographical polarization in the incidence of plague can be seen in variations in mortality between parishes.'[198] The approach to dealing with plague

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[194] *APC*, vol 22, p 549.

[195] *Ibid.* The letter regarding the Clink and Paris Garden were addressed to Mr Gardiner, Mr Bowier and Mr Parker; those for St Katherine's and East Smithfield were addressed to the Lieutenant of the Tower and the Master of St Katherine's; Blackfriars' letters were sent to Lord Cobham; those for Whitefriars were sent to Sir Thomas Sherley; and the Bailiff of Westminster was charged with organising the watch for St Martin le Grand, along with Westminster and the Strand.

[196] CLRO Rep 30, fo 114. 7 May 1611.

[197] P Slack, *The Impact of Plague in Tudor and Stuart England* (London, 1985), pp. 303-10.

[198] P Slack, 'Metropolitan Government in Crisis: The Response to Plague', in A L Beier and R Finlay (eds), *London 1500-1700: The Making of the Metropolis* (London, 1986), p. 62.

became more formalised over time. Before 1540, the focus of the civic government was on *ad hoc* responses to outbreaks of epidemic disease.[199] The bills of mortality—first introduced in 1532 and expanded under Elizabeth—helped the City and later the royal government to understand the progression of infection in the capital. By the 1580s the Royal College of Physicians successfully pushed the Privy Council to adopt regulations for responding to epidemics.[200] Although some of the regulations—particularly those related to the quarantine of infected houses—encountered popular resistance, they at least helped local officers approach outbreaks more coherently.

There was nevertheless considerable flexibility built in to the system for responding to plague. In 1603, plague struck the eastern edge of the City with particular force. Seventy-seven Minories residents died that year, more than five times the annual average during the preceding decade.[201] By June, the seriousness of the problem was clear, and the Court of Aldermen decided to pay £1/10*s* weekly to the parish of St Botolph Aldgate 'during the tyme of this present infeccion of the plague, to be disturbuted…amongst such poore people within the same whose howses are or shalbe within that tyme infected with the plague'.[202] Such generosity on the part of the aldermen, contingent though it was upon the effective quarantining of the sick, was unique to the summer of 1603. It suggests both the poverty of the residents of St Botolph Aldgate and the severity of the outbreak in the parish, which abutted the Minories. By the 1630s responses to plague were clearly more advanced than they had been a century before. In 1631 the king's physician Theodore de Mayerne proposed the creation of a standing committee of civic authorities, Privy Councillors and bishops that 'could deal both with epidemics and with the conditions which produced them—vagrancy, overcrowding, bad hygiene and inadequate food supplies.'[203] Mayerne's suggestion went unheeded, but it suggests that contemporary professionals understood more of the factors that contributed to the spread of disease than their predecessors had a century before.

A more mundane concern was the public nuisance caused by the improper disposal of waste. The sewers of early modern London—advanced for their day—were little more than the central gutters of the streets. Householders were responsible for cleaning the street in their immediate vicinity, sweeping filth into piles. Parish authorities generally arranged for a raker to collect the piles of waste into a laystall at the edge of the

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[199] See for example, CLRO Jo 14, fo 106.

[200] Slack, 'Metropolitan Government in Crisis', p. 65.

[201] GL MS 9238.

[202] CLRO Rep 26, fo 157v.

[203] Slack, *Impact of Plague*, p. 219.

parish. Ideally, these laystalls were emptied regularly by nightsoilmen, the unenvied labourers who carried the filth farther afield—often to the nearest waterway. In places where refuse collected—at the banks of the Rivers Fleet and Thames or in any neighbourhood laystall emptied irregularly—the stench can easily be imagined. Mark Jenner suggests that the one theme connects early modern efforts to regulate the disposal of waste: the preservation of the flow of water: 'whether it was animal guts, mud, building rubbish, human, equine or porcine excrement that was being discharged into the streams and channels, mattered far less than that these were blocking water flow.' Time and time again offences were described as being to the great obstruction of the current, as preventing the free passage of water or as clogging the sewers.[204]

The modern system for disposing of waste developed only slowly. Although commissions for sewers were appointed sporadically periodically from 1427, the first sewer commissions for the metropolis as a whole were not named until Elizabeth's reign, and they were not established permanently until 1667. The over-arching of sewers did not occur on any large scale until the late seventeenth century.[205] Concerns about the state of the River Fleet, however, meant that commissioners for that waterway and its tributaries were named regularly from the late fifteenth century onwards.[206] By the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, the state of the Fleet was so bad that the Court of Common council instituted more frequent civic taxes to pay for its cleansing.[207] The spike in mayoral precepts governing the disposal of waste in the later sixteenth century also had its roots in the particularly virulent outbreak of plague that had struck the capital in 1563.[208] The frequency with which the sewers were to be cleaned increased over the period as well. Civic regulations called for them to be cleaned two or three times weekly in the 1540s, but by the turn of the seventeenth century that had increased to once or twice daily.[209]

It should be remembered that problems of sanitation were not confined to the liberties. In January 1609/10, the aldermen were asked to intervene when the scavengers living in Aldersgate Ward refused to pay parishioners' rates.[210] Waste disposal was a challenge for the entire metropolis, as it would continue to be into the nineteenth

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[204] M S R Jenner, 'Early Modern English Conceptions of Cleanliness and Dirt as Reflected in the Environmental Regulations of London, c.1530-c.1700' (U of Oxford DPhil thesis, 1991), p. 375.

[205] Ibid., pp. 366, 381.

[206] Ibid., pp. 111, 367-8.

[207] CLRO Jo 20, fo 64v.

[208] Jenner, 'Early Modern English Conceptions of Cleanliness', p. 114.

[209] Ibid., p. 117; CLRO Rep 26, fo 332.

[210] CLRO Rep 29, fo 154. 9 Jan 1609/10.

century. The churchwardens in the nearby Minories, on the other hand, were particularly conscientious about their waste disposal system. They had the liberty's laystall repaired in 1575. When the repairs proved unsuitable, they had it rebuilt entirely in 1579, and they kept close watch over the raker they hired to clear it.[211] That waste accumulated in or near other liberties was an unfortunate accident of geography. Whitefriars, St Katherine's, the Clink and Paris Garden all stood at or near the banks of the Thames, and Blackfriars had the misfortune to stand at the confluence of the Fleet and the Thames. When problems occurred, we can be sure that no one regretted them as much as those in adjacent neighbourhoods, whether liberties or not.

The records of the Court of Aldermen and the Privy Council suggest that those who complained about improperly removed sewage were often liberty residents. In 1600 a laystall was constructed in Bridewell, on the bank of the Fleet opposite the Blackfriars residence of Lord Henry Seymour. Seymour petitioned the Privy Council for relief. In conjunction with the City—which had jurisdiction over Bridewell—the council shut down the waterside sewage dump. The following spring, however, it was being used again. The council asked lord mayor to intervene immediately to dismantle the laystall, 'so neare and directly under the windowes of his Lordship's principall lodgings: Besides the loathsome prospect thereof the savour is like to breede infection amongst his familie and make his house altogether unfitted to inhabit, which wee hould too great a wronge to be offered to any, and much more to a nobleman of his quallitie'.[212] Mistaken in connecting its foul odour to disease, the Privy Council still had legitimate reasons to order the destruction of the unauthorised laystall.

In February 1610/11 five men living in Whitefriars (a brewer and four woodmongers) asked the aldermen to investigate a laystall interfering with passage through Water Lane to the Whitefriars Dock: 'the lane is so insufficyently paved and the docke so stopped with soile & filth that the landinge there is very much hindered'.[213] The City investigated the matter and ordered the removal of the waste. In 1631, the residents of Black and Whitefriars joined together to complain that, contrary to their wishes, waste was continually dumped 'at the Blackfriers and Whitefriers staires', both of which led down into the River Thames. In this case, their complaint was not to the Privy Council but to the City. The aldermen assigned three of their own to 'view the annoyances…and

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[211] LPL MS 3390, fos 48, 54, 86, 89.
[212] *APC*, vol 31, pp 268-9. 9 April 1601.
[213] CLRO Rep 30, fo 69. 21 Feb 1610/11.

consider how the same may be moved and reformed'.[214] Such complaint was not unprecedented among the residents of Whitefriars. Two years before the City assumed jurisdiction over the precinct in 1608, residents there asked the aldermen to intervene on their behalf. John Taylor, a resident of the City, was dumping 'ordure and dong' in Whitefriars, 'to the annoyance of the inhabitants thereaboutes'. The court enjoined him to carry the waste 'awaye from thence out of the liberties of this Cittye'.[215] Another laystall dispute earned Whitefriars the first civic attention after the annexations by the Jacobean charter; residents there did not resist the City's intervention.

On other occasions, the aldermen took initiative, investigating and resolving waste problems in or near exempt places. Most jurisdictions (parishes and liberties alike) were eager to remove waste quickly and efficiently. When eagerness resulted in the disposal of filth into bordering areas, tensions understandably rose. The Court of Aldermen was the natural adjudicator of many such disputes. In 1604, for example, they ordered Stephen Soame to inspect a sewer running out of the Minories to ensure it was not illicitly dumping waste into the City.[216] In 1622 the aldermen ordered an inspection of the common sewer that ran along one edge of Duke's place, and asked the inspectors to determine 'to whom the same ditche belonges and by whome of right the same ought to be cleansed and consider what the charge thereof may bee'.[217] Likewise, when a dispute emerged in 1636 between Whitefriars and the neighbouring parish of St Bride over Water Lane and the Whitefriars Dock, the aldermen stepped in.[218] After investigating, they decided that the parishioners of St Bride, who 'for the space of one and twenty years had quietly and peaceably enjoyed from the Lord Maior a lease of water lane & the docke', were responsible for the expense of cleaning the dock and paving the lane.[219] It naturally followed, according to the aldermen, that they should also have the right to deposit their soil at the laystall there, to which the residents of Whitefriars had objected.

Aliens

Over the course of the sixteenth century, some of London's liberties became well-known for housing large numbers immigrants. Of course, not all liberties attracted aliens. Neither Duke's Place nor Whitefriars ever became a centre of immigrant

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[214] CLRO Rep 45, fo 491. 10 Sept 1631.
[215] CLRO Rep 27, fo 170. 6 Mar 1605/6.
[216] CLRO Rep 26, fo 332v. 24 Apr 1604.
[217] CLRO Rep 36, fo 177v. 25 Jun 1622.
[218] CLRO Rep 50, fo 159v. 27 Mar 1636.
[219] CLRO Rep 50, fo 189-190v. Apr 1636.

settlement, while some parts of the City did, strongly suggesting that factors other than jurisdictional status influenced the settlement choices of strangers.[220] For many contemporaries, however, the visibility of the stranger populations in places like Blackfriars and St Martin's was enough to make the liberties suspect. Understanding the role of immigrants in the early modern metropolis is therefore central to understanding the liberties. To do so requires familiarity with both the published *Returns of Aliens* and the extensive body of secondary work that has been published on aliens in the metropolis.

London's population grew at an alarming rate between 1500 and 1700, but each year more people died there than were born. The imbalance was overwhelmed, however, by the number of people moving into London annually. Most of these new Londoners came from within the realm. Work by scholars such as E A Wrigley documents the process that brought tens of thousands of migrants from the English provinces to early modern London.[221] Lien Luu, however, argues that Wrigley overestimated the economic importance of these 'foreigners', as English migrants to the capital were known. Instead, Luu stresses the new skills and technical expertise that continental immigrants—known at the time as 'strangers' or 'aliens'—brought with them.[222] For many native Londoners, neither new skills nor an increased customer base could outweigh the competition posed by these newcomers. Since aliens were more easily identified than English-born foreigners, they faced more acute hostility. Irene Scouloudi, who analysed returns from 1583 to 1639, concludes that the fear of strangers in the liberties 'was but a dreadful chimera', but that does not mean it was not a powerful force at the time.[223]

If one characteristic tied together the experience of aliens in early modern London, it was the variability of their reception by their English hosts. Joseph Ward and others have pointed out that feelings toward aliens ran the gamut from antipathy to sympathy, with a heavy dose of ambivalence between the two. These feelings varied from group to group within the metropolis, but they also varied over time. Nigel Goose suggests that the polarization in English urban society goes a long way toward explaining

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[220] See figure 6.1, p. 216 below for a comparison of the alien populations in the liberties and in the four City wards most popular among immigrants.

[221] E A Wrigley, 'A Simple Model of London's Importance in Changing English Society and Economy 1650-1750', *Past and Present*, 37 (1967), pp. 44-70.

[222] L B Luu, *Immigrants and the Industries of London, 1500-1700* (Aldershot, 2005), p. 3. According to Luu, the periods of greatest opportunity followed the exodus of religious refugees from the continent in 1567 and again in the late 1580s.

[223] I Scouloudi, *Returns of Strangers in the Metropolis, 1593, 1627, 1635, 1639: A Study of an Active Minority* (London, 1985), p. 80.

the restrictive regulations forced on foreign immigrants.[224] In theory, the economic activities of aliens were substantially restricted, and their behaviour was closely monitored. In practice, however, the policies followed by the civic and royal governments were far from systematic. As Irene Scouloudi writes, strangers, 'if circumspect, or useful to the City or central government, or when disturbances were not stirred up by trouble-makers, were left to their own devices.'[225]

Both early modern Londoners and modern-day historians have assumed that the aliens who took up residence in liberties did so primarily to avoid governmental oversight. According to Luu, 'besides offering accommodation in central, prized districts of the city, these liberties and exempted places also provided extensive immunities, making them the favourite resort for both non-freemen and religious dissidents.'[226] There is some truth in this assertion, but it belies the complex considerations that drew strangers to the liberties (and indeed the complexity of the liberties themselves).

There was, of course, a variety of opinions on aliens in London, but it is difficult to deny that intense displays of xenophobia, rare though they were, tainted the city as a whole. The most notorious of these displays was the 'Evil May Day' of 1517. According to Hall's *Chronicle*, 1,300 Londoners gathered at St Martin le Grand to protest the supposed special treatment of aliens by the royal government. The aliens living in St Martin's began hurling projectiles into the crowd from there windows while

> Sir Thomas More, perswading the rebellious persons to cease: insomuch as at length, one Nicholas Dennis, a serjeant at armes, being therefore hurt, in a furie cried downe with them, and then all the misruled persons ran to the doores and the windowes of the houses within St Martins, and spoiled all that they found.[227]

May Day 1517 was the most violent eruption of anti-alien sentiment in early modern London. It was certainly not the only manifestation of such sentiments, but it had significant effects in its own right.[228] Changes in European trade and politics during the late fifteenth century had already begun to erode the historically prominent position of

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[224] N Goose, 'Introduction', in N Goose and L B Luu (eds), *Immigrants in Tudor and Early Stuart England* (Brighton, 2005), p. 14.

[225] Scouloudi, *Returns of Strangers*, p. 45.

[226] L B Luu, 'Natural-Born Versus Stranger-Born Subjects: Aliens and Their Status in Elizabethan London', in N Goose and L B Luu (eds), *Immigrants in Tudor and Early Stuart England* (Brighton, 2005), pp. 69-70.

[227] E Hall, *The Union of the Two Noble and Illustre Famelies of Lancastre & Yorke* (London, 1548), Hen VIII, fo 61v. Hall also included a poignant statement of contemporary xenophobia. He quotes one of the chaplains of St Mary Spital as saying 'the straungers compass all the cytye rounde aboute, in Southwarke, in Westmynster, Temple Barre, Holborne, Sayncte Martynes…and Sayncte Kathyerynes, and forstall the market, so that no good thynge for them commeth to the market; which is the cause that Englishmen want and starve'; Ibid., fo 60.

[228] M J Holmes, 'Evil May-Day 1517: The Story of a Riot', *History Today*, 15 (1965), pp. 642-8.

Italians in London. The May Day riots, which targeted Italians particularly, accelerated that process. Lien Luu notes a sharp drop in the number of Italian immigrants in the decades that followed.[229]

In the two centuries after Evil May Day the nature of immigration to England changed drastically. Soon after Henry's break from Rome, England began to attract religious refugees, who quickly began to outnumber the older group of immigrants that had arrived in London for primarily economic reasons. As the English Reformation progressed, and especially after Elizabeth's accession, the issue of religion further complicated relations between aliens and their neighbours. Nigel Goose points out that 'their reception was shaped by the very fact of their Protestantism, but also by the perception of the economic benefits they could bring on the one hand, and the economic competition that they posed within the context of an increasingly polarized society on the other.'[230] The stranger churches founded under Edward and revived by Elizabeth helped to remind Londoners of the confessional bonds they shared with immigrants, but they had unanticipated consequences as well. When strangers congregated to attend services at the French or Dutch churches—both in Broad Street Ward—Englishmen were made aware just how many strangers were in the City. The effect was to stimulate a wave of hostile rumours about the vast numbers of strangers in the city, who made easy scapegoats for high prices and food shortages.[231]

Hostility ran particularly high when periods of economic or social stress coincided with a large influx of continental migrants. In the 1580s, such a coincidence culminated 'in harassment by informers and prosecution by guilds, threats of violence, increasing curtailments of aliens' economic activities and financial exactions.'[232] Even during such periods of tension, however, some immigrants fared better than others. Irene Scouloudi points out that long residence did much to make a stranger acceptable in the eyes of his neighbours.[233] But even if immigrants to early modern London only rarely experienced overt hostility, they suffered a variety of practical legal disabilities. These disadvantages had only been formalised in the latter half of the fifteenth century, but they strictly limited the conditions under which immigrants could work.[234] Their ability to retail their goods was restricted and new requirements were made for their relationship to

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[229] Luu, *Immigrants*, p. 58.
[230] Goose, 'Introduction', p. 29.
[231] Luu, *Immigrants*, p. 123.
[232] L B Luu, 'Alien Communities in Transition, 1570-1650', in N Goose and L B Luu (eds), *Immigrants in Tudor and Early Stuart England* (Brighton, 2005), p. 206.
[233] Scouloudi, *Returns of Strangers*, p. 2.
[234] A Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities in Sixteenth-Century London* (Oxford, 1986), p. 14.

stranger apprentices and journeymen. They were also subject to higher taxes and dues, severe limitations on their ability to buy or inherit real property, and some restrictions related to lawsuits.[235] Many of these legal disabilities were enforced only falteringly, but for those who intended to settle in England permanently, they were vexing.

The regulations imposed on alien activity were accompanied by a set of exemptions which gave immigrants the opportunity to participate more fully in English society. The most far-reaching of these was the development of a system for legally integrating foreign-born immigrants. Two routes were available: the costly naturalization by act of Parliament and the more popular denization by letters patent. While the former route conferred all the benefits of being English-born on the new subject, it was a cumbersome process that could cost a hundred pounds or more. Less than half a dozen aliens were naturalized during Elizabeth's reign.[236] Denization through letters patent was significantly less expensive. The cost of a patent of denization varied (and rose as the period progressed), but it generally ranged from fifty shillings to five pounds. This would still have represented a significant expense for the early modern artisan since, as Andrew Pettegree points out, 'it was possible to have a reasonable living and be assessed on a subsidy on as little as £2, and that well-to-do gentry were assessed at £20 on land.'[237] Denizens remained the subjects of foreign princes, so they (and their children) continued to suffer some legal disabilities. Most prominently, their ability to own, bequeath or inherit real property remained uncertain. Under a 1483 statute, however, denizens were the only aliens permitted to practice handicrafts, and Henrician statutes allowed denizens to keep shops and lease property.[238] Other rights associated with denization depended on the wording of the particular patent.[239] While it is therefore difficult to precisely define the benefits of denization, it is clear that it allowed its holder to circumvent many of the legal hurdles that confronted them.

Despite its advantages, denization did not appeal to every immigrant. It was only useful to householders. For their wives and children, servants and apprentices, the exemptions that denization afforded would have changed their lives minimally, if at all. Even householders (or prospective householders) were not uniformly interested in securing a patent. For those who intended to remain in England for only a few years, the

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[235] See, for example, CLRO Rep 16, fo 80v on the City's July 1566 efforts to reinvigorate enforcement of restrictions on alien craftsmen.
[236] Scouloudi, *Returns of Strangers*, p. 3.
[237] Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities*, p. 81.
[238] 1 Ric III, c. 9; 14/15 Hen VIII, c. 2; 21 Hen VIII, c. 16.
[239] Luu, *Immigrants*, p. 143.

expense of a patent would likely have seemed unnecessary. For those who intended to stay longer, the lax enforcement of restrictions discouraged interest in denization. As Irene Scouloudi explains, 'it was the self-contained family unit that was paramount. On this basis few strangers would have been interested in denization or the freedom of the City…They worked hard and independently within their own circles. Except in times of economic or social stress, or when molested by informers or busy-body government such as found in the Stuart period, they were permitted to pursue their activities with little interference.'[240]

For a variety of reasons, then, only a small proportion of London's immigrants secured patents of denization. In 1568, only 13% of metropolitan aliens were denizens.[241] That proportion declined as the century progressed.[242] The number of new patents issued fell precipitously after the first half of Elizabeth's reign:

2.1 Patents of Denization Issued, 1558 – 1640.[243]

Years	No. of Patents Issued
1558-78	1669
1578-1602/3	293
1602/3-1625	530
1625-40	286

The cost of a patent rose steadily during Elizabeth's reign, which may have contributed to their decline in popularity.[244] As the number of immigrants resident in the capital increased, furthermore, enforcement of economic restrictions became less systematic. Simultaneously, the immigrant communities matured, providing regular customers for alien craftsmen who chose to operate outside the denization system.

Aspects of the alien communities in individual liberties will be presented in the appropriate chapters, but the concept of denization allows us to correct one mistaken assumption about the liberties immediately. The immigrant population of many liberties grew rapidly during Elizabeth's reign, often outstripping the rate of growth in the metropolis as a whole. While the protection that these precincts offered immigrants were not so complete as some historians have implied, there were some advantages to be gained by settling there. The aliens of St Martin le Grand were specifically exempted from statutory limits on the number of foreign-born servants that aliens could keep, and its officers attempted (unsuccessfully) to exclude City inspectors from entering the

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[240] Scouloudi, *Returns of Strangers*, p. 12.
[241] *Returns of Aliens Dwelling in the City and Suburbs of London: From the Reign of Henry VIII to That of James I*, eds R E G Kirk and E P Kirk, 4 vols, (London, 1900-08), iii.400, ff.
[242] Lien Luu records that the proportion had dropped to 9% in 1573 and 7% in 1593. Luu, 'Natural-Born Versus Stranger-Born Subjects', p. 61.
[243] Scouloudi, *Returns of Strangers*, p. 5.
[244] Luu, *Immigrants*, p. 144.

liberty.[245] The residents of Blackfriars had marginally greater success in denying entry to civic officials,[246] and many of the immigrants who settled at St Katherine by the Tower enjoyed exemptions as brewers and coopers. Indeed, it should be noted that those migrants whose skills were valued by the civic or royal government (brewers and goldsmiths foremost among them) settled in London more permanently and were more integrated with their English co-practitioners.[247]

But did immigrants choose to settle in these liberties primarily to avoid economic oversight? According to Lien Luu, 'the possibility of working freely in the exempted places precluded the need to acquire a letter of denization, and this may explain why the number of denizens fell. There was a close link between non-denizen status and settlement in exempted places. A survey of the alien population in exempted places in 1583 shows that of the 1,604 aliens settled there, only 316 were denizens (19.7 per cent): non denizens, in other words, made up 80 per cent of the population.'[248] Luu, unfortunately, misses the forest for the trees. According to her own statistics, the percentage of strangers (throughout the metropolis) who held patents of denization fell from 9% in 1573 to 7% in 1593.[249] The full statistics from the 1583 returns of strangers confirms that the proportion of denizens in the liberties and suburbs was higher than that in the City of London:

2.2 The Percentage of Strangers Holding Patents of Denization, May 1583.[250]

Place	Denizens	Strangers	Percentage
City of London	243	2537	9.6%
Suburbs and Liberties	316	1604	19.7%
Metropolis (sum)	559	4141	14%

Clearly there were other factors that drew immigrants to the liberties, since the residents of suburbs and liberties were *more* likely than immigrants in the City to secure patents of denization. Seeking out a patent of denization did not help an alien householder fly below official radar; it did much the reverse.

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[245] 21 Hen VIII, c. 16, §IX; BL Lansd 74, no 32. Nevertheless, a large number of goldsmiths, both citizens and strangers, settled in St Martin's. See L B Luu, 'Aliens and Their Impact on the Goldsmiths' Craft in London in the Sixteenth Century', in D Mitchell (ed), *Goldsmiths, Silversmiths and Bankers: Innovation and the Transfer of Skill, 1550 to 1750* (Stroud, 1995), p. 48.

[246] BL Lansd 155, fos 79-81v.

[247] L B Luu, 'Assimilation or Segregation: Colonies of Alien Craftsmen in Elizabethan London', *Proceedings of the Huguenot Society*, 26 (1995), p. 170.

[248] Luu, 'Natural-Born Versus Stranger-Born Subjects', p. 70.

[249] Ibid., p. 61.

[250] From *Returns of Aliens*, eds Kirk and Kirk, ii.342-57. It shoud, however, be noted that 'Suburbs and Liberties' included Westminster and Southwark along with unincorporated Middlesex and the exempt places within the City.

If legal privileges drew some aliens to the liberties, it is clear that many others came for unrelated reasons. The immigrant communities in St Martin's and St Katherine's, for example, predated the flurry of late fifteenth and early sixteenth century regulations that restricted immigrants' economic activities.[251] Geography played a role, with St Martin's near the Goldsmiths' Row at Cheapside and St Katherine's location on the River Thames. Among the City's wards, the largest numbers of aliens in the fifteenth century seem to have settled near the river.[252] With their international links, religious houses may also have been seen as more sympathetic landlords by new immigrants, and as gated precincts they offered greater protection when hostility toward immigrants ran high.[253] As time progressed, the advantages themselves were joined (and perhaps eclipsed) by the appeal of the strangers themselves. As Lien Luu points out, the process 'was cumulative, and areas with a long-established immigrant community would further attract newcomers, reinforcing their concentration in particular sites.'[254] Especially in the years before the stranger churches, the appeal of living near one's countrymen should not be underestimated.

In addition to the legal disabilities that affected immigrants throughout England, those who settled in and around London faced an additional level of regulation in the form of the City's livery companies. While the franchises of liberties could often be used to rebuff advances made by the City itself, liberty residents had less luck in convincing the Privy Council that they should be exempt from the supervision of the companies, which were generally chartered to exercise authority over their trades both within the City and within two or more miles of its borders. As was the case with other levels of government, the intensity with which the companies enforced regulations varied. Many companies were more interested in accommodating than in alienating stranger craftsmen, who enjoyed a reputation for unrivalled skill in many fields.[255] It was these skills that inspired the royal government to actively welcome many aliens into the realm, a policy that was first employed by Edward III in 1331. The tradition continued through the sixteenth century. Fourteen projects were launched between 1540 and 1580 to tempt immigrants from the continent in trades as diverse as iron founding, dyeing, and the making of precision instruments.[256] While the occupational breakdown of aliens had long

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[251] Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities*, p. 17. See also pp. 179, 215 below.
[252] Luu, *Immigrants*, p. 121.
[253] Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities*, p. 127.
[254] Luu, *Immigrants*, p. 126.
[255] Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities*, p. 12.
[256] Luu, *Immigrants*, p. 53.

mirrored that of other Londoners, by 1561 more and more aliens were engaged in new and luxury crafts.[257] The royal and civic governments and the livery companies were all eager to see the newly-imported skills shared with English artisans, and during periods when anti-immigrant feeling ran high, strangers were 'advised by those in government to employ English servants to pacify resentment and foster goodwill'. Many aliens continued to resist teaching their skills to English artisans, fearing that they would later be prohibited from employing the same as unwanted competitors.[258]

Although, strictly speaking, immigrants were required to gain both a patent of denization and the freedom of the City to openly practice a trade in or near London, few livery companies attempted strict enforcement. By tolerating illicit economic activity (if not too flagrant), officials hoped to convince craftsmen to share their skills, but they also hoped to line the company coffers. Early modern ordinances 'required all strangers, including denizens, to pay quarterage and other fees and fines to companies "as our sovereign Lord's subjects of like craft and mystery do always pay", and if any refuse, then they "shall no longer occupy any handicraft".'[259] Ian Archer points out that the payment of quarterage was often closely related to a company's commitment to carrying out thorough searches.[260] In conjunction, the systems of search and quarterage allowed livery companies to assert their authority over the non-free without alienating them entirely. Quality could be maintained, immigrant craftsmen could be monitored, and dues could be collected without opening company membership to men who had not served their apprenticeship in London.

The use of quarterage and search varied from company to company, but they were not the only tools available to deal with aliens. Some livery companies, for obvious reasons, had more regular contact with aliens than others. The cloth-weaving industry was the backbone of London's international trade, and more than forty percent of the alien artisans living in London in the late sixteenth century were involved in it.[261] It is hardly surprising, then, that the Weavers' Company was 'exceptional in both the number of alien members (73 masters and 80 journeymen) and also in the detail of their records'

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[257] Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities*, pp. 47-9. It is possible that participation in new and luxury crafts was over-reported by aliens who recognised that such occupations were less likely to draw scrutiny from officials or English neighbours. For further details, see Luu, *Immigrants*, pp. 115-6, 313-5.

[258] Luu, *Immigrants*, p. 128.

[259] Rappaport, *Worlds within Worlds*, p. 46.

[260] 'Thus the more vigorous search conducted by the Coopers' Company…in the later 1560s resulted in much higher levels of quarterage payments by the non-free'; Archer, *Pursuit of Stability*, p. 139.

[261] Luu, *Immigrants*, p. 119. Among Londoners generally, only twenty percent of artisans were involved in clothing trades.

relating to immigrants.[262] The weavers fell at one end of the spectrum.[263] Only twenty-seven companies (of more than a hundred) reported having alien members, and of those no other company boasted more than six.[264] Even the Weavers' Company needed time to develop a regular system for accommodating immigrants. Andrew Pettegree examined the company's records from Edward's reign and found that between 1547 and 1551 strangers paid fees that varied between twenty and forty shillings for admission to the company. From 1552, however, the company standardised the entry fee for aliens at twenty-five shillings.[265] According to Pettegree's assessment, 'the enrolment of foreigners in the Company was not the result of an aggressive drive against unauthorized competition, but rather indicated a desire to harness the skills of the foreigners by accommodating them within the Company.'[266]

English weavers were particularly eager to develop a domestic silk industry. Although continental silk workers enjoyed company support, they largely made their homes in the liberties. John Strype recorded that in addition to the immigrant silk weavers at St Martin le Grand during the first half of Elizabeth's reign, there 'lived also two silk-twisters, who I suppose were the first silk-throwers in London, and brought the trade into England.'[267] In March 1624/5, the king granted a Frenchman called Bonnal two gardens and a shed in the Minories 'for keeping and breeding of silkworms for his majesty'.[268] The creation of a domestic silk industry was a slow process. It is often asserted that by the early eighteenth century the silk industry employed between 40,000 and 50,000 people in the metropolis.[269] Even if those numbers are remotely accurate, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries we should remember that the quality of English silk weaving was significantly lower than Italian or even Dutch silks. Domestic products therefore complemented rather than replaced imports.[270] The nascent silk industry nevertheless provides a good example of the eagerness of English officials to use immigrants to help develop new industries in London.

While immigrant weavers were welcomed by their company, immigrant brewers (and the coopers who made their barrels) received favourable treatment from the civic

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[262] Scouloudi, *Returns of Strangers*, p. 44.

[263] See F Consitt, *The London Weavers' Company: From the Twelfth Century to the Close of the Sixteenth Century* (Oxford, 1933).

[264] Scouloudi, *Returns of Strangers*, p. 43.

[265] Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities*, p. 96-7.

[266] Ibid., p. 97-8.

[267] J Strype, *A Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster*, 2 vols (6 bks), (London, 1720), iii.111-2. See also p. 102, below.

[268] *CSPD*, 1623-5, p. 497.

[269] Luu, *Immigrants*, p. 3.

[270] Ibid., p. 185.

government. Beer was a staple for Londoners, whose water was often dirty or contaminated. Its availability was so important that in 1549 'the Common Council was prepared to advance the brewers £700 to ensure that they had sufficient stocks of malt to last a month, and the Council showed a concern for the maintenance of supplies of beer second only to their anxiety for the provision of wheat.'[271] A 1556 order in Common Council that prohibited the employment of foreigners specifically excepted brewers.[272] Brewers clustered largely in suburban areas near the river, and coopers set up close at hand. Continental brewers had been instrumental in introducing modern brewing techniques to England in the fifteenth century; large numbers of immigrants continued to be involved in both brewing and coopering. Many became prominent members of their local communities in places like St Katherine's, where they were more likely than other aliens to forego membership in the stranger churches in preference of joining their neighbours in the local parish. The centrality of aliens to the brewing industry waned toward the end of the sixteenth century. In comparison to other immigrants, brewers were particularly wealthy and well-integrated into their communities.[273]

Like brewers and silkweavers, alien gold- and silversmiths were openly welcomed to London by virtue of their highly desirable skills. But unlike other 'desirable' immigrant groups, luxury metalworkers were dominated by the English members of the Goldsmiths' Company from the beginning of the sixteenth century, if not before.[274] One of the most important ways that European and English goldsmiths interacted was through short terms of itinerate journeymen, a practice that was encouraged among continental metalworkers but that left little evidence in London.[275] By reviewing local records, however, Lien Luu determined that up to a quarter of Antwerp goldsmiths worked with English artisans at some point during their careers.[276] English goldsmiths depended on immigrant artisans as 'the conduit through which awareness of new waves of ornament flowed across the Channel.'[277] Unlike other industries, however, the cooperation between aliens and citizens was not that of equals. The largest employment market for alien goldsmiths was through the subcontracting by their English counterparts to 'produce goods of high quality to meet the demand of their most fashionable

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[271] Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities*, p. 101.
[272] CLRO Rep 13(1), fo 126v, 127v. Let Bk R, fo 93v.
[273] Luu, *Immigrants*, pp. 278-82.
[274] Ibid., p. 219; see also C M Barron, *London in the Later Middle Ages: Government and People, 1200-1500* (Oxford, 2004), pp. 70-3.
[275] Luu, *Immigrants*, p. 219.
[276] Luu, 'Aliens and Their Impact', p. 50.
[277] P Glanville, *Silver in Tudor and Early Stuart England : A Social History and Catalogue of the National Collection 1480-1660* (London, 1990), p. 86.

clientele.'[278] Luu points out that alien goldsmiths should not be treated as a monolithic group. Their experience of the trade in London depended on where they came from, the nature of their skill, their motives for coming to England and their length of residence in the metropolis.[279] English gold and silver workers relied on the expertise and cachet of immigrants, but toward the end of the sixteenth century the interest in exploiting their knowledge gave way to increasing hostility. By the early seventeenth century, the Goldsmiths' Company began to experience acute periods of hostility to immigrant workers. The scepticism of the company reflected a slowdown in their trade (after the heady decades that followed the dissolution) as much as it reflected the competition posed by the immigrant goldsmiths.[280]

The prevalence of denization in the liberties and suburbs contradicts the common assumption that alien craftsmen in early modern London went to great lengths to avoid the supervision of livery companies and the civic and royal governments. Latent in such an assumption is the idea that immigrants were not entirely trustworthy, but evidence concerning the enforcement of city and company policy provides a more nuanced view of their motives. Alien craftsmen, to be sure, frequently flouted the more burdensome restrictions on their behaviour, but it is likely that their disobedience was grounded in practical necessity rather than any ideological opposition to regulation. According to City regulations, only freemen were permitted to practice their trades independently, and apprentices could only be bound to freemen. In practice, unsurprisingly, 'the policy followed by the City authorities appears…to have been far from systematic'.[281] When companies set out to enforce economic regulations, they often found immigrants ready to cooperate. Lien Luu recounts the story of a Frenchman who in March 1574 'told the Goldsmiths Company there were "diverse strangers goldsmith working some within shoemakers, some within tailors, some within saddlers and others within others"' in various parts London.[282]

Companies that made efforts to accommodate immigrants found their cooperation useful in securing the compliance of other aliens. The Coopers' Company accounts for 1531 contain an item for entertaining certain Dutch coopers to breakfast when they came to bear witness against some of their countrymen for setting up shop

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[278] Luu, *Immigrants*, p. 239.
[279] Luu, 'Aliens and Their Impact', p. 44
[280] Luu, *Immigrants*, p. 249.
[281] Scouloudi, *Returns of Strangers*, p. 45.
[282] Luu, 'Natural-Born Versus Stranger-Born Subjects', p. 64.

without authorization.[283] The company made immigrant coopers a regular part of their enforcement drives. Their statutes 'laid down that one substantial alien of the craft [coopers] should be present at any search of alien premises, and it was probably as a result of this provision that the Coopers' Company established a separate warden for the alien coopers. Many of the Dutch householders took a turn in this office and are marked as such in the quarterage accounts.'[284] Segments of London's immigrant population showed a clear inclination to work under (and assist in the process of) company supervision. It seems likely that, had other companies sought to accommodate alien craftsmen, they would have found them eager to participate more openly in the London economy.

The religion of continental immigrants generally endeared them to their neighbours, balancing (at least in part) the suspicion that often met their economic endeavours. The godly minority certainly welcomed the religious refugees, many of whom brought strong Calvinist sensibilities embraced by London's first Puritans. According to Nigel Goose, 'whatever the true religious persuasion of the mass of the London populace, there is little to indicate that the stranger churches were widely resented on religious grounds.'[285] The stranger churches—originally established under Edward VI—were primarily meant to provide immigrants with a place to worship in their own language and according to their own customs. Particularly after their revival in Elizabeth's reign, though, the stranger churches took on other functions as well. In many ways, their responsibilities mirrored those of London's parishes, but the aid they distributed and the discipline they enforced were not geographically confined. In addition to 'allowing their members to forge, sustain and resuscitate informal networks, and maintain links with their homeland', the stranger churches helped the royal government monitor and communicate with a formalised community of metropolitan aliens.[286]

The stranger churches did not appeal to all of London's immigrants, however. Frenchmen working in the print trades showed little interest in any church, French *or* English.[287] Other aliens actively resisted interaction with the stranger churches. Some were like Reyner Wolf (from 1547 the King's Printer in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew), who 'baulked at subjecting himself to the discipline of the stranger [Dutch] church, although

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[283] Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities*, p. 103.
[284] Ibid., p. 104.
[285] Goose, 'Introduction', p. 5.
[286] Luu, *Immigrants*, p. 15.
[287] *Returns of Aliens*, eds Kirk and Kirk, ii.13-7, iii.411.

he seems to have been a firm Protestant.'[288]Andrew Pettegree identifies a strong correlation between occupation and commitment to the reformed churches. Aliens practising new trades or trades where technical innovation was highly-valued (such as weaving) were significantly more likely to join the stranger churches than their compatriots in more traditional trades (such as cooperage).[289]

Immigrants who had settled in England even a few years before the foundation of the stranger churches were much less likely to attend services there than those who entered England later. This, in part, may have been related to a change in the religious sentiments of immigrants, but other factors seem to have had an effect as well. Later-arriving immigrants who settled in areas like St Martin le Grand and St Katherine by the Tower attended their local English parish churches in significantly greater numbers than those who settled in areas with small or relatively new stranger populations.[290] Counter-intuitively, perhaps, it appears that the aliens who chose to settle in the liberties were by all measures better integrated into the social and economic life of the capital than others.

After the late 1580s, no great wave of continental immigrants arrived in England until the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. Small numbers of aliens continued to come to England, but other immigrants returned to the continent. As time passed, the earlier waves of aliens assimilated into London society. The process started earlier in some places than others. A 1561 petition from French church members 'noted that most of the long-term residents from the precincts of St Martin's and St Katherine's had English wives.'[291] As decades passed, aliens across London invariably developed links with their English neighbours. As Londoners grew used to the immigrants, hostility decreased. The intensity of efforts to regulate their economic behaviour declined as well. These trends may help explain the steady decline in the popularity of denization. As the seventeenth century progressed, the same trends probably contributed to the reduced size of the stranger churches' congregations. Nigel Goose warns against assuming that smaller stranger churches necessarily meant fewer strangers in the capital: 'Numbers in London…may have fallen somewhat by the 1630s, but they had clearly not collapsed, particularly if allowance is made for those who by now had assimilated into the English population and had joined the English church, not to mention the "papists" with which, Bulteel claimed, the London suburbs were now swarming.'[292]

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[288] Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities*, p. 93.
[289] Ibid., p. 107.
[290] See p. 216, below.
[291] Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities*, p. 304, Scouloudi, *Returns of Strangers*, i.288.
[292] Goose, 'Introduction', p. 17.

Concerns about strangers were clearly tied up with the City's role in regulating London's economy. London's livery companies were generally authorised to complete searches for illegally made and sold goods not only within the City also within a certain distance of its walls.[293] As Joseph Ward writes, 'their members exerted influence in the suburbs and liberties'.[294] Ward records numerous instances of the London companies exercising their authority beyond the borders of the City.[295] While such forays into the suburbs and liberties confirm the livery companies' rights, it was practically impossible to regulate the suburbs and liberties to the same level as the City.

In the 1630s, the Caroline royal government began to consider ways to extend the order exemplified within the precincts of the City of London to the ever-growing, ever-menacing disorder of the suburbs outside.'[296] They had every reason to believe that they would have the City's support. In November 1632 the aldermen petitioned the Privy Council, complaining 'of great injury to the city by reason of the extraordinary enlargement of the suburbs, and [stating] the results to be, that the freedom of London was grown to be of little worth [and] that the multitudes of people of the meaner sort were drawn to London by the new erected buildings.'[297] When the government moved to create a new corporation for the suburbs, however, civic support was elusive. The new corporation was officially created by letters patent in April 1636.[298] Those living or working in the suburbs were required to join, paying fines of between 4*s* and £2 to the Crown. This revenue stream does as much as the need for economic reform to explain the timing of the initiative.[299]

By its very nature, the new corporation was easier to create than to sustain. A royal proclamation from November 1637 suggests that mandatory enrolment had failed to attract large numbers of members for the new corporation: 'therefore the king doth now declare his pleasure, That the Governor, Wardens, and Assistants shall, and may proceed without delay to admit into the said Freedom all sorts of Tradesmen and Artificers, as well Brewers, Weavers, Brickmakers, as others &c.'[300] For those who

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[293] CLRO Rep 25, fo 260.
[294] Ward, *Metropolitan Communities*, p. 28.
[295] Ward, 'Imagining the Metropolis', pp. 32, 35-6.
[296] K Sharpe, *The Personal Rule of Charles I* (New Haven, CT, 1992), p. 406.
[297] TNA SP 16/225/71.
[298] *CSPD* 1635-6, p. 359-60.
[299] Ward, 'Imagining the Metropolis', p. 31.
[300] J Rushworth, *Historical Collections II* (London, 1680), pp. 452-3.

neglected to seek the freedom of the new corporation, enforcement was difficult. Many foreigners continued to trade outside its auspices with little fear of punishment.[301]

In addition to its inherent impracticality, however, the new corporation also, unfortunately, truncated the chartered rights of the livery companies and invited the resentment of the civic elite. While the corporation was ostensibly created to help enforce professional standards throughout the capital, citizens of London saw it as a threat to their livelihoods. Ward notes that the officers of the Tylers and Bricklayers' Company 'defended the apprentice of one of their freemen who was arrested in Southwark for violating the charter of the new corporation.'[302] The new corporation was not even a month old when the aldermen began to attack those of its responsibilities which were at odds with the chartered rights of the City. From April 1636 onward, the Repertories contain frequent mention of 'causes in difference betweene the City and the new Incorporation'.[303] By the end of the 1630s, it was clear that the new corporation could not survive without the constant support of the royal government. The deterioration of the relationship between king and Parliament at the end of the decade increased the City's power within the metropolis and guaranteed the demise of the new corporation.[304] When Charles II resumed the throne 'the new Incorporation of the Suburbs was in abeyance if not actually moribund'. It seems to have passed away entirely after March 1660/1, when it is mentioned for the last time in the Journals of Common Council.[305] Norman Brett-James suggests that the Caroline new corporation was 'the veritable precursor of the LCC', created by Parliament in 1888 to unify London's fractured system of government.[306] The new corporation, however, had no administrative framework, and it enjoyed only nominal economic jurisdiction. The patchwork of county and parochial governing structures remained unchanged.

Conclusions

The rapid growth of the capital between 1500 and 1700 posed new problems for contemporary governors. The rate of expansion in the suburbs and liberties outpaced that of the City. This was in large part because of City's previous density of settlement restricted growth and made it less noticeable. Although the ancient City of London

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[301] Sharpe, *Personal Rule*, p. 407.
[302] Ward, 'Imagining the Metropolis', p. 34.
[303] CLRO Rep 50, fos 191v, 205v; Rep 52, fo 159; Rep 53, fo 143; Rep 54, fo 322.
[304] Pearl, *London and the Outbreak of the Puritan Revolution*, pp. 31-37.
[305] Brett-James, *The Growth of Stuart London*, p. 244.
[306] Ibid., p. 231.

remained at the centre of a growing metropolis, it had little interest in expanding its borders to include newly urbanised areas. Even Southwark, which the City annexed in March 1549/50, was never fully integrated into the City's administrative system. David Johnson points out that in spite of the City fathers' initial enthusiasm to make Southwark a full ward of the city, they quickly became indifferent:

> They were naturally conservative, being reluctant to create new responsibilities for themselves, especially in an area which was always much poorer than most city parishes, and unwilling to jeopardize any of their own privileges by extending them to include possibly irresponsible elements in the suburbs. They therefore avoided as too radical the obvious solution of making Southwark a full ward but relied instead on piecemeal expedients.[307]

As distinct geographic units within or adjacent to the City, the liberties made more appealing targets for annexation. The City also used its franchises with broader geographical limits—its rights over the tidal waters of the Thames, the livery companies' rights to regulate trade, and the aldermen's role in regulating metropolitan building and sanitation—to affect life in the larger metropolis. It nevertheless relied extensively on the royal government to help in regulating the liberties and suburbs. Within this context, the post-monastic liberties were just one of the City's many jurisdictional concerns in the century after 1540. As we have seen, it tried to undermine the liberties franchises directly, but it also pursued *ad hoc* remedies to specific concerns related to taxation, development, the maintenance of order and economic regulation. Now let us turn to the liberties themselves, to see matters from their perspective.

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[307] Johnson, *Southwark and the City*, p. 174.