

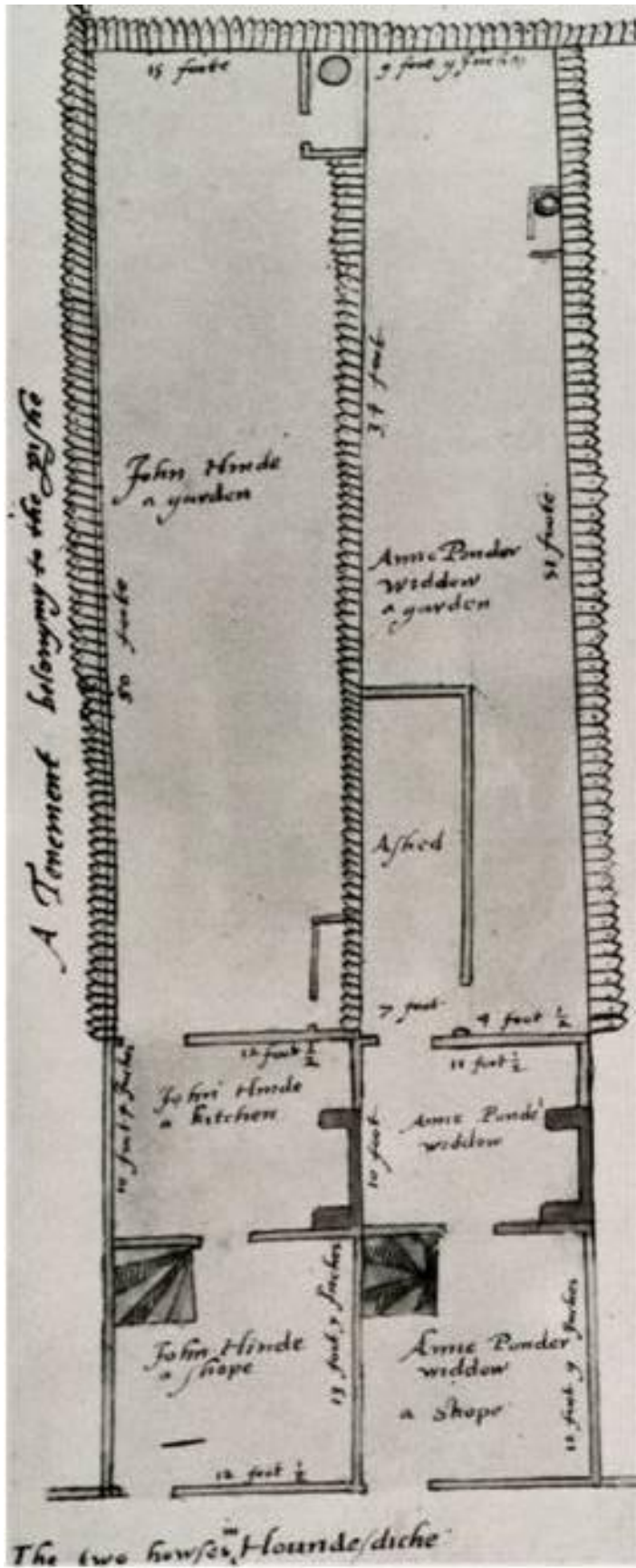
ST. BOTOLPH ALDGATE

140-141 HOUNDSDITCH, EAST SIDE

These two tenements lay on the east side of the street of Houndsditch between Gravel Lane on the S. and Cock and Hoop Yard to the N. The tenements ran on a SW to NE axis, and were abutted by ?? on the NW and ??? on the SE and ??? on the NE. The properties can be accurately identified on 1907 Parish map, Portsoken ward map 1858, Horwood 1799, and Ogilby and Morgan 1677.

i. Dimensions and layout according to Treswell's 1607 plan

Both were surveyed by Treswell in 1607 who records the dimensions for no.140, the most northerly of the two, as 12 ½ ft. wide on the street facing boundary, extending back a total of 73 ft. 9 in. from the street, and 15 ft. wide at the rear. No.141 was slightly narrower, with the dimensions recorded as 11 ½ ft. street frontage, extending back 73 ft. 9 in. to a 9 ft. wide rear boundary. Both tenements had identical ground floor plans, with 50 ft. and 51 ft. gardens respectively, and 2 rooms on the ground floor: a shop at the front of the property with stairs in the north corner of the room, and a kitchen behind with a large fireplace on the south eastern wall. The dimensions of the shop in no.140 were 12 ½ ft. x 13 ft. 9 in. and for the kitchen 12 ½ ft. x 10 ft. 7 in. with the rooms in the slightly smaller no.141 recorded as the shop 11 ½ ft. x 12 ft. 9 in. and the kitchen 11 ½ ft. x 10 ft. Treswell records that both had privies at the bottom of the garden along the SE fences, and no.141 a small shed. Neither property had a cellar. Although both had two chambers on the second floor and a garret, these properties differed somewhat in the dimensions of the upper floors. The chamber next to the street at no.140 is recorded as containing a chimney, and the room measured 12 ft. x 15 ½ ft. therefore jettied approx. 2 ½ ft. into the street. The back chamber of 12 ft. x 13 ft. contained the stairs up to a garret of 12 ½ ft. x 12 ft. House no.141 registered dimension of 11 ½ ft. x 14 ½ ft. for the front chamber (therefore jettied just under 2 ft. into the street), the back chamber 11 ¼ ft. x 11 ½ ft. with stairs leading to a garret of 12 ft. x 14 ft.

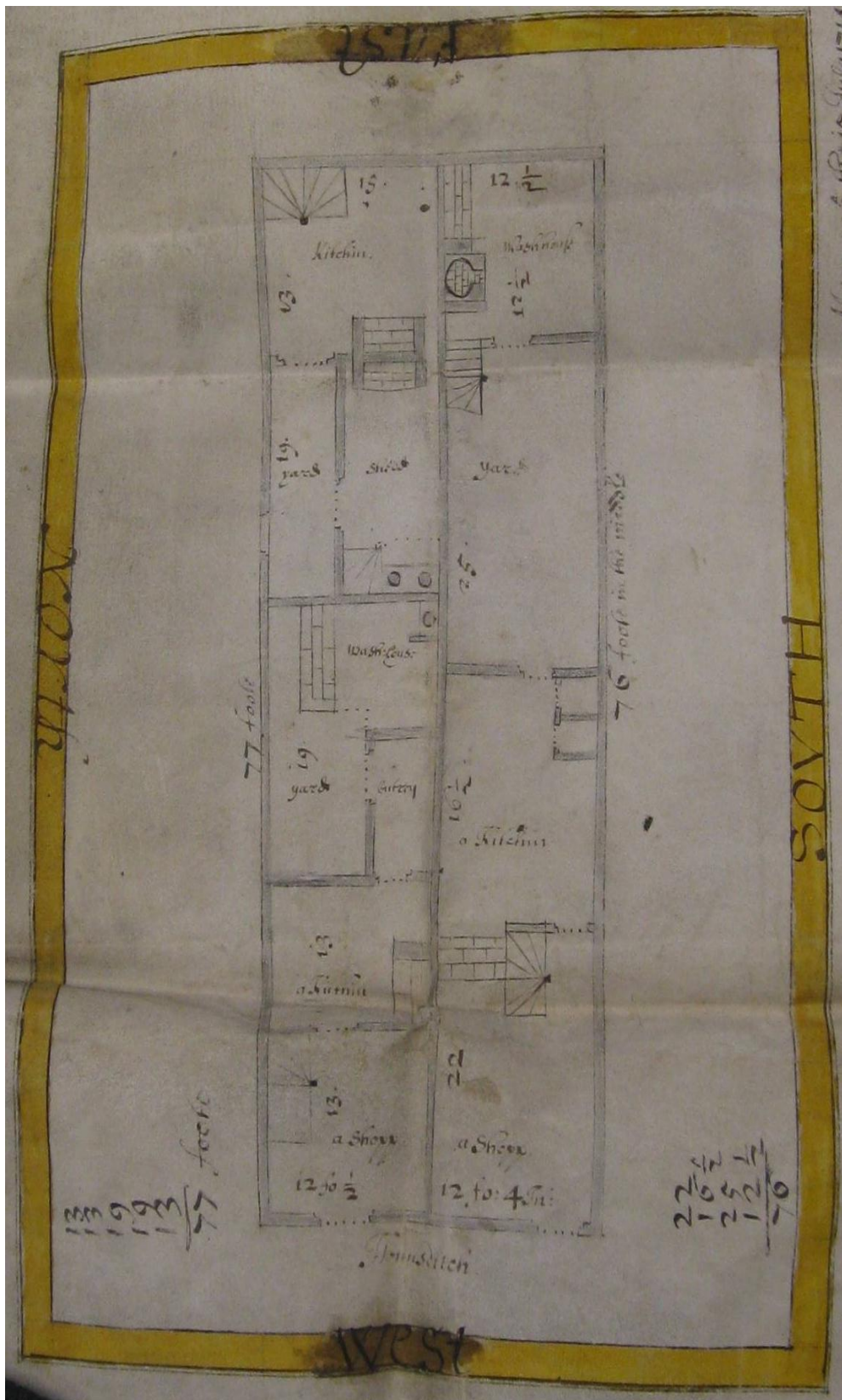


ii. *Dimensions and layout according to Christ's Hospital plan of 1667*

Sixty years after the Treswell plan it is clear that the layout of the ground floors of these properties had changed considerably, in particular the loss of the large yards to living space, and both plots were recorded as slightly longer than the Treswell plans: 77ft for no.140, and 76ft for no.141.

No.140 maintained the same layout as the 1607 plan in terms of the front two rooms, the shop and the kitchen, although the kitchen is recorded as slightly larger, 12 ½ ft x 13ft. than in 1607. However the yard space is dramatically different from 1607. The yard contained a buttery, where the shed had been situated in the 1607 plan, and a washroom with a privy located in the E corner of the yard. Access to the yard in 1607 had been directly from the kitchen via a doorway, however now the access from the kitchen to the yard was via doorways through the buttery. The most dramatic change was that the yard now extended back only 19ft to a wall, which the plans indicate had no doorway or access point to the ground behind it. The ground on the other side of this dividing wall now consisted of a yard, a shed and a kitchen. The "shed" abutted the dividing wall, and contained two privies in the S corner (presumably utilising the same cesspit as the privy located the other side of the dividing wall in the front property on the plot), a stairwell in the W corner, and a fireplace along the NE wall. This shed ran the same length of the yard, 19ft, and was approx 8-9.ft in width, reducing the yard to a rather small sliver of land. The kitchen was noted as being 15ft x 13ft, and containing a fireplace in the SW wall (same chimney stack as fireplace in shed) and stairs in the northern corner of the room. This plan could suggest that the large yard noted in the 1607 Treswell plans had, by 1667, been subdivided, and that two dwellings now occupied the plot of no.140. However, assessment lists from the 1670s do not provide any evidence for this assertion (see section vii below) and so it is also possible that the rear kitchen was for commercial purposes.

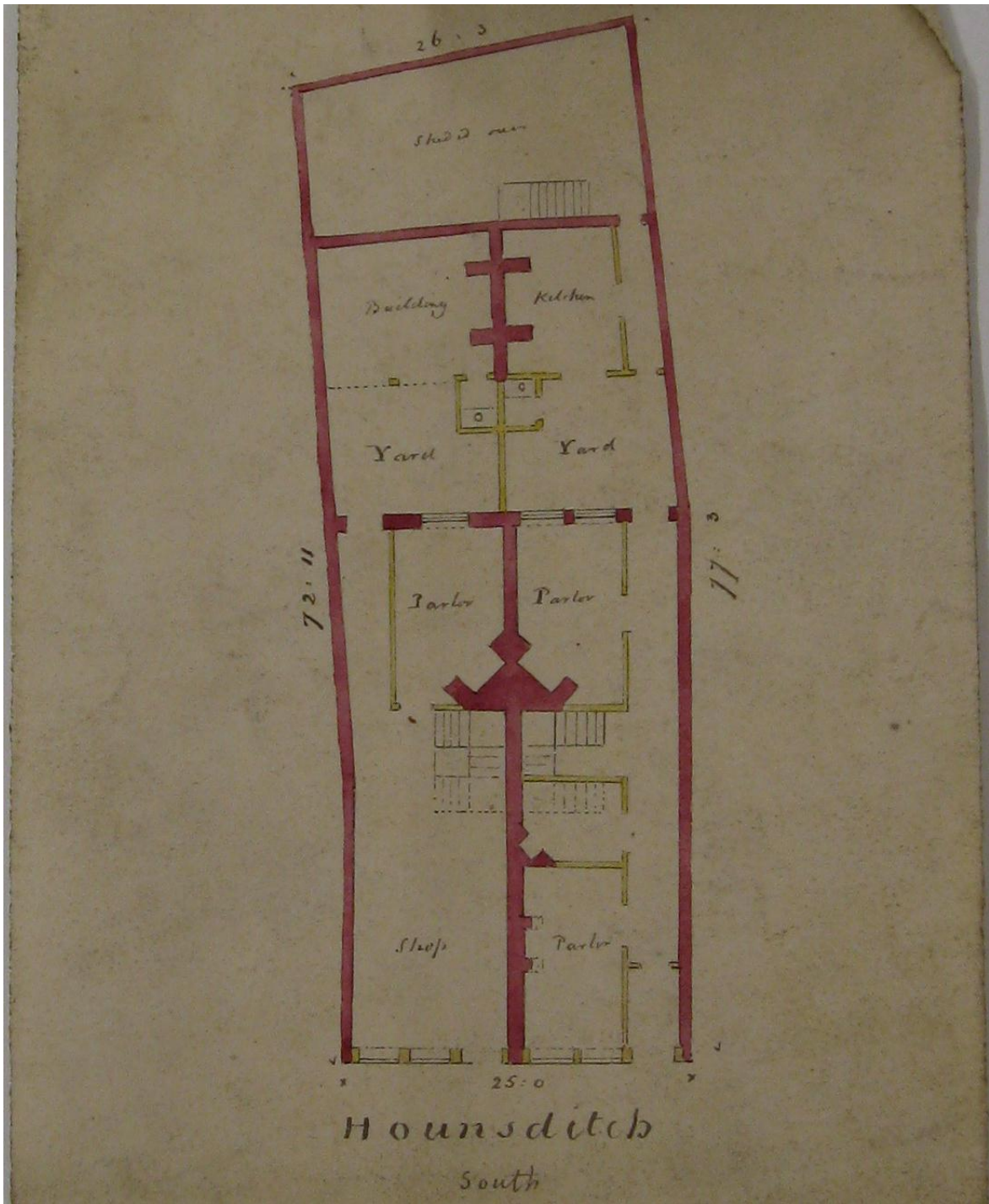
No.141 had also been substantially altered from 1607. The shop now extended back 22ft, and the stairs had been moved from the N corner of the room, and were now situated mid-way along the back wall. The Kitchen behind the shop had also been extended back by another 6 ½ ft, to 16 ½ ft., the fireplace on the SE wall had been removed, and a parlour was now situated in the eastern corner of the room. The yard was now reduced to 25ft in length, and hosted a 12 ½ ft. x 12 ½ ft. washhouse at the bottom of the plot. This washhouse seemed to contain a fireplace in the N corner of the room, an external staircase in the N corner of the yard, and an oven.



iii. *Dimensions and layout according to Christs Hospital plan of c.1713*

The plan drawn after fire destroyed the properties in 1713 (see section vii below) shows that the layout of both properties had been altered by the lessee John Markham not just in terms of the configuration of rooms but also central elements of the houses such as privies, hearths and stairwells had been re-sited. This last point is interesting as the position of the large central hearths, the stairwells and the privies was mirrored in each property, indicating a degree of standardisation both in design and construction, standardisation that was becoming increasingly evident in housing in this the period.

The northern property no.140 had been rather streamlined in terms of its layout, with a large shop space at the front containing a stairwell, a parlour behind that, a yard in which was located a privy and a further undesignated building. The property had no access to a shed at the rear, and no kitchen is recorded. Yet whereas no.140 seemed to have been designed specifically as a shop, no.141 was clearly envisaged as a dwelling. A hall, and parlour were located at the very front of the dwelling, with a further parlour behind these. A yard, privy, kitchen and shed were located in the rear half of the property. An additional story of bedchambers had been added to the properties in the rebuilding of the 1670s (see section vii below) and it is likely that Markham adhered to this design in his rebuilding, although this cannot be confirmed.



iv. Decent of the freehold in the sixteenth century

The first recorded holders of the freehold were Thomas Browne and Robert Wilson. In March of 1563 they conferred the freehold of these ‘two messuages, with two gardens’ and the related ‘shops, cellars, solars, chambers and easements’ to John Arnolde, a joyner, and his wife Joan (nee Awsten), who it appears had been married a few years previously in September 1561.¹ The Arnolde’s occupied one of the properties, with the other in the occupation of Henry Beck a brewer.² Just a year later Arnolde sold the freehold to John Warreyn, a tallowchandler, possibly for the sum of one years rental value, 13s 4d.³ It is probable that Beck continued as the occupier of one the tenements as a bond of Arnolde to Warren notes that the 21 year lease Beck signed with Arnolde in 1563 (at a rental charge of 13s 4d) was to remain. The bond, for the value of £40, notes that if Arnolde ‘within five years at the request and charge of Warren . . . does as required further to assure the premises then the bond to be void.’ It is possible that this was an agreement for Arnolde to renovate or repair his property within five years, suggesting that Arnolde may still have been resident in one of the tenements. Sometime around 1576 Warren’s son, George a leatherseller, married a London spinster by the name of Margaret Ashton, and John Warren granted the freehold of the two houses to his newlywed son.⁴ At the expiration of the lease on the southern property in 1583⁵ Warren leased the house to its current occupant, Lawrence Ponder an ironmonger and the church sexton⁶ for a 21 year term at 53s 4d rent p.a. This figure comprised a very substantial increase on the 13s 4d rental charge of the previous lease. No fine was charged. This rental charge is interesting when compared against Ponder’s salary as a Sexton which stood at 40s pa.⁷ The church warden’s accounts illustrate that he did earn additional monies for odd-jobs around the parish, and his wife was paid 6s 8d pa for a once yearly wash of the church linen, but even so on the basis of their wages alone they must have struggled to ensure their rent was paid.⁸

The lease contained standard covenants – that the tenant was to repair the property within six months and was responsible for its continued physical upkeep and repair, and that the freeholder was able to enter and view the property – but also noted that Warren was to provide new ‘principle timbers’ for the property within 2 months of a request by Ponder, suggesting that important elements of the structure may have been in a state of disrepair. The lease notes that a gardener by the name of William Stockdon resided in the other house to the north, and a widow Dedman in the property to the east. Interestingly it also notes that the garden was ‘now paled in from the other gardens of Warren’ indicating that Warren owned further land behind the property, but also, this could be illustrative of an increasing need to establish more permanent demarcations of things such as garden plots in the face of the growing urbanisation of the area.⁹

By October 1586 Warren, by now a widower as Margaret was deceased, decided to sell the freehold to John Wriothesley a haberdasher for the sum of £110. The covenants of the indenture note the existence of Ponder’s lease, but no mention is made of a lease for Stockdon, meaning that Stockdon was almost certainly a tenant-at-will.¹⁰ Warren entered into a bond for £200 to ensure he kept to the covenants in the sale. Wriothesley only held the title for less than a year and a half, as he sold the property to Thomas Lawrence a goldsmith in February of 1588, and it was Wriothesley this time who was entered in to a £200 bond to observe the covenants. Lawrence donated the title of the properties to Christs Hospital in 1593, although no deeds or documentation relating to this transferral appears to have survived.

v. no.140: 1593 – 1672

Once in the possession of Christ’s the property was leased from 1593-1599 to George Mason at £4 p.a. rental. In 1599 the occupation of the tenement was transferred to John Hinde/Hynde a Merchant Tailor although there is no record of any lease being signed for the property. In May

1607 a view of the house was ordered by Christ's, and in November Hinde is recorded at the suitor for a new lease for 21 years from Christmas 1607 at £4 p.a. with a £25 fine of which he had already paid £5 and paid £5 quarterly for the remainder of the year.¹¹ In August 1612 a neighbourly dispute erupted, as the wife of Hinde, whose name is not mentioned, made a complaint against the tenant of the adjoining property (no.141), Isaac Simmes, for pulling down a shed belonging to Hinde and encroaching by a bricks length into the garden of no.140. Ralph Treswell was ordered by Christ's to view the offending encroachment and resolve the dispute. It was agreed that a line would be established on the outside of the new work, within Hinde's ground, and that the digging of a party gutter to demarcate this boundary, along with work on re-tiling of Hinde's damaged shed, would be charged to Simmes.¹² The account books record that Hinde paid the rental charge until 1612¹³, but no rental payments are record between 1612 and January 1614 when John Price is assigned the lease at a charge of £4 p.a. A similar hiatus in rental payments is recorded for no.141, although whether this was perhaps due to an amendment in accounting or lease procedures, or the property laying empty for some reason is unclear. There is no documentation to indicate that Price was charged a fine or signed any form of lease, and it is possible that he occupied the property as a tenant-at-will. Price remains the lessee until 1623 when he pays 10s to alienate the lease to a Yeoman by the name of Matthew Sharpe.¹⁴ However there is no record of Sharpe paying any rental or a fine, and it seems that the lease is taken up instead by another Merchant Taylor Richard Bell¹⁵. In May 1626 with 2 ½ years remaining on the lease Bell renews the lease but the Minute book records that the property was 'much out of repair' and that Bell had 'been at some cost repairing the house'. Therefore in acknowledgment of the monies he had spent on repairs in June 1626 Christ's granted a 21 year lease (in addition to the 2 years lease remaining) at £4.p.a. but with a much reduced fine of £13.6.8. payable £6.13.4 that year and £3.6.8 in a yearly payment for next two years.¹⁶ The terms of the lease noted that the tenant was obliged to ensure the repair of the property, he was unable to convert the property into sub-dwellings or to 'take in inmates' (presumably referring to both lodgers and subtenants?), and would be required to pay a £10 in the event of wishing to alienate the lease.¹⁷ The exact identity of the lessee becomes somewhat confused toward the end of this lease term in the latter 1640s. In June 1646 the CH view book gives the annual rental value of the property as £9p.a. but it also notes that the lease is in the possession of a Mr Joseph Bell (possibly a son of Richard?).¹⁸ However, a few days later the CH minute books record that Richard Bell was still the tenant, and it was Richard petitioning for a new lease on the property, offering £5p.a. and £20 as a fine, which he claimed were the sums 'his father gave' when the lease was signed in 1626. This last piece of evidence suggests the possibility that the Richard Bell of 1646 may have been a son of the previous Richard Bell, but without further information this is difficult to establish. Whatever the case the CH court refused his offer, illustrating the preference of institutional landlords for higher fines over higher rents.¹⁹ Undaunted, Richard Bell returns to the court in November 1646 with an improved offer of £10 rent and £20 fine, but the court were clearly determined to extract a higher fine and demand a £30 fine, which Bell rejected. Bell was evidently eager to remain the lessee, as a year later in Sept 1647 he tried one more forlorn attempt to convince the court to accept his £10r/£20f for the lease, but to no avail. Instead in June 1648 the court agreed to grant the lease to the previously mentioned Joseph Bell, by now noted as another Merchant Taylor,²⁰ on a standard 21 years repair lease (commencing from Christmas 1649) £4r/£25f with £10 of the fine payable immediately, and £5 instalments every 6 months thereafter. In common with most leases of this period the agreement also called for Bell to donate 2 shillings to the poor box. Interestingly there is a covenant inserted into the lease for Bell to add 'a story and a half' on top of the front part of the house, although, and unusually for such a covenant, it does not stipulate the time period within which the work needed to be completed.²¹ As with most repair leases the agreements notes that the lessee was required to see to the repair of the property, that no inmates were allowed, and that the lessee would be subject to a £5 charge if he were to alienate the lease without licence (i.e. agreement by CH) and the payment of a 10s fee.²² The CH account books

record that Richard Bell made the initial £10 payment for the fine, and that the 3 subsequent £5 payments were made by Joseph Bell.²³ The CH account books record that Joseph Bell continued to pay the rental until his death in late 1661,²⁴ and thereafter the rental is paid by his widow Elizabeth Bell.²⁵ It appears that Elizabeth Bell may have slipped behind with the rental payments, as the accounts books suggest she owed a year's back rent of £4 by 1665-6.²⁶ Elizabeth either remarried or reverted back to her maiden name sometime in 1665-7 as she is listed as Elizabeth Foster in a CH view book entry of Feb 1666. The viewing indicates that the composition of the property remained the same as the Treswell plan of 1607, with a shop, a back room, 2 chambers, a garret, and a yard, with the exception being that this viewing notes that the property possessed 'a little buttery'.²⁷ and valued the property at £8p.a. However as noted about the plan of the building drawn in 1667 indicates that the ground floor layout of the property had changed markedly since 1607. In March 1666 the CH minute books record that Foster had submitted a note to the court stating that she had passed her interest in the property to a John Palmer the lessee of the neighbouring property no.141. The existing lease ran until 1670, and Palmer was clearly keen to renew. Palmer claimed to the court that the tenement was 'a small thing' but out of repair, and that if he were granted a new lease he would spend a considerable amount on repair. Palmer offered a fine of £10, with presumably a rental of £4p.a, and the court countered with an offer of £30 fine for a 21 year lease at £4p.a. to which Palmer agreed. Latter that month the minute books record that one of the two tenements was in a very poor state of repair, and that, in order to mitigate the high cost of repair, Palmer desired a longer lease than 21 years. The court rejected this proposal but agreed that the two leases for no's.140 & 141 would be merged into a single lease, and commence and expire at the same time from Michalmiss 1671.²⁸

vi. *no.141: 1587 – 1672.*

Some interesting biographical information on the residents of no.141 in this period does survive. Lawrence Ponder is recorded as have died prior to his own son Thomas' appointment as sexton in December 1587-8, yet interestingly his actual burial is recorded as occurring on the 17th July 1588. Next to this entry in the PCMs is inscribed a small symbol of a bell, presumably to indicate that Ponder in his status as a citizen of London, church official and 'howshowlder' of the parish was granted the honour of having the parish bell rung at his funeral.²⁹ Unfortunately for him Lawrence died shortly before his grandson Daniel was born to Thomas (also an ironmonger) and his wife, who lived in Three Kings Alley in the Minories.³⁰

Once the freehold had passed into the ownership of CH in 1593 the tenant is recorded as Anne Ponder, the widow of Lawrence who paid an annual rent of £2.13.4³¹, rent that Ann may have met through the income from lodgers. An entry in the PCM's from 1591 notes that a 'Gamaliell Willan the sonne of William Willian an alebrewer' was christened in October of that year. William's wife had 'browght a bedd in the howse of the widowe Ponder dwelling in Hownsdich', suggesting that it was in Ponders house that the child may have been born. Interestingly the entry also notes that Gamaliell was 'no parishioners chyld'. Whether this was indeed Anne Ponder's is impossible to confirm categorically.³²

The widow Ponder, noted variously as Agnis Ponder, 'goodwyfe Ponder', and 'owlde mother Ponder' in the church warden accounts, also earned small sums from the parish after Lawrence's death for jobs such as mending old carpets, and continuing to wash the church linen.³³ Such income must have been important elements in ensuring her maintenance.

It is also possible that the Ponder clan were spread throughout the parish. Another Lawrence Ponder (perhaps another son) is recorded as marrying Elizabeth Haman in June of 1594³⁴, however most interesting is the story of George Ponder an ironmonger 'being by his trade a graver', and dwelling with his wife Ann (nee Ferris) in Eastsmithfield.³⁵ The couple had lost a stillborn infant daughter in September 1594, and also lost a four day old son almost exactly a year

later in September 1595.³⁶ However, the PCM's record that the son was 'borne in the howse of Ann Ponder a widow dwelling in hownsich'. It is therefore plausible that George's wife Ann was living with her mother-in-law Ann in the property during the later part of her pregnancy.³⁷ It also appears that George Ponder and his family took up permanent residence in Houndsditch as when they are recorded as living there when his son Jonathan is christened on 7th December 1596, and both himself and his wife received communion at the church on 13th March 1596-7.³⁸ Again whether he and his family were residing in no.141 Houndsditch is impossible to confirm but it is certainly very feasible. George also kept child 'servants', presumably related to his trade. Their names were given as Richard Pope, John Crockson and Edward Pope.³⁹

The Ponder's story ends on something of a sad note, particularly for George's wife Ann. She gave birth to another daughter, Anna, in August 1599, however her joy was to be short lived. A few months later George himself was being buried in the parish, and a matter of weeks after that Ann was attending the burial of the three month Anna.⁴⁰

As Treswells plan indicates a widow Ann Ponder is still resident in 1607, although whether this is Lawrence Ponders widow or George Ponders widow is impossible to tell. We do know that Anne died and was buried in January 1611-12, and had been a Dow pensioner since 1605 until her death.⁴¹

In 1612, and presumably due to Ponder's death, the tenancy passed to Isaac Simmes a goldsmith at a charge of £4p.a rent. The account books record that Simmes paid a £15 fine for the lease, although they also note that this was only a part payment, suggesting that the fine was probably set at the same £25 level as was no.140. It appears that Simmes neglected to pay the outstanding amount owed on the fine. Simmes was also probably the Isaac Syms who held the office of the Houndsditch precinct scavenger in 1606 and 1614 parish collector in 1618 and constable in 1619.⁴² It is also likely that he was the same Isaake Symmes who had married Emme Howe in March 1603.⁴³ Simmes may well at some points have been housing his sisters Mary and Jane. Mary Spilman (nee Symmes) wife of Thomas Spilman was noted as sister to Isaac when she was buried in September 1611, and she was recorded as living in Houndsditch.⁴⁴ Similarly, upon the burial of Jane Roberts, wife to Henrie Roberts a clockmaker, in the early 1620s the PCMs record that she was being 'mayntayned by her brother Isaack Symmes . . . dwelling in Houndsditch.' She was buried in the south church yard by her mother's grave.⁴⁵ She was soon joined by Isaac himself, and his wife Emme who were buried on the 18th November, and 24th November 1622 respectively. Isaac's passing was marked with a knell from the great bell of the church.⁴⁶

The account books record the subsequent lessee as Francis Norfolk, and there is no record that he ever paid a fine.⁴⁷ There appear to have been a least two men by the name of Francis Norfolk(e) resident in Houndsditch at the time and it is not clear which the individual related to this property. It is possible that one Norfolk was a bricklayer by trade, as a bricklayer by the name of Francis Norfolk is recorded as working on the parish church at regular points between 1595 and 1620.⁴⁸ This Francis Norfolk died in 1650, donating £10 to the parish for the 'reliefe of the poor', in his will.⁴⁹ A second Francis Norfolk held various parish offices, beginning as a sideman in 1610 and including questman, churchwarden, and constable.⁵⁰ He seemed to have been an important member of the vestry by the 1630s, acting as a feoffee for parish lands, sitting as a member of small committees responsible for surveying parish lands and overseeing repair works to them and the church, and becoming a member of the wardmote.⁵¹ He apparently died in 1655 and was by this point a Beadle of the Ward.⁵²

Norfolk is recorded as slipping £1 into arrears in 1638-9.⁵³ A viewing of the property in 1646 records that it was worth £13.6.8 and that there existed a cellar to the 'forepart and the back part' of the house, which had clearly been added since the 1607 Treswell plan. The viewing also records that the property was in a poor state, with 'walling, playting, glasing and tiling' in need of repair and the guttering so faulty that rainwater was able to enter the property on both external walls, and that Norfolk reassured the court that he would rectify these problems.⁵⁴

In June 1646, with the lease due to expire at Michalmass 1650, Robert Pierce a Merchant Taylor, offered Christ's Hospital a £30 fine for the lease. In the documentation relating to this offer Peirce is recorded as the sub-tenant of Norfolk. Surprisingly perhaps, the court declined. Pierce asked the court to reconsider, and the court, noting that he had been a 'long dweller' in the property, offered him terms of 21 years, £4p.a. and an inordinately large £60 fine, to be paid £20 upon sealing the lease, and two £20 annual instalments thereafter.⁵⁵ The court also ordered that Norfolk be informed of the repairs needed to bring the house up to a suitable standard before the cessation of his lease in 1650.⁵⁶

For how long the property had been subleased by Norfolk is not clear, indeed we have no direct confirmation that Norfolk was at any point resident in the house. He was certainly noted in the account books as the rental payee from the beginning to the end of the lease term, and it seems likely that he was the occupant for at least the early part of the lease. A schedule attached to the lease in Aug 1647 gives a detailed description of the layout and fixtures and fittings of the property. The shop is described as having a door with a lock and key, bolt and knocker, and 2 two under and 2 upper shutting windows. The Kitchen contained a door with bolt and latch, 7 glass lights, 2 iron casements with a 'fair glass window' and wainscot boards all along the window. The House of Office (toilet) was located in the yard with a door without a lock or key, and this adjoined the washhouse which contained a chimney and a door lock with no key. On the upper floors the bedchamber next to the street contained a window with 10 glass lights, 3 of which were non casements, a cupboard with several doors underneath the window, with the door to the chamber possessing a spring lock without a key. The chamber above it on the third floor was identically equipped. The second story chamber next to the yard possessed a framed window with 6 glass lights with one wooden casement, a door with lock and key, and a chimney, with the garret above this chamber containing an 'oyld paper' window with laths and a door with lock and key.⁵⁷ Once the lease was endorsed in August 1649 Pierce was granted a license (for a 10s charge) to assign the lease to Henry Richardson, a haberdasher, and his wife Ann.⁵⁸ Richardson is recorded as the rental payer from 1651 to 1653-4, with the lease to expire in 1673, suggesting that there had been some increase from, the 21 year term of the lease endorsed in 1650.⁵⁹ From 1654 onwards the account books suggest that there was a rapid turnover of sub-lessees in the property, with William Richardson 1655 to 1656-7; Ann Richardson, 1657-8; William Taylor, 1658-9 to 1663-4; and finally Taylor's widow Margaret, 1664-5 to 1666-7,⁶⁰ but a viewing in Feb 1666 still noted Peirce as the lessee.⁶¹ The viewing also noted that the property now possessed a cellar, and valued the property at £18p.a. with a rent of £4, and a purchase price of £14.⁶² In March 1666 John Palmer, described as the son-in-law of Taylor, and now the actual tenant of the house, sought to renew the lease. He claimed that his mother-in-law had invested 'a great deal' in renovations to the house, and on that basis offered a £50 fine and £4p.a. rent for a 21 year lease beginning in Mich 1671. The court requested a £100 fine, to which Palmer agreed and also gave the undertaking that he would spend money on re-building the property, although no actual sum is stated and it is not clear if this was a specific covenant in the lease. However what is clear is that the property had deteriorated somewhat since the early 17th century, perhaps as a result of the fairly routine turnover of occupants.

vii. 1672 – 1714. *Single lease*

No.140

Despite Palmer's assurances that he would see to the repair of the properties it is evident that he failed to fulfil his obligations. By 8th July 1672 one of the tenants, possibly no.140, may have been occupied by Anne Palmer who was most likely either the wife/widow or daughter of the lessee John Palmer, although the 1671 subsidy list records no occupant, and the 18 months tax list records no.140 as empty.⁶³ The building was clearly in an appalling state as a viewing committee

reported to the court that it was on the verge of collapse and ‘whatever would be lent out in repairs would be all be lost since the house is so ruinous’. They concluded that total rebuilding would be required the court was to allow a Mrs Gardner to present to them a written statement on behalf of Palmer stating how much she was prepared to spend on this rebuilding.⁶⁴ The viewing also reconfirmed that the properties had been let for 21y from Michaelmas 1671 to expire Michaelmas 1692 at a combined figure of £8p.a. and a £130 fine. Clearly Palmer was unable to obtain sufficient funds to pay for rebuilding as in January 1672/3 John Holmes a joiner was let the property, on the proviso that he rebuild the house, for 19 years at £9pa rent. Interestingly, it is likely that this agreement was actually a rather unusual and perhaps bespoke sublet arrangement authorised by Christs in order to ensure that rebuilding took place. Holmes did not sign a lease with Christs itself but rather an indenture between himself and Palmer, Thomas Gardner, Daniel, Margaret and William Taylor. Thomas was presumably some form of relative to Palmer (perhaps son-in-law) and the Taylors may have retained quit rent interests in the property.

The property apparently remained empty until 1673 when John Tilley takes up residence.⁶⁵ He remained the occupier probably until 1678, when the parish registers record that John Tillie, a joyner living in Houndsditch died.⁶⁶ The Hearth tax assessments of 1674-5 record only two hearths in the property.⁶⁷ The 1678 poll tax records that Tilley household consisted of himself, his wife, one child and two apprentices, and he was taxed 5s.⁶⁸ The property is apparently briefly occupied by a Chaney Coul before John Markham, a cane chair maker, begins a long residency there with his wife sometime between 1680 and 1689.⁶⁹ They were almost certainly living there by the time their son William was baptised in 1687.⁷⁰ This is the only mention of William in the records, and it is possible that he had died by the time his sister Sarah was baptised in 1688 - although the parish registers do not record the burial of any William Markham.⁷¹ Interestingly, the 1689 poll tax assessments record that only an apprentice (also described as a ‘servant’) lived with the Markhams – the assessments specifically record that no children were resident.⁷²

Another viewing of the properties on 20th January 1689-90 indicates that at some point Palmer had assigned her lease, which was due to expire in 1692, to a John Gardener. The descriptions given in these viewings, alongside the related plans, indicate that rebuilding of the properties had indeed occurred and that substantial alterations had been made, including the addition of another floor. Markham’s dwelling contained a cellar, and a shop and kitchen on the lower floor. The second and newly added third floor consisted of two chambers each, with two garrets over them. The yard was next to the kitchen, and contained a shed or workhouse. The viewing valued the properties at a combined £50: £8 rent and £42 to purchase.⁷³

John Gardener was indeed granted the new lease in 1692 for a term of 21 years, at £8pa with a £130 fine. Interestingly it appears that indenture signed in 1690 between Gardener and Christs required Gardener to spend £50 on repairs to the houses, before Christs would consent to grant the lease.⁷⁴

By 1692 the Markham household had expanded substantially, and now consisted of himself and his wife, two children and three servants: Henry Brayne, Stephen Oakes, and Martha Markham.⁷⁵ The two children were Sarah and Lawrence, who had been baptised in 1690.⁷⁶ The Markhams had lost a further child, Rebeccah, almost certainly Lawrence’s twin, who was both baptised and buried within the month of April 1690.⁷⁷ John Markham was paying 9s in the 1693 land tax, and 9s in 1693 4s in the £ tax. Interestingly the 4s in the pound assessment of 1694 records that he was assessed for 1s 6d worth of stock.⁷⁸ Rather confusingly the 1694 poll tax records that eight people were dwelling in the house - Markham, his wife, his three children and three individuals by the names of John Sadler, Steven Oakes and Elizabeth Markbee - although the assessment also records that Markham had no apprentices, servants or kin living with him. It is possible that these three individuals were lodgers, but given that Steven Oakes was noted as a servant in the 1692 poll tax it is more likely that they are servants/apprentices and the 1694 poll tax is simply erroneous.⁷⁹ The three children were Sarah, Lawrence, and the recently born who was baptised in March 1694.⁸⁰

The Markham household continued to expand. The 1695 Marriage Duty Assessment has ten individuals occupying the premises – Markham, his wife Sarah, four children: Lawrence, Sarah, Elizabeth and Theodor, and four other individuals: Stephen Oker (probably Steven Oakes) John Sadler, John Wattleton and Elizabeth Gold.⁸¹ Again there is no record of the baptism of a Theodor Markham. There is however the baptism of George, another son of John and Sarah, in July 1696 and the most likely explanation is that Theodor and George were one-and-the-same person.⁸² Earlier that same year the Markhams lost their young daughter Sarah.⁸³

Despite Markham's personal losses his business clearly continued to prosper as he still employed four apprentices (unnamed) plus a servant, Anne Richason, in 1698. It does appear that Markham (by this time noted as a Joyner) and his wife had had no further offspring, with only three children (presumably Lawrence, Elizabeth and George) recorded as occupants of the house in the 1698 Poll Tax.⁸⁴ Both the 1703 and 1713 Land Tax assessments continue to record Markham as the occupier, although no further information on the rest of the household is given.⁸⁵

No.141

In July 1672 a similar agreement to that forged between Holmes and Palmer et al in January 1672/3 for no.140 had been created for a Sir Edward Herr in relation to no.141. As with Holmes, Herr signed an indenture with Palmer, Gardner and the Taylors, rather than a lease directly with Christs. The agreement was for 21 years but at a seemingly excessive rental rate of £18 pa (compared with the £9pa rental on no.140).⁸⁶

According to the 1671 subsidy no.141 was occupied by an Eliza Warrin⁸⁷ however by the time of the 1673 land taxes James Goodale, a drum-maker, has begun his long occupancy of the property.⁸⁸ The dwelling contained five hearths in 1675.⁸⁹ Similarly the property had five occupants: Goodale, his wife, two children, and a maid servant paid £2 wages (presumably per annum).⁹⁰ One of the children may have been Elizabeth who had been baptised in August 1671.⁹¹ An assessment lists 1680 indicates that five people still occupied the property that year, however by 1689 only Goodale, his wife and a single child were present, and by 1690 just Mr and Mrs Goodale.⁹²

As with no.140 by 1689-90 the lessee Anne Palmer had assigned her lease to John Gardener who had rebuilt the properties. As with no.140 no.141 contained a cellar, and a shop and kitchen on the lower floor. The second and newly added third floor consisted of two chambers each, with two garrets over them. The yard was next to the kitchen, and contained a shed or workhouse. Goodale's property required some repair according to the viewing, with the paving in the yard, plastering on the brickwork of the house and the ceiling of a chamber, tiling, and glass windows of the entire dwelling all in need of attention. In the process of cataloguing these repairs, such a viewing offers an interesting insight into the materials used in the construction of these properties. As noted above Gardener was indeed granted the new lease for both 140 and 141 in 1692 for a term of 21 years, at £8pa with a £130 fine.

By 1692 the Goodale household was back up to three members again the Poll tax of that year records that a child was again resident at the property, as the later Marriage Duty Assessment of 1695 revealing that James and his wife Frances had a daughter by the names of Elizabeth, presumably the same Elizabeth who had been born in 1671.⁹³ Interestingly the Poll tax of 1698 records that Goodale, now listed as a joyner, and his wife were again childless, perhaps after their daughter Elizabeth had flown the nest.⁹⁴ It is likely that James died a few years later in June 1700.⁹⁵ Upon the death of Goodale, the occupancy probably passed to a Richard Nichols, who was listed in the 1703 land taxes.⁹⁶

It was John Markham himself who obtained the lease for the properties 1713 when John Gardener's 21 year term expired. Interestingly, although the lease stipulated the same £8pa rental and 21 year term as the previous lease, the fine was reduced to £100. No explanation is given for this reduction in the fine (such as money Markham had spent on repairs) so the assumption must be that the value of the lease had simply declined since the 1690s.⁹⁷ The lease contained the usual covenants - the obligation on the lessee to maintain the property, the right of entry for Christs, no inmates allowed, and the need for Markham to obtain permission to sublet the property. Unfortunately for Markham he would return to the court for another lease just a year later in 1714 after both dwellings had been gutted due to a fire. Markham had rapidly rebuilt the houses with his own money, and in view of this the court accepted the surrender of his previous lease and granted him a new one (£8pa and no fine) but this time for a 51 year term. The plan included with the lease suggests that some significant alterations had taken place to the ground floor since the viewing of 1689 as the 1713 plan makes no reference to a kitchen in no.140, and no.141 clearly no longer possesses a shop area. Indeed it looks likely that no.140 was now specifically envisaged as a shop, with perhaps the dwellings in the floors above, and no.141 was purposely constructed as a dwelling only.

The records relating to the property continue to extend well into the 19th century, and by 1808 no.141 had been converted into the Kings Arms pub.

NOTES

¹ Ev ID 311805 28/09/1561.

² HPL 184m. 17. 18th Jan 1563. GL Ms 13442 10 March 1563.

³ GL Ms 13442 17th April 1564

⁴ GL Ms 13442 2 July 1576

⁵ Possibly Becks lease signed in 1563?

⁶ PCM 1583, fol.23 16th feb 1583.

⁷ GL Ms 9235_3980. CW accts 1583-4 fol.174.

⁸ GL Ms 9235_3983 cw acc 1583-4 fol.176.

⁹ GL Ms 13442 24th Jan 1583

¹⁰ The parish registers record that a gardener by the name of William Stockden living in Houndsditch died in April 1608. Ev ID 103773 27/4/1608.

¹¹ GL MS 12805, 12806/3, 12819/3.

¹² GL MS 12806/3

¹³ GL MS 12819/2 & 12819/3 (Christs Hosp accounts); GL MS 12805 (Ch hos register) It appears that Hinde died in April 1626, by which time he was recorded as one of the Merchant Taylors almsmen. PR Ev ID 210238 23/4/1626.

¹⁴ 12819/3

¹⁵ GL MS 12819/3 & 12819/4 (Christs Hosp accounts)

¹⁶ 12806/3. 12819/5

¹⁷ 13443

¹⁸ 12834/1

¹⁹ 12806/4

²⁰ 13443

²¹ 12806/4

²² 13443

²³ 12819/6/7

²⁴ PR Ev ID 410508 29/8/1661. Interestingly the address is given as the neighbouring Cock Court.

²⁵ GL MS 12819/7 – 9 (Christs Hosp accounts)

²⁶ 12819/9

²⁷ 13444

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- 28 12806/6
29 PCM 1587-8, fol.3 15th Dec 1587-8, fol.95 17th July 1588
30 PCM 1589, fol.26, 8th feb 1589.
31 12818/2-3
32 PCM 1591 fol.124 , 24th Oct 1591
33 GL Ms 9235_5073 fol.57., 9235_5103 fol.72., 9235_5221 fol.130., 9235_5071 fol.56.
34 PCM 1594 fol.183, 23rd June 1594.
35 PCM 1593 fol.86, 2nd dec 1593.
36 PCM 1594 fol.227 28th Sept 1594.
37 PCM 1595 fol.116 9th Sept 1595.
38 PCM 1596 fol.74 7th Dec 1596, fol.120 13th mar 1596-7.
39 PCM 1597 fol.303 11th Sept 1597. fol.60 5th feb 1597-8.
40 PCM 1599 fol.132 19th aug 1599. fol.156 6th oct 1599, fol.178 11th nov 1599.
41 GL Ms 9235_5362 fol.214. GL Ms 2632 023,025,027,029,031,033,035. PR Ev ID 202918 21/1/1611
42 BOD MS Rawl D796B f.100, f.101, f.3.
43 PR Ev ID 315133 13/3/1603.
44 GLMs 9235_5358 CWacc, 1611-12, fol.212 12th Sept 1611. PR Ev ID 202799 12/9/1611
45 PCM 1622 fol.163 30th June 1622.
46 PCM 1622, fol. 177 18th nov 1622, 24th nov 1622. PR Ev ID 206656 18/11/1622 and Ev ID 206669
24/11/1622.
47 12819/3-4
48 GLMs 9235/5117 f.79; 9235/5527 f.301.
49 BOD MS RAWL D796B f.112.
50 BOD MS RAWL D796B f.100, 1610 and PCM 1615 f.216, 12th April 1615 (Sideman); BOD MS
RAWL D796B f.101, 1618 (constable); f.66, 1621 (first elected vestryman); f.102, 1620/1624/1629 &
f.104, 1633/1634 (questman); f.4, 1626/1627 (churchwarden).
51 GLMs 9237-1 f.86 1/4/1624; f.96 14/3/1635; f.98 1/02/1636 & 12/5/1637; f.100 27/02/1638; f.101
29/01/1638; f.103 14/06/1640.
52 PR Ev ID 226696 31/5/1655
53 12818/7
54 12834/1
55 Paid between 1646 and 1649-50. 12819/6
56 12806/4
57 13443
58 13443
59 12819/8-9
60 12819/9
61 13444
62 13444
63 1671 Sub and 1673 18m tax lists
64 12834/2 fol.165 8th July 1672. & 13444
65 COL.CHD.LA.03.15.20 012
66 PR Ev ID 132755 9/1/1678.
67 COL.CHD.LA.03.24.7 011; TNA E 179.252.23 021;
68 COL.CHD.LA.03.68.1 026
69 COL.CHD.LA.03.36.6 020; COL.CHD.LA.03.22.2 021; COL.CHD.LA.03.18.2 043
70 Pr Ev ID 10885 15/4/1687
71 PR Ev ID 11411 14/6/1688
72 COL.CHD.LA.03.24.10 014.
73 13444
74 GL Ms 13444
75 COL.CHD.LA.03.32.16 021
76 PR Ev ID 114980 24/3/1690
77 PR Ev ID 12185 1/4/1690. Ev ID 1227857 30/4/1690.
78 GL MS 11316.11 118; COL.CHD.LA.03.13.14A-D 011; COL.CHD.LA.03.17.6 018

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- ⁷⁹ COL.CHD.LA.03.112.6 011
⁸⁰ PR Ev ID 116380 29/3/1694.
⁸¹ MDA pp.62.
⁸² PR Ev ID 117411 21/7/1696
⁸³ PR Ev ID 1203576 22/6/1696.
⁸⁴ COL.CHD.LA.03.18.4 025
⁸⁵ GL MS 11316.14 074. GL MS 11316.44 016.
⁸⁶ GL MS 13444 CH paper of memoranda 8th and 15th July 1672, 10 Jan 1672/3
⁸⁷ COL.CHD.LA.03.24.17 0017.
⁸⁸ COL.CHD.LA.03.14.11 043 and 1674: COL.CHD.LA.03.24.7 011.
⁸⁹ TNA E 179.252.23 021.
⁹⁰ COL.CHD.LA.03.68.1 026.
⁹¹ PR Ev ID 503845 26/8/1671
⁹² COL.CHD.LA.03.36.6 020, COL.CHD.LA.03.22.2 021. COL.CHD.LA.03.24.10 014.
COL.CHD.LA.03.18.2 043
⁹³ COL.CHD.LA.03.32.16 021. and 1694 PT - COL.CHD.LA.03.112.6 011. MDA pp.63.
⁹⁴ COL.CHD.LA.03.18.4 025.
⁹⁵ PR Ev ID 1406080 7/6/1700
⁹⁶ GL MS 11316.14 074. GL MS 11316.44 016.
⁹⁷ Surprising given early 18th c property market boom. Cottrell et al

EAST SMITHFIELD

Barbers Surgeons Properties

This plot lying on the south of East Smithfield was located between a plot belonging to St Mary-at-Hill to the west and a property belonging to St Katerines Hospital and The Swan brewhouse to the east. The plot contained several alleys including Swan Alley, Mouse Alley, and Pond Alley, which, by the early 17th century were densely populated and well known areas of intense overcrowding.

i. 1443-1470

In the earliest recorded mention of this property it is described as consisting of seven small cottages with a garden lying in Tower Hill without London. They were in poor condition 'full old, ruinous and feeble and of little value, not stretchyng to 26s 8d pa. in value, above charges and reparations when they are occupied.' They had originally been the possession of Henry Tueslee of London, subsequently the Comptroller of Newcastle. He had alienated the property to Thomas Hunte Esq the 'countrollour of Receite general of Normandie' and resident of Tychemersh in Northamptonshire. In June 1443 a committee of five London citizens Thomas West (squire), William Berkyng (stockfishmonger), Thomas Gibbes (grocer), William Serle (carpenter) and John Sparowe (stockfishmonger), valued the freehold of the property at 20 marks, taking into consideration the 16d pa quit rents that were due.¹

Between 1443 and 1461, upon the death of Thomas Hunt, the freehold of the seven tenements and garden passed to his widow Juliana who in turn in September 1461 'remised, released and quitclaimed' the fee to John Cadman (wiredrawer), Thomas Frowyk (gent) and Thomas Swetnam (grocer). It also appears five further men; John Barnvile, Richard Dudley, John Gedon (chaplain), Thomas Wytelshay and Thomas Dalynghton, sold their interests in the property to Cadman, Frowyk and Swetnam.² A few weeks later Frowyk quitclaimed his interest to Cadman and Swetnam.³

The property changed hands at least twice more before finally being granted to the Barber surgeons in 1473. Their documents record that in September 1469 via a charter the property came into the hands of Edmond Legg (pynner) and Thomas Bernard (scriptor). The subsequent feoffees appear to have been John Dagvile, Thomas Maryot and John Taillour, and it was presumably they who granted the fee to the company. The property was still described as seven cottages with gardens (plural) bounded by the lands of the confraternity of St Katherine's and John Saverey to the east, the lands of St Mary-at-the-Hill parish church (held by Thomas Towcester, ironmonger) to the west, and the land of John Saverey to the south.⁴ Later Barbers Surgeons account books indicate that St Katherine's Hospital continued to possess quit rent interests in the property into the 17th century.

It is not until the mid 16th century that the documentary trail relating to this property once again emerges. However, as is perhaps to be expected with the material relating to an increasingly densely populated property it is difficult to trace the exact occupants or indeed lessees of the numerous dwellings that spring up on the site. Therefore the description that follows is organised where possible into a chronological history of a dwelling or lease, and where this has not been possible the information is presented thematically.

¹ BL add. Ch. 26073, 28th June 1443.

² BL Add. Ch. 26079, 6th Sept 1461.

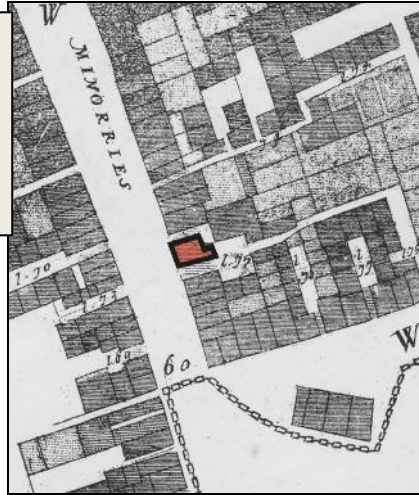
³ BL Add. Ch. 26080, 2nd Oct 1461.

⁴ GL Ms 9826 (Ferbras MSS)

ST. BOTOLPH ALDGATE

BLUE ANCHOR – Minories, East Side

This property occupied a plot towards the south of the Minories on the east side. The plot corresponds to no.77 the Minories on the Portsoken ward map of 1858, and can be identified on the Ogilby and Morgan map of 1676 at the entrance to Blue Anchor Alley (1.75)



i. 1588 –late 18th c

This history of this property begins on a gruesome note, as the first entry in the PCMs is a memo of a coroners inquest into the death of the occupant of the Blewe Anker(sic) ‘upon Sparrowes corner’ a John Dunstone. The inquest found that Dunstone, 34 years old and a bricklayer, was murdered ‘whilst sitting on his seat at his door’ between 8 and 9pm on the night of Wednesday 15th May 1588. The perpetrator, a ‘labouring householder’ by the name of Thomas Campyan (Campion) who ‘did dwell in a garden alley being near Sparrowes corner’ approached from ‘Behynde the Sayd Jhon Donstone Sittinge at His owne Dore Ded throoste a knyfe in to his Backe under His lefte Showlder Blade wch wente abowte v entchis Deepe into His Bodye and more whereof He Dyed’. Dunstone was buried in the south aisle in the church under the right side of the great stone, with the ‘best cloth’ of the parish being used and ‘an afternoons knell with the great bell’ accompanying the burial.¹ Campion, the husband to an unnamed wife and father to ‘three small children’ was executed soon after, hanged ‘upon a giblet’ set up at Tower Hill close to the Blue Anchor itself. He was buried in the common church yard.²

By this period of the early 1590s the property was being occupied by a Robert Elsworth, who is described as a ‘tipler’, and who apparently took in lodgers. The PCMs record that one such individual, a scholar by the name of Adrian Poynes (Poynnes), died from the plague aged 33, and was buried on 12 September 1593.³ Another man Symon Greaves described as a ‘skottishe man some times a lieutenant of a coronet of horsemen’ and ‘no parishioner’ of the parish, was buried on 23rd January 1593-4 at the age 40 after ‘lying sick’ at the Blewe Ancker the house of Robert Elsor.⁴ It is clear that by this period the Blewe Anker was a significant local landmark, as a number of times in the PCMs the locations of places are referred to in relation to the Anker.⁵

By December 1596 Elsworth had been replaced as the occupant by a Fishmonger called John Smith, whose son Statius was christened on the 29th December 1596.⁶ Smith lasted only a few years in the property, as by September 1599 John Glory a pewterer and family were dwelling there. It appears that his existing daughter Anne (baptised in 1596) was joined by twins William and Dorothy who were christened on the 3 September 1599.⁷ It is possible that Glory had married an Anne Symmons in 1593. It is also probable that Glory moved to the Anchor from Houndsditch, as the PCMs record the christening of a Stephen Glory, son of a pewterer by the name of John Glory who was resident in ‘Mr Gaskens rents’ in Houndsditch. The PCMs also record that in 1594 Glory had Andrewe Parker the son of Andrewe Parker a trumpeter ‘lying’ at his house in Houndsditch.⁸ If as it seems likely, this is the same Glory that moved to the Anchor in the late 1590s then he is still engaged in the practice of

taking in lodgers in 1614 as in November of that year Joane Read ‘an aged widow (reputed to be a 100 years old) who lodged in the house of John Glory in the precinct next to the tower’ was buried.⁹ His daughter Anne was married to George Howcroft a taylor from St Saviours parish on 28th April 1616.¹⁰

In terms of the ownership of the property in this period it appeared to be in the hands of a Nicholas Reynolds as his will dated the 1st August 1593, and proved in the Archdeaconry court on 25th October 1602, left the freehold of the Blue Anchor to his wife Elizabeth, who was betrothed to Robert Wheatley, a salter. The freehold was to pass to Wheatley (presumably upon marriage) and the rent of £6pa was to be paid to the executors of Reynolds. After the death of both Wheatley and the executors the freehold was to pass to the Church Wardens ‘in the ward of Portsoken’ for the ‘needy poor.’ The property was described as a ‘new build tenement’ with a vault into the street.¹¹

However, the vestry minute indicate that by 1604 there was some form of legal dispute regarding the title of the property. The minutes do not explain in detail the nature of the dispute, but record that the ward of Portsoken was to ‘bear one third of litigation costs of Wheatlye at common law’ regarding the property, and that ‘if his case is overthrown’ then the ward would ‘begin their own case’ to ‘sue at law’ and Wheatley would pay one third of the ward’s costs. Wheatley clearly one the case as the minutes have a signed receipt from him that on 22 May 1606 he received £4 2s for a third of the charges.¹² Whatever the case the next documented reference to the property is contained in the Church Wardens poor accounts of 1622 indicating that the title was indeed successfully transferred to the parish.

The property probably leased by a widow Elizabeth Tubman at that time, for the sum of £2 10s per quarter (£10pa).¹³ It is possible that she lived with her father Mr Lomley, who died in her house and was buried ‘in the country.’¹⁴ Tubman was involved in an interesting internal dispute within the vestry that was resolved at the Chancery, and resulted in a series of legal clarifications as to the procedures of the vestry. The case was brought before the Chancery by John Brigg clerk, and governors of parish church of STB, against Thomas Vinton, William Carpenter, William Price, William Hearte, Robert Leutour, and widow Tubman. Presumably the two camps were involved in some form of internal power struggle between parish and corporate authority. The parish argued that the defendants ought not to be permitted to keep the ‘common chest, evidences, writings, church books, accompts and a stock of money’ at their private houses as the ‘custody, ordering and disposing’ of these items was the responsibility of the minsters, wardens, and vestrymen of the parish, and that ‘no vestry ought to be kept in any private mans house.’ The defendants responded that Vinton was an alderman’s deputy, and that all the rest were common councilmen and had been church wardens (although this clearly could not have been the case for Tubman herself) and that effectively they were just exercising their rights. After a ‘long debate of the matter’ the Lord Chancellor ‘was pleased to declare’ that as the defendants were the ‘civil government of the said ward’ they did not possess the legal authority to hold the aforementioned documentation or parish resources, and that the chest should be returned to the vestry house and to the custody of the wardens and minster. The judgement also stipulated that vestry meetings were to be held in the vestry house, that no parish officers were to be excluded from these meetings, and reaffirmed that it was the minister, church wardens and vestrymen that ‘shall dispose of all matters and affairs belonging to the parish’. Finally, the financial state, and procedures of the parish were to be clarified. It was ordered that Brigg (now a minister?) and 6 vestrymen (3 from the City, and 3 from Middlesex) should form a commission take a ‘stock’ of the ‘sums of money given to use of the poor and of yearly employment thereof.’ To complete this audit the commission was given the power to ‘interrogate’ the defendants. They were also required to question the defendants in relation to the account books of the parish which had been ‘torn and defaced’, and the ‘suppressing and decaying’ of other books concerning the parish premises. It was noted that Widow Tubman herself had ‘in her hands several rents belonging to the parish’ but that she had been unsure as to who to pay the monies to given the state of the accounts and internal power struggle within the parish.¹⁵ Interestingly, as a result of the dispute Tubman appeared to have been withholding her rental payments to the parish.¹⁶

By the following year (1623) the parish was apparently required to pay legal fees to transfer an interest that a Sir John Leimon held in the property (the exact nature of which is not mentioned although the evidence suggests it was indeed the freehold) to the parish.¹⁷ The deed relating to this case provides the only detailed description of property, along with rudimentary ground floor plans

seemingly penned in 1836.¹⁸ The deed notes that the occupant of the Blue Anchor was now a George Bayley and that the property was bordered by properties in the occupation of John Martin to the north, John Howe to the east, and a 'tenement or gatehouse' owed by Walter Mears to the south. The property comprised of 3 ½ floors and included substantial cellars. The ground floor of the property consisted of a shop 14ft 7 inches east to west, by 14ft 3 inches north to south. Underneath this room was a large cellar measuring 14ft 7 inches east to west and 18ft 10 inches north to south, and containing a chimney. Interestingly the properties underground space extended further, as it included another substantial 'vault' or cellar 'shooting from the said tenement under the street called the Minories' and measuring 27ft east to west and 16ft north to south. The chamber over the shop on the second floor apparently jutted out over both the east and west walls being 18ft 10 inches in size along this axis, and 14ft 7 inches north to south, and the chamber above that on the third floor measured 16ft 10 inches east to west, and 14ft 7 inches north to south, with the garret located above. A staircase (the deeds indicate this was an external staircase) was located on the south east corner of the property and climbed 7ft 4 inches from east to west. Another staircase, presumably internal, ran from north to south and climbed 7ft 1 inch. Finally, there existed a funnel next to the staircase which ran down to a 'privy vault' located under the yard of the adjoining property belonging to Howe.

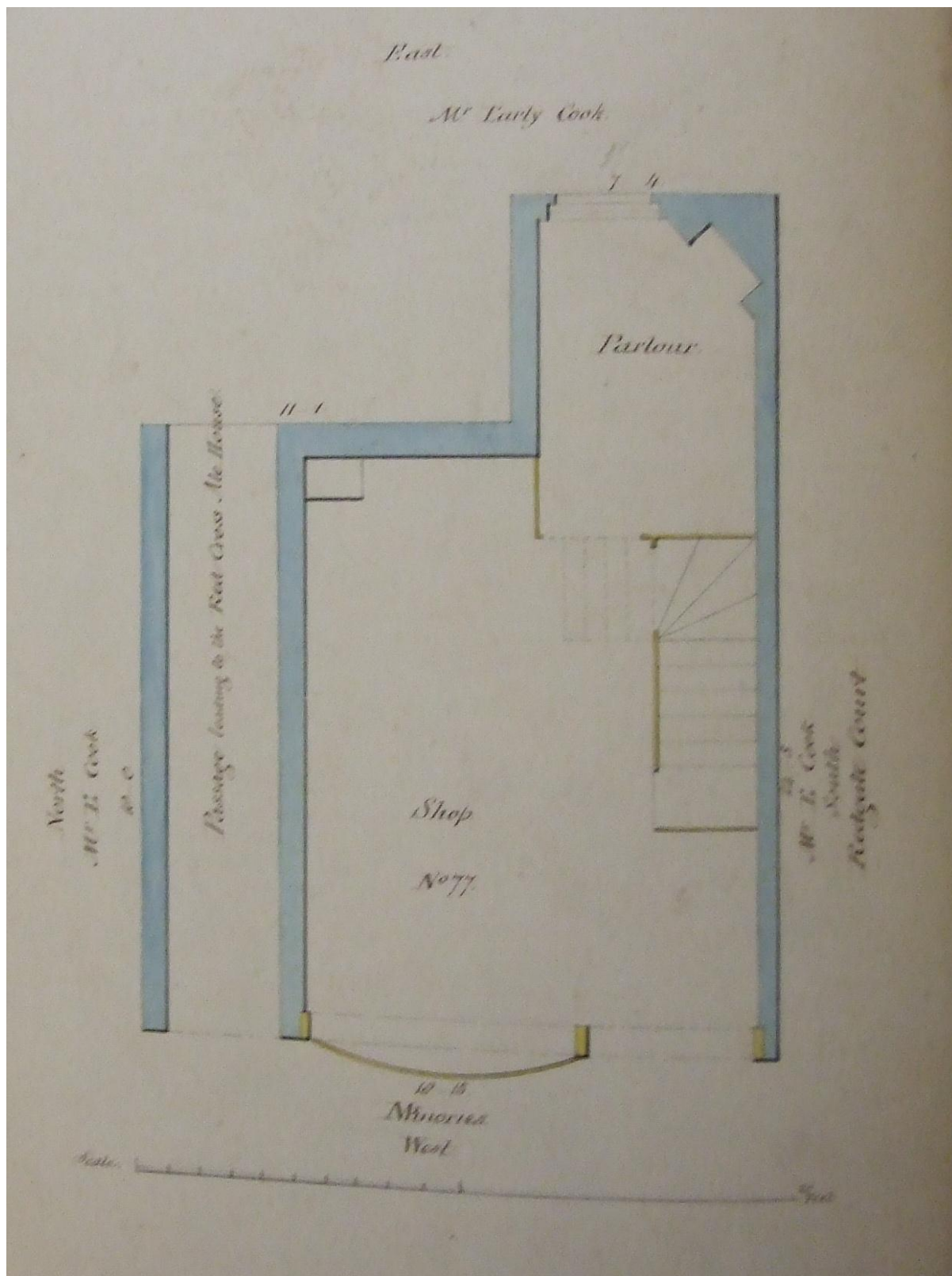
Interestingly the deed notes that the freehold was to be held by Lemman for the remainder of his life, then to be held in trust that would 'distribute the rents amongst the poor'. Once the membership of this trust had been reduced to four men (no mention is made of the original number of trustees) then the premises would be conveyed to '18 more of the ward of Portsoken.'¹⁹ The parish spent £3 1s 'in suite' as late as 1635 for 'cleeringe the title' of the property, indicating that the conveyance was still proving problematic as late as the mid 1630s.²⁰

Between 1632 and 1648 the £10p.a. rent on the property was paid by a Mr Francis Johnson, although it is not clear if a lease agreement was involved.²¹ Johnson may have held the post of a parish collector a couple of times in the early 1630s, and the post of 'Examyner' for Tower Hill precinct (for plague?) in 1636.²²

However a lease was clearly involved when Henry Ratliffe took over occupancy of the Blue Anchor in 1648 (still at £10p.a), as he paid a fine of £15.²³ The same year the parish also paid 9s 6d to search for Reynolds' will, in light of a 'difference between two parts of parish', suggesting there may still have been some unresolved issues with the title of the property. Ratliffe, who was on the vestry in the late 1650s and held the post of Churchwarden in the early 1660s,²⁴ continued to lease the property until 1666, when the account books record that Anthony Dyott (Dyatt) was paying rental on the dwelling.²⁵ This is probably the same Anthony Dyott an ironmonger, who married Mary Walker (daughter of Thomas Walker) in February 1657. Dyott's place of residence at the time of his marriage was recorded as the parish of Michael Queenhithe.²⁶ He died in 1668 and in October 1672 Mary his widow signed a lease for the property, still described as a messuage of tenement, and containing 3 hearths according to the hearth taxes of the 1670s, for the unusually long term of 41 years, at the existing rent of £10 pa although no fine is mentioned. Widow Dyatt was in receipt of assistance from the parish in the form of £2 'expended upon her' in 1672 although the poll tax returns of 1678 reveal Dyett to be a woman of significant wealth. She was recorded as possessing £200 plus in 'money' and was assessed for the relative high value of £2 1s.²⁷ Her household consisted of three women 'maid servants', Eliza Cope, Mary Flecher and E Newland, to whom she paid £2 in wages, suggesting she was running some kind of business from the premises, although what type of business was engaged in is not clear.²⁸ She was buried in July 1686.²⁹

The subsequent occupier was a Daniel Picard a haberdasher (also recorded variously as Pickard and Pikard) who presumably occupied the property after Dyatt's death.³⁰ The 1690 Poll Taxes record the household as consisting of Pickard, his sister and his brother. A sister was still living with him by 1692, along with his wife and servant by the name of Elizabeth Pell.³¹ The land tax assessments of the 1690s also reveal Pickard to be a man of substantial wealth. He was paying £17pa rent for the Anchor, and was assessed for 3s to 4s 6d in stock, whilst the Marriage Duty assessments of 1695 also reveal that he was assessed for £600 in capital assets.³² The Pickard household continued to remain compact, with only Daniel, his wife Anne and a servant by the name of Elizabeth Peele resident in 1695, and an apprentice and a servant by the name of Ellis Willis living there along with the Pickard's in 1698.³³

Pickard continued to reside in the property into the 1710s, and was apparently quite active within the parish, appearing in the wardmote presentment as a prosecutor against a pair of men accused of running disorderly and unlicensed houses in Covent Garden.³⁴ He was granted a 41 year lease for the property in 1713 by which time the Blue Anchor was also being referred to as The Sign of the Bell. The nineteenth century 'Trust money' book records the property as abutting north with a tavern formerly known as The George (subsequently as The Standard), and also situated next to the Red Cross Ale House. In 1755 the Anchor was leased to Francis Hawes for a 31 year term, and again in 1786 to a Joseph Burton for 21 years in return for a £14 annual rent and £85 spent on repairs.³⁵ An early nineteenth century included below plan gives an indication of the scale and layout of the property which apparently had not changed a great deal since the description given in the 1620s.³⁶



¹ GLMs 9235_4995 CW accs f.18. PRs 12/5/1588 EvID 201755

² 9234/1 PCM 16 May 1588, f.65 17 May 1588, f.68 23 May 1588. PRs 23/5/1588 EvID 201758.

³ 9234/4 PCM 12 sept 1593. GLMs 9235_5059 CW accs f.50. PRs EvID 303633.

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- ⁴ PCM 9234/4 f.115 23 Jan 1593. . GLMs 9235_5077 CW accs f.59. PRs 23/01/1593 EvID 300215
- ⁵ PCM 1592 f.122 20 Aug 1592; f.171 Nov 19 1592.; f.185 June 1594; f.123 23 July 1598;
- ⁶ PCM 1596 f.88 29 Dec.
- ⁷ PRs 01/08/1596 EvID 308985; PCM 1599 f.138, 3 Sept 1599.
- ⁸ 1593 f.37 30 Sept 1593; f.133 16 March; f.254 Nov; PRs 4/11/1593 EvID 314089
- ⁹ 1614 f.202 9 Nov. PRs 9/11/1614 EvID 203874
- ¹⁰ 1616 f.249 28 April.
- ¹¹ 2630 19th c ‘Trust Money’ book f.21(11)
- ¹² 9236 vest mins STB f.95 29 sept 1604; 2630 19th c ‘Trust Money’ book f.21; 9236 Vest mins STB payments 22 may 1606 f.98.
- ¹³ 9237 CW poor acc 1622 STB receipts. 9236 vw’s STB 16 Dec 1622.
- ¹⁴ GLMs 9235_5484 CW accs f.278.
- ¹⁵ 3606/1 STB parish records. 16th Dec 1622.
- ¹⁶ GLMs 9237-15 CW acc’s f.19 16th Dec 1622
- ¹⁷ GL MS 9237 CW poor accs 1622-73 - STB misc vestry mins 22 Jan 1623-4 - and disbursements 1623-4 f.40-1.
- ¹⁸ 9237 CW poor accs 1622-73, STB vest mins 22 jan 1623-4 f.28&29.
- ¹⁹ GL MS 2630 19th c ‘Trust Money’ book f.22 1 May 1623
- ²⁰ GLMs9237_111/112 f.67 CW accs 1635.
- ²¹ GL MS 9237 CW poor accs 1622-73 STB receipts f.60/62/66/67/71/74/81/84/85/89/92/97. 1644-1648
- ²² GLMS9237_98/99 f.62 CW accs 1633; GLMs9237_111/112 f.67 CW accs 1635. GLMs9237_120 f.71 CW accs 1636.
- ²³ GL MS 9237 CW poor accs 1622-73 STB receipts 1648
- ²⁴ GLMs 9237_610 f.263 CW accs 17 March 1656. GLMs9237_608 f.261 CW accs 25th Dec 1657. GLMs9237_296 f.161 CW acc 1661
- ²⁵ GL MS 9237 CW poor accs 1622-73 STB rental & f.3
- ²⁶ PRs 10/2/1657 EvID 320354
- ²⁷ PRs 12/8/1668 EvID 515695; COL.CHD.LA.03.25-9.7 014 f.27; TNA E 179/252/23; GLMS9237_397 f.205 CW accs 1672.
- ²⁸ COL.CHD.LA.03.68.1 033 f.5. 1678
- ²⁹ PRs 18/7/1686 EvID 1225175
- ³⁰ COL.CHD.LA.03.29.22.019 f.5. 1688. COL.CHD.LA.03.22.2 030 f.4 1689.
- ³¹ COL.CHD.LA.03.18.2 026 f.5. 1690; COL.CHD.LA.03.32.16 006 f.5. 1692.
- ³² GL MS 11316.11 006 f.5. 1693; COL.CHD.LA.03.13.14A-D 021 f.5. 1693; COL.CHD.LA.03.17.6 035 f.5. 1694
- ³³ COL.CHD.LA.03.18.4 005 f.4. 1698.
- ³⁴ GL MS 11316.14 019 f.8. 1703. COL/AD/04/012 Portsoken wardmote presentments 1703. 21/12/1703.
- ³⁵ GL MS 2630 19th c ‘Trust Money’ bk, f.22
- ³⁶ GL MS ‘Trust money book’ fol.11 (P69/BOT2/D/001/MS02630)

ST. BOTOLPH ALDGATE

HAND AND HATCHET ALLEY MINORIES, EAST SIDE

This plot comprised of a street frontage of numbers 86-89 at the southern end of the Minories on the Portsoken ward map.

i. 1575-

The first lease for this property dated September 1575 describes the plot as ‘a garden near the postern lately enclosed by Anthony Fenrother’ a goldsmith and Master Gunner to the queen. The lease was for 41 years, at 10s pa rental.¹ Presumably at some point the lease was assigned to Oliver Skynner as he was noted as surrendering the existing lease when a new one was granted to Sir James Altham in January 1611-12 for 31 years, at 50s pa rent, and a £50 fine.² This lease must have been amended soon after as the City Cash books record the lease as a 41 year term at 40s pa rent. These books also record that in 1632-3 Peter Blower, presumably having been assigned the lease was paying the rental on the property which was described as five tenements. Upon Blower’s death c.1646 one of his executors Richard Duke assigned the remaining seven years of the lease for the five tenements to Thomas Kelke, although Kelke appears to have struggled to pay the rental, falling into arrears for several years between 1651 and 1654.³ In April 1652, in anticipation of a new lessee being granted, a sub-committee of the City Lands Committee viewed the plot in order to establish its yearly rental value, and the potential cost of rebuilding.⁴ Clearly some rebuilding was in order as the following lessee John Silke, a gunsmith, was given a 61 year rebuilding lease. He paid 40s pa rent, and a £240 fine for the lease granted to him in June 1653. There were by now seven tenements on the plot. The Cash books indicate that John East was assigned the lease in c.1658.

Silke was also granted a plot of ground between the rear of his properties and the city wall, a ditch which functioned as the common sewer, on the basis that he had ‘lately built and arched over’ the ditch at his own charge. He was asked to provide an ‘iron grate there’ and ensure it was kept cleansed.⁵ The minutes of the gunmakers company record that warden Silk had undertaken this work in order to allow the company to construct a ‘proving place’ for handguns there (a testing house for the weapons). To fund the project all members agreed to give 10s each to the company. The building was 16ft square and Silke granted them a 13 year sub-lease at peppercorn rent for the first four years and 40s pa thereafter. Interestingly the minutes give evidence that the Court of Assistants may have met several times at this site. Unsurprisingly the activities conducted in the proof place provoked complaints presumably from the neighbours. An individual by the name of Watson complained that the bulwark was ‘old and decayed’ which was ‘occasioned by the proof place being under it’, and the company resolved to repair the same. The company also had to pay for the repairs to the roof of the proof place thanks to ‘the breach being made by an accident in proof of the company’s guns.’⁶ It is possible that soon after 1657 the lease was assigned to a Mr Durborn who was according to the gunfounders accounts receiving rents for the property in 1663.⁷

At the expiration of Silke’s lease in the early 1710s it appears that the plot was divided into several leases. The first demise was made to Jeremiah Butt, the current occupier, for the two tenements (which, the lease notes, had formerly been three tenements) located at the south

east corner of the plot, at the junction of Minories and Tower Hill. Butt was granted a 21 year lease, at £5pa rent, and was covenanted to spend at least £100 on repairs to the properties.⁸ The property was leased to William Pomroy in June 1732 for 21 years.

The second demise was made to Edward Crouch a poulter. In October 1712 he was granted the lease for sixteen tenements clustered around Hatchett Yard, for 21 years at £11 pa, and no fine. He was, in October 1715 also granted the lease for two tenements at the north east end of the plot for 40 years at £3pa. It is probable that these properties were included in the original lease of 1712, and it is not clear why another separate lease was issued for these particular abodes in 1715.⁹ Finally, in July 1734 Thompson Wayne was granted a lease for four tenements which lay between Tower Hill and Hatchett Yard and had presumably previously been part of the 1712 lease made to Crouch. No further details given.¹⁰

¹ CLRO Rep 18 f.417 6th Sept 1575.

² CLRO City Lands Grant book i f.116 29th Jan 1611/12.

³ CLRO City Cash books vol.1

⁴ CLRO City Lands Grant book iii, f.15 2nd April 1652.

⁵ CLRO City Lands 'copies of deeds' vol.9 ff.264-7 28th June 1653. Grant book iii f.27 17th Nov 1652.

⁶ GL Ms 5220/1 p.54 23 April 1657 & 30 April 1657, p.16 July 1657, p.58 27 Aug 1657, p.77 4 Jan 1659/60, p.100 12 Nov 1662, p.102 1 Apr 1663, p.104 5 Aug 1663.

⁷ GL Ms 5219/1

⁸ CLRO Comp Deeds 54:2 8th July 1711

⁹ CLRO Comp deeds 58:8 6th October 1712 & 84:20 4th Oct 1715.

¹⁰ CLRO Comp Deeds 83:37 30th July 1734.

ST. BOTOLPH ALDGATE

MINORIES, EAST SIDE

This small plot comprised of approx street frontage of number 100 at the southern end of the Minories on the Portsoken ward map.

1615-1713

The small property first etches itself onto the historical record in May 1614 when the land and the shed located there is leased to a widow, Ann Siverdale for 41 years at 30s pa rent.¹ By 1632 Siverdale had assigned the lease for the 'shed and yard' to Henry Waller, who presumably died c.1638 as John Frith his devisee is recorded as the lessee by that year. In the early to mid 1650s Frith falls regularly into rental arrears, possibly as a result of the £125 fine he paid for a new lease to the property in 1652.² The lease, for 61 years at 30s rent pa, also informs us that there were at this point two dwellings plus sheds on the plot.³ The next demise in 1713 offers a nice plan of these dwellings, one of which was in the occupation of John Shinger, and the other inhabited by the new lessee John Fawcett, who paid a £50 fine and £3pa rent for the privilege of his 21 year lease. The dimensions illustrate the petite nature of these houses, with the plot measuring just 26ft 4inches along the Minories, 27ft 4inches at the rear, 20ft on the northern edge, and 21ft 3inches on the southern edge.⁴

¹ CLRO CLGB i f128 20th May 1614.

² City Cash books vol.1 cash Accounts vol.8

³ CLRO CLGB iii f.23 7th July 1652.

⁴ CLRO Comp deeds 51:20 31st March 1713.

ST. BOTOLPH ALDGATE

MINORIES, EAST SIDE

This small plot comprised of approx street frontage of number 124 in the middle of the eastern side of the Minories on the Portsoken ward map.

1582-1715

The first record of this property appears in April 1582 when two aldermen Sir John Ryners and Thomas Blangs were asked to view the garden in the tenancy of Richard Markham. A year later a fellow alderman Sir Edward Osborne was granted the lease for 60 years (no rent or fine mentioned). Osborne surrendered this lease in March 1584/5 and was offered a new lease for 99 years. It appears that a proviso of this new grant was that Osborne repay to the Chamberlain the £19 17s 1d that was 'yet owing' for iron, glass and other building materials 'laid out in new building a house situated in the said garden.'¹ The later cash books record that Osborne held a 60 year lease suggesting that ultimately the 99 year demise was not issued and the description of the property contained therein is 'a garden sometime two gardens', no mention of a dwelling is made. They also record that the current lessees as, the late Jeffrey Moore, and previous lessees as Jeremy Dyke and John Dodson. Moore's widow was assigned the lease in 1633 and, in turn, in 1639 the lease was assigned to her executrix widow Elizabeth Sheers.² In the 1640s Sheers (Sheires) faced competition for the new lease in the form of one of the current occupants Edward Jones a blacksmith who was, along with Sheers, recorded as a suitor for the lease 'in respect of his great charge bestowed in building there.' Jones died soon after and the property was ultimately demised in 1644 to Robert Bridgeman a merchant taylor and his wife Anne for 31 years at 20s pa rent and a fine of £40. As seemed to be the protocol Bridgeman surrendered this lease soon after and was granted an extended 61 year lease in its place, although on this occasion the rental was increased to £5 6s 8d and a fine of £65 charged.³ The indenture described the property as measuring 25ft along the street front, and 130ft from street to ditch at the rear. A shop measuring 25ft by 28ft with a parlour and two upper chambers abutted the street, and an adjoining workhouse ran back a further 19ft.

The property passed to Samuel Barnes and his wife Sarah in 1661 as the executors of the Bridgeman's. A memo in the 1654 demise notes that at some point Edmund Hopegood a merchant and Robert Hudson an innholder had been assigned the lease by the commissioner of bankruptcy and in February 1675 they were given licesne to assign the lease to John Hudson a grocer 'to the use of Richard Hudson' a merchant taylor.⁴

As with neighbouring City properties this one also underwent a substantial burst of development in the second half of the 17th century. The deed of January 1714/15 which granted the property to John Stevens a tyler and bricklayer for 21 years at £11 pa (no fine) documents a plot that contained seven tenements and five sheds and was densely occupied.⁵

¹ CLRO Rep.20 f.312 4th April 1582, f.404 26th Feb 1583. Rep.21 f.145 4th March 1584/5.

² City cash Book vol.1.

³ CLRO CLGB ii, f.89 14th April 1641, f.95 20th May 1644. CLGB iii, f.43 12th April 1654.

⁴ City cash book vol.1. CLRO city lands 'copies of leases' vol.4. ff.41-46, 30th May 1654.

⁵ CLRO comp deeds 56:18 18th Jan 1714/15.

ST. BOTOLPH ALDGATE

MINORIES, EAST SIDE

This was originally a very large plot that corresponded to the street frontage of numbers 125-135 on the middle of the eastern side of the Minories on the Portsoken ward map. In 1645 the plot was split into five separate leases : 18, 19a, 19b, 20 and 21. This history of the property until 1645 is covered under the gazetteer entry for no.18.

1645-1652

19A

In 1643 widow Grace Bullock was granted this tenement that was currently in the occupation of Froderin Fiste, for a term of 21 years at 20s pa rent and a fine of £60 which was to be paid within a year, and if not the grant was to be ‘considered void and the committee at liberty to let.’ Bullock managed to pay £45 worth of the fine in 1643/44, but it was not until 1647 when Roger Turnsley a cooper and Grace’s new husband finally paid the outstanding £15 due on this fine.¹

19B

John Butterfield a glazier was granted the lease for this property at the same meeting as Grace Bullock in May 1643 with the same terms and conditions. Again as with Bullock Butterfield failed comprehensively to pay the £60 fine within a year, and it appears that it was not until 1651 that his ‘administrator’ (presumably an unnamed executor) paid the outstanding £35.²

1652-1711

19A&B

It appears that by October 1652 Turnsley had been assigned the leases for both 19A&B, and in May 1654 he was issued a demise for both. The properties were described as ‘two messaues or tenements and gardens formerly two gardens or garden plots’ in the occupation of John Horton and William Rowse, with the entire plot measuring 28ft along the street front and 72ft to the rear. The houses dwelt in by Horton and Rowse were described as each comprising a cellar next to the street, a kitchen, a garden, a shop, a parlour, two chambers and two garrets. Turnsley was granted a 61 year lease at 40s pa rent and an £80 fine, and a few years later in February 1656/7 assigned the lease to William Warne a scrivener.³

1711-

19A

In February 1711 this property was demised to widow Frances Pollard for 21 years at £3pa rent, and no fine is mentioned.

19B

On the same day this property was granted to Reginald Sumpner a blacksmith for the same terms as no.19A.

Interestingly, both properties remained as single dwellings rather than suffering any subdivision, and both still possessed open ground to the rear.⁴

¹ CLRO CLGB ii, f.93 12th May 1643, City cash acc/s vols.5&6.

² CLRO CLGB ii, f.93 12th May 1643, City cash acc/s vols.5-8.

³ CLRO city lands 'copies of leases' vol.3 f.125-129 9th May 1654.

⁴ CLRO comp deeds 54:15 & 54:14 5th Feb 1711.

ST. BOTOLPH ALDGATE
THE MINORIES, EAST SIDE

A small plot comprised of a street frontage of numbers 95-6 at the southern end of the Minories on the Portsoken ward map.

i. 1622-1714

In 1622 the current occupant, Thomas Blemell a carpenter, was granted a 36 year lease for the property, at £5pa rent, and no fine. The property was described as a single tenement, and as part of the lease Blemell was covenanted to ‘substantially build the forepart’ of the tenement within three years.¹ Interest in the lease repeatedly changes throughout the 1630s. It is probable the Blemell sublet the property to a John Stubbs who, by 1632, was assigning his interest to his daughter Ann and her husband Thomas Axtell. Almost immediately they assign there interest to Arthur Juxton, who is recorded as the rental payer from 1633-4 to 1636-7, when he then assigns to a Thomas Adams (Addams). From 1639-40 to 1646-7 Thomas’ widow Elizabeth is listed in the city cash books as the lessee, and she subsequently assigns her interest to Richard Clutterbuck Esq in 1647-8. A few years later in March 1652 Clutterbuck was granted a fresh 61 year lease for the property, now described as two tenements, at £5pa rent, and with a £90 fine.² The City Cash books record that Clutterbuck was soon reverting back to the pattern of assigning the lease, this time to a George Echell in 1655-6. George’s wife Frances and her new husband William Macham were assigned the lease in 1657-8 which they continue to hold until the recording of cash book data finishes in 1670.

The cash books for this period record the property as ‘several tenements’ suggesting that there may have been more than two, however by the time of the next lease in December 1714 it is clear that only two dwellings are located there. The property is recorded as two tenements with two sheds, on a plot measuring 29ft 5inches along the Minories, 32ft 4inches at the rear, 44ft east to west along its northern edge, and 42ft 6inches along its southern boundary. The property was demised to Camalieu Lewing a carpenter for 21 years at £6pa rent with no fine.³

¹ CLRO City Lands Grant bk ii f.23, 11th July 1622.

² CLRO CLGB iii f.31 16th March 1652.

³ CLRO Comp deeds 52:29 14th Dec 1714.

ST. BOTOLPH ALDGATE

BULLOCKS COURT, MINORIES, EAST SIDE

This small plot comprised a street frontage at the southern end of the Minories on the Portsoken ward map.

1565-1712

The first mention of this property was in October 1565 when Richard Henson (possibly Hughson) a skinner was admitted as a tenant-at-will for the 'garden without Aldgate' that had previously been demised to widow Skalyon. Henson paid 40s as a fine, and the same rent as Skalyon (the rental figure was not recorded).¹ Henson eventually took a 21 year lease for the plot described as 'one of the new gardens' in April 1578 for 12s pa rent and a £5 fine.¹ Henson assigned the lease prior to its expiry in 1599 as the City Lands Grant books record that in c.1598 William and Francis Shute, an imbrothere (embroiderer) and goldsmith respectively, had surrendered their interest in the property now described as one tenement and a garden. William Shute, probably the current occupant of the dwelling, was offered and accepted a 21 year lease at 20s pa rent and £20 fine, although a year later (perhaps due to the death of Shute) the lease was delivered to Thomas Addeys (Addis) a blacksmith for the remainder of the term.² Addis (listed in the City Cash books as an armourer) was granted another 21 year demise in 1619 at 40s rent, and again in March 1638/9, this time for 22 years at 40s rent and an £80 fine. His lease was extended to 31 years a few months later in July 1639 'in respect of his great charge to be bestowed in new building of a piece of the tenement in his occupation.'³ The lease was assigned to Thomas' widow Margaret in c.1647 and it appears that soon after the lease was assigned to John Jones a grocer, as he surrendered in June 1653.⁴ In May 1652, just prior to the expiry of the lease a sub-committee of the City Lands Committee was ordered to view the 'tenement and garden' in order to establish its value. The subsequent lease to Jones in 1653 notes that the property now consisted of two tenements and a garden again illustrating, as with other City plots in the Minories that the Corporation was often seemingly unaware of the developments that were occurring on its properties. Interestingly the lease set the rental at the same level previously, 40s, but the term was compared to the 1639 demise, a much increased 61 years, and the fine a much reduced £48. The dimensions given for the plot were 51ft along the street frontage, and 149 ½ ft along its east to west axis. The rear boundary abutted the common sewer, the north the property of John Edgerton, and the south the tenement of widow Day. A later addendum to the lease also records that in May 1656 Jones was given license to assign the lease to a Mr Mansfield a blacksmith.⁵

Over the next six decades the development of the plot continued apace and by the time of the next lease in July 1712 the plan associated with the indenture illustrated that the plot was well built up, with seven tenements, some sheds and closets, five small yards, a Wheelwrights shop, and a washhouse, all mostly clustered around what was now being called Bullocks Court. The property was demised to Humphrey Primatt a grocer for 21 years at £12pa rent, no fine is mentioned.⁶

¹ CLRO rep 15, f.481, 16th Oct 1565.

² CLRO rep 19 f.331, 22nd April 1578.

³ CLRO CLGB ii, f.78 20th March 1638/9, f.81 12th July 1639.

⁴ City Cash Books vol.1. CLRO CLGB iii, f.33 29th June 1653.

⁵ CLRO City Lands 'copies of leases' vol.4 ff.108-113, 8th September 1653.

⁶ CLRO Comp deeds 54:8 15th July 1712.

ST. BOTOLPH ALDGATE

EALES YARD/COURT, MINORIES, EAST SIDE

This small plot comprised of approx street frontage of number 122-3 in the middle of the eastern side of the Minories on the Portsoken ward map.

1600-1713

This property is perhaps the most extreme and vivid example of explosive development and acute housing density that we encounter in any of the City's properties located along the Minories. At the turn of the 17th century William Burnham a carpenter was granted the lease for this 'garden and shed', previously in the tenancy of widow Brooke, for 21 years, a rent of 20s pa and fine of 20 marks. By the time he was granted another lease in 1619 the plot had developed in to two tenements and a carpenters yard, for which Burnham paid £4pa rent and a £50 fine for his 30 year rent.¹ The ensuing lessee, a fishmonger named William Startute's, seemed to develop the plot further. He was issued a lease in May 1649 for the two tenements, for 21 years, £4pa rent and a £150 fine.² It appears he then assigned the lease to a John Privett a mariner, who in turn passed his interest to his wife Elizabeth upon his death c.1652.³ She surrendered this lease in August 1653 and was issued a new demise for the plot which by this time was described in the City Lands grant book as four tenements. The grant books record that the demise to Elizabeth was for 61 years at £4pa rent and a £140 fine, although the actual indenture a year later in 1654 was for a 45 year term beginning in 1670. Presumably the City felt it more expedient to simply let the existing lease in the possession of Elizabeth run its course and issue a fresh lease for the number of years required to take her interest up to the required 61 years.⁴ The deed described the property as comprising of a garden, a yard, 'sheds and other buildings' and two tenements, one in the possible occupation of Anne Hewitt a widow, and the other inhabited by John Ellis a blacksmith. The plot measured 76ft along the street front and abbutted the house of widow Jones on the north, and Mr Devoris to the south. It measured 65ft at the rear, and extended to a depth of 132ft back from the street front.

As the subsequent deed illustrates, over the course of the six decades between the 1650s and 1710s Privett or her assigns managed to develop the property to the extent that by 1713 a total of sixteen dwellings were located there, with an astonishing fourteen dwellings crammed onto the southern half of the plot which measured just 43ft by 134ft. The property was demised in February 1713 to a Thomas Minshull a stationer for 21 years at £20pa rent and no fine.⁵

¹ CLRO CLGB i, f.43 29th Feb 1599/1600. CLGB ii, f.8 12th Nov 1619.

² CLRO CLGB ii, f.117, 31st May 1649.

³ City cash books vol.1

⁴ CLRO CLGB iii, f.34 29th June 165, f.35 17th Aug 1653

⁵ CLRO Comp deeds 57:8 28th Feb 1712/13.

ST. BOTOLPH ALDGATE

THE GREEN DRAGON MINORIES, EAST SIDE

This property occupied a plot towards the south of the Minories on the west side. The plot corresponds to numbers 92-94 the Minories on the Portsoken ward map of 1858.

i. 1575-1660

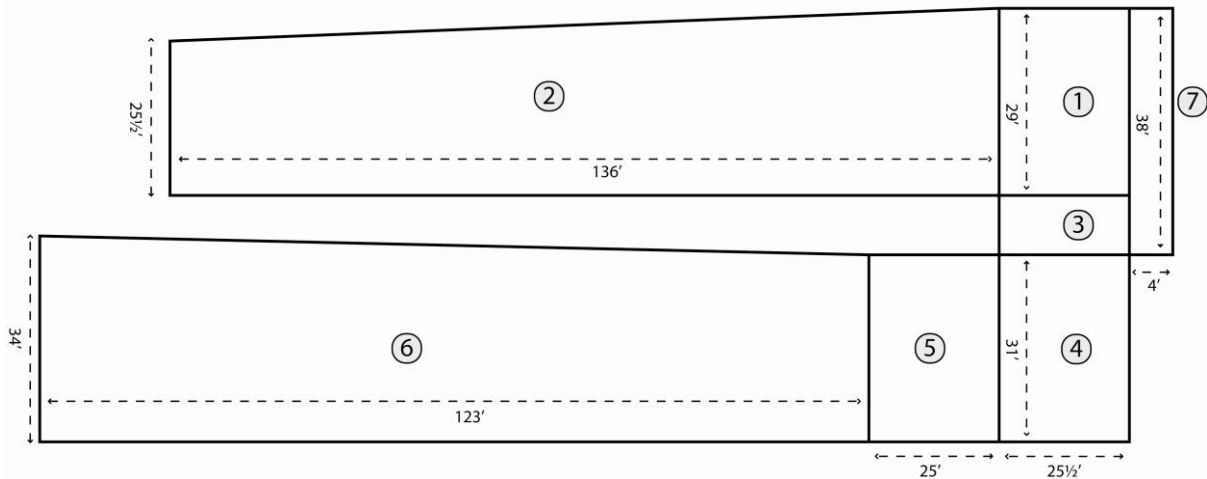
This property was first recorded as a garden in East Smithfield that had been 'lately enclosed' by a William Wyggins a skinner, who had leased the plot from the City for a term of 41 years at a rent of 10s pa.¹ A few years later in 1581 Wyggins surrenders his lease (the reasons are not recorded) and is issued another lease on 'his garden near the postern', again for 41 years at 10s pa with covenants regarding repairs (again unrecorded).² At some point over the next 15 years Wyggins must have constructed a dwelling on the plot as when he surrendered his lease yet again in March 1597-8 the grant books note that the lease now comprised of a tenement and a garden. Wyggins (possibly in view of his construction of this dwelling) and his wife were granted a lease for 50 years. Interestingly, the lease contained the covenant that if the property 'came to possession of a foreign' i.e a non freeman either by Skinner assigning the lease or by his wife remarrying, 'or be not preserved for the City's use, the lease shall be void'. To ensure Wyggins's compliance the lease required the tenant to enter into a bond on the alienation of the lease.³

The historical record falls silent for a number of decades after this until 1632 when the City's cash books record that Thomas Matthew, who had presumably been assigned the lease, was paying the rental on the property at a rate of 10s. His widow, Joane was assigned the lease upon the death of Thomas in c.1639-40, although it appears that a Johan Matthew(?) acquired the lease in 1642-3 and remained the lessee until its expiry in 1647-8. The City, as was its wont, had agreed terms some years earlier in 1645 with a new lessee of the property, a widow by the name of Anne Tedder, for a 31 year term at 40s pa rent. Tedder paid a £200 fine for the lease of the property now described as a tenement by the name of the Greene Dragon which was used as a tavern, with a stable and ground adjoining.⁴ Tedder had been living there since at least 1637 as she is recorded as paying £4 pa (£3 pa moderated rent) in the 1637 tithes.⁵ The grant books also record that the current lessee, Mrs Matthews, would allow Mrs Tedder to dwell in the tenement until her (Matthews) lease expired in 1647-8 for a seemingly prohibitive rent of £27pa, although presumably Tedder accepted these terms as she is noted as the occupier in June 1647.⁶ By June 1647 Tedder had already spent money on 'new building' parts of the property and, in recognition of her outlay, the committee granted her a newly extended lease for 45 years.⁷

Yet, despite her investment in the property, just a few months later in November 1647 Tedder assigned and granted the lease to a London gentleman by the name of John Hatt. It appears that this was not a straightforward assignation, with Hatt simply subleasing the property, but rather it is probable that Tedder actually surrendered her lease (although this is not stated) as the subsequent indenture demising the property to Hatt in December 1647 was

between himself and the Corporation (the freeholder). Why Tedder had chosen this course of action is intriguing - the indenture suggests she may have continued to occupy a dwelling she had constructed on the site - but the documentation provides no further clues. What the documentation does provide however, is a detailed description of the tavern and the related buildings.

The description and dimensions given in the lease provide the following layout: (North is to the top, and the eastern side abutted the Minorities.)



1 - The tavern (29x25½ft) contained two cellars, with the ground floor consisting of two drinking rooms, a hall and a kitchen. The second floor comprised of four rooms, with another five rooms on the third floor.

2 – The garden of the tavern

3 – Anne Tedder’s dwelling contained a cellar, a kitchen and buttery on the ground floor, second and third floors of two chambers each, and topped off with a garrett. This dwelling was described as a ‘new building’.

4 – Two stables in the ‘occupation’ of William Stane

5 – Three sheds containing a cellar of the same dimensions underneath them, with two haylofts above them.

6 – A garden plot.

7 – Described as ‘a piece of ground enclosed with a pale and a little shop’.

Given the description of the property in 1645 it appears that Tedder had added both her dwelling and the three sheds as part of her renovations.

A number of typical covenants were contained in the lease, such as the forbidding of inmates, the right of the freeholder to enter and view the property, the obligation of the lessee to pay the rental within 28 days, and the right to demise the lease to his wife, children or executors only. There are also a handful of nonstandard covenants. Only elm, oak or fir was to be used in repairs, and Hatt was covenanted to use only City workmen and surveyors to undertake such repairs. Most interestingly though the lease stipulated that Hatt would breach the covenants if he ‘divides or builds into more tenements, or if by building he diminishes the lights of any nearby building’. In other words the committee was acutely aware of the potential pressures to cram further dwellings on the plot.⁸

It is likely that Anne Tedder died in 1655, and Hatt continued to lease the Green Dragon until 1658-9, although he suffered a period between 1651-2 and 1655-6 when he was constantly in rental arrears.⁹ His widow Dorothy was assigned the lease for a short period in

1659, before in November 1659 it was then assigned to Henry Leeke a vinter. The City cash books record that in 1674 the property was assigned to Thomasin Richmond, the sister and legatee of Leeke.¹⁰

ii. 1692-1714

A lease indenture between the City and Ezekiel Gibbs a brewer for a period of 21 years at £16pa rent and a £200 fine shows that significant alterations had occurred since 1647, and indeed the indenture notes that Gibbs had incurred costs thanks to ‘substantial repairs’. The tavern and stables were no more, having been converted into dwellings, and the gardens divided into several plots with large sheds. The plot size had also been reduced slightly with dimensions of 61ft along the street front, 62 ft 2in at the rear, and 168ft along its southern edge, although the northern edge remained at 165ft 6in. The tenant to the north was tenanted by Allen, with that to the south in the possession of Jasper Rawlins. The lease also contained a number of covenants that were fairly standard for the time. These covenants included the stipulation that Gibbs or his subtenants should ‘suffer any inmates to dwell or to habit in any part of the premises’. The covenants also proscribe the close attention to the physical state of the property that Gibbs must adhere to. In the advent of their demise Gibbs was to replace the principle timbers of the properties with ‘well seasoned oaken timber’ as per the Acts of Parliament for rebuilding London. Similarly, the pavements were to be maintained and the ‘privies and wyddraughts’ belonging to the dwellings were to be ‘emptied scowered and cleansed’ when required. Gibbs was also covenanted to essentially leave the properties as he found them, with all ‘locks, keys, bolts, barrs, latches, windows, glazing’s, casements, shutters, dressers, shelves, chimney pieces, wainscots, pipes, gutter of lead and such like other materials and things’ to be still in situ at the end of the lease. The City also reserved the right to enter the property to monitor its state and order repairs when necessary, and Gibbs was also required to seek the City’s assent if he wished to assign the lease.

The lease also notes that the three messuages facing the street were occupied by Benjamin Smith, Stephen Gifford and a Wilson. The tenement behind was occupied by Charles Lewis.¹¹ This information allows us in conjunction with taxation listings to track the occupants of the properties both back and forward from this point.

iii. Occupants 1660s-1710s

Dwelling 1. The most southerly on the street front, was occupied by Benjamin Smith from some years prior to 1692. He is first recorded in the 1668 11 month taxes.¹² Interestingly, according to the Hearth Taxes of the 1670 the dwelling contained just 3 hearths, whereas by the time of the 1674-5 assessment this had risen to 5 hearths.¹³ The 1678 Poll taxes offer the first indications of the composition of the household, with Smith recorded as dwelling there with his wife, two children, and a maidservant by the name of Deborah Solomon to whom he paid £2 in wages.¹⁴ Smith again reappears in the 6 months taxes of 1689, and the Poll taxes of a year later indicate that the household still consisted of Smith, his wife, two children and a maid. A maid was no longer present by the 1692 poll taxes.¹⁵ By the early 1690s Smith is paying £20pa in rent, and is assessed for 3s in the 1693 land taxes and 4s 6d in the 1694 *4s in the £* assessments suggesting that, although hardly wealthy, he was a man of some means.¹⁶ One man who was certainly wealthy however was William Prescott, a batchelor who was recorded as lodging with the Smiths in the 1695 Marriage Duty Assessments. Prescott has at least £600 in capital assets and paid a total of £1 12s 6d in the MDA. Why such a man would choose to lodge like this is not clear, although the 1698 land tax assessments show he was

still lodging with Smith three years later.¹⁷ The rest of the household according to the MDA was wife Hanah Smith and daughter Elizabeth, with another inhabitant Jane Blanchett presumably a maid or servant. In 1698 Hanah and Elizabeth are absent from the listed inhabitants with the household now consisting of just Smith (recorded as a Tinner) Prescottt and a servant Jane Brookes. Astonishingly Smith is still resident in 1703-4 (and still paying £20 pa rent) although by the time of the 1713 land taxes he has finally been replaced by Nathaniel Frankling as the resident of this property¹⁸.

Dwelling 2. This dwelling, the middle of the three along the street front, was occupied in 1692 by Stephen Gifford. It is probable that a Henry Beal occupied the property in 1668, followed by William Fisher in 1670. Fisher was resident in the four hearth dwelling till c.1675.¹⁹ He was followed by John Tufly (Tuffley) who's household in 1678 consisted of his wife, two children, an apprentice, and a servant called Alice Tipson. He is also recorded as resident in 1680.²⁰ Gifford first makes an appearance in 1689 residing in the property with his wife, a child, a maid, and 'one man'.²¹ The unnamed male is gone by 1692, and the maid is named as Anne Buckby. In addition the Gifford's had had another child.²² His wife was Charity Gifford (nee Marlow) who he had married in 1683.²³ The Giffords had probably been resident since at least 1685 as they are recorded as living in the Minories in 1685 when their son Stephen was baptised and buried within a week.²⁴ Another young son by the name of Stephen suffered the same fate in 1687.²⁵ Efforts to raise a child by the name of Charity also succumbed to the same fortune. Three daughters by that name were baptised between 1690 and 1697, and three daughters called Charity were buried between 1692 and 1704.²⁶

Gifford was paying £18 pa rental in the mid 1690s and was assessed for 3s in stock.²⁷ The assessments also indicate that his household continued to grow. In 1695 it consisted of himself, his wife Charity, three children: Thomas, Joseph (baptised 1689²⁸), and Anne, and two servants: Robert Walder and Elizabeth Harlow. The 1698 poll taxes still record that Gifford, noted as an Apothecary, and his wife had three children, an apprentice, and a servant called Elizabeth Smith.²⁹ Gifford was still recorded as resident in 1704 and again in 1713. He was still paying £18 pa rent according to the 1703 assessments, and the 1713 version notes that he was assessed for 15s personal estate and £1 16s rents.³⁰ It is possible that this the same Stephen Gifford that was a vestyman and churchwarden at numerous times from the late 1690s to early 1710s although it has not been possible to confirm this and there are certainly several other Stephen Gifford's in the parish during this period.³¹

Dwelling 3. Although the lease of 1692 notes the occupier as 'Wilson' there is no record of such an individual in any of the taxation listings. Instead it is clear that in the early 1690s this property, the most northerly of the three along the street front, was in the occupation of Christopher Husband. Prior to his occupation we can trace the residents back to 1668 and a William Ffludiere (Fflodyer/Fflyder/Flider are some of the many alternative spellings) The property possessed four hearths and, according to the 1678 Poll taxes, was occupied by Fludyer his wife, a daughter and an apprentice. The final record of Flyder is in the 1680 6 month taxes.³² Given the wide variety of spellings of his surname it is difficult to ascertain with any certainty any further information on William and family. However, it is likely that his wife was called Sarah Ffludyer and she gave birth to a son William in 1667, and who had presumably died by the time of the 1678 poll. She herself died in late 1678.³³

Husband and his wife Anne were present in the property from at least 1689, but interestingly it appears the household only ever consisted of the two of them, no children, servants or apprentices are listed as resident with them.³⁴ He is no longer listed by the time of the 1698 poll. It is also difficult to establish the rental Husband was paying. He is only recorded intermittently in the land taxes and 4s in the £ aid of 1693-4. In some instances he is

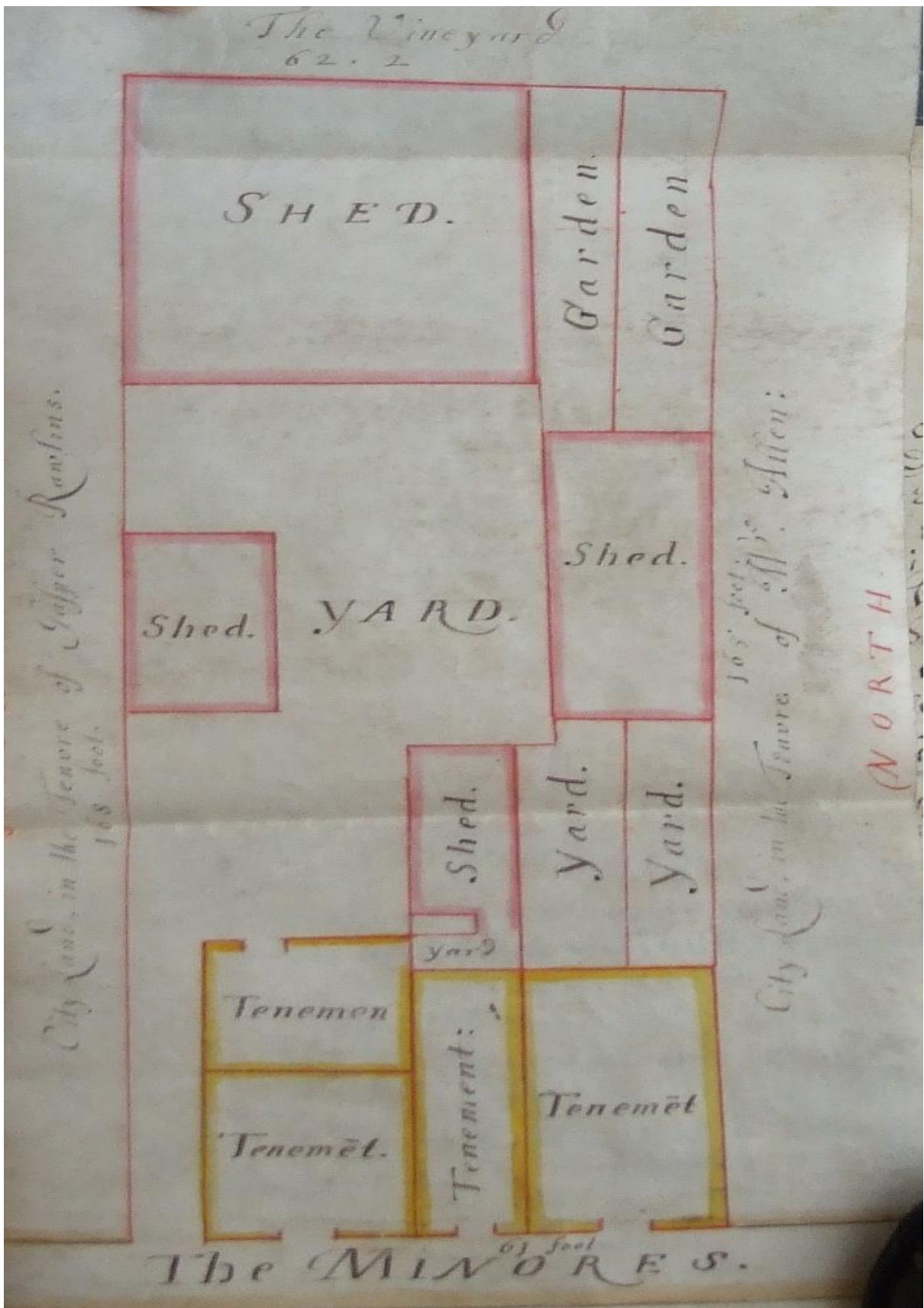
assessed for just 3s rent, meaning a yearly rental charge of just £3, whereas in the 1694 4s in the £ aid his rent is assessed a £1 4s giving a yearly charge of £24. Furthermore an assessment carried out by the City in 1693 of the rents paid by those living on its lands records his rental as £6 pa.³⁵ There is no mention of the couple in the 1698 poll and the exact identity of the occupants after 1695 is unclear.

Dwelling 4. The tenement behind the street front was in the tenure of Charles Lewis from at least 1689. It is not possible to trace the residents of this dwelling back to the previous existing taxation listings, the 6 month taxes of 1680. It may be that the dwelling was actually constructed sometime in the 1680s although this is again simply speculation.³⁶ In 1690 Lewis a joiner occupied the property with his wife, an apprentice, and a maid. By 1692 Lewis had taken on another apprentice and the maid was named as Hannah Jacob.³⁷ The Marriage Duty Assessment of 1695 records the household consisting of Lewis and his wife Sarah, three servants George Walters, John Dolmer, Mary Baker, and a lodger called John Towers. As with their neighbours the Husband's there is no mention of the couple ever having children living at the property. Lewis was paying £19 pa rent, and was assessed for 4s 6d in stock in the taxes of 1693-4.³⁸ He is still present in the 1698 Poll with just his wife, but it appears likely that James Jones, another joiner and his apprentice may have also been residing there.³⁹ It is also likely that Jones was the resident in the early 1700s.⁴⁰

iv. lease of 1715.

The plot size seems to have been reduced slightly again by the time of the next indenture in February 1714-15, when William Lawrence a joiner was granted the property described as a parcel of ground with 'messuages or tenements and several sheds thereupon' for 21 years at £20pa rent and a £200 fine. There were now six dwellings on the plot, and the configuration of the rear of the plot had altered substantially since 1692, with yards and sheds repositioned, a dwelling house and washhouse added, and the gardens lost.⁴¹ It is probable that these buildings added by Gibbs were of dubious quality as Lawrence was covenanted to spend within three years the fairly substantial sum of £300 in repairs to the premises. It is also probable, given the evidence from the 1695 Marriage Duty Assessments and poll of 1698 that these additional dwellings had been added in the 1700s rather than 1690s.

The Green Dragon plot 1692



The Green Dragon plot 1715



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- ¹ CLRO rep 18 f.417 6 Sept 1575
 - ² CLRO rep 20 f.204 2 June 1581
 - ³ CLRO City Lands Grant Book (CLGB) i, f.25, 8 Oct 1596, f.31v 8 Marhc 1597/8, f.32 24 March 1597/8
 - ⁴ CLRO city cash accounts vol.5-6.
 - ⁵ Dale
 - ⁶ CLRO CLGB ii f.101 13 June 1645.
 - ⁷ CLRO CLGB ii f.108 2 June 1647
 - ⁸ CLRO comp deeds box E no.15
 - ⁹ PRs 30/11/1655 Ev Id 226938
 - ¹⁰ CLRO city cash books
 - ¹¹ CLRO comp deeds 39.24 indent 20th Oct 1692
 - ¹² COL.CHD.LA.03.66.23 008 f.4. TNA E 179/252/23 f.53.
 - ¹³ COL.CHD.LA.03.25-9.7 015 f.29.
 - ¹⁴ COL.CHD.LA.03.68.1 036 f.8.
 - ¹⁵ COL.CHD.LA.03.22.2 032 f.6. COL.CHD.LA.03.18.2 029 f.8. COL.CHD.LA.03.32.16 008 f.7.
 - ¹⁶ GL MS 11316.11 008 f.7. COL.CHD.LA.03.17.6 037 f.7.
 - ¹⁷ COL.CHD.LA.03.18.4 008 f.7.
 - ¹⁸ GL MS 11316.14 024 f.13. GL MS 11316.44 060 f.20.
 - ¹⁹ COL.CHD.LA.03.66.23 008 f.4. COL.CHD.LA.03.25-9.7 015 f.29. TNA E 179/252/23 f.53.
 - ²⁰ COL.CHD.LA.03.68.1 036 f.8. COL.CHD.LA.03.36.6 010 f.5.
 - ²¹ COL.CHD.LA.03.22.2 032 f.6. COL.CHD.LA.03.18.2 029 f.8.
 - ²² COL.CHD.LA.03.32.16 008 f.7.
 - ²³ PRs 05/02/1683 Ev Id 322592.
 - ²⁴ PRs 14/11/1685 Ev Id 510175, 18/11/1685 Ev Id 1224715
 - ²⁵ PRs 27/11/1686 Ev Id 510688, 17/05/1687 Ev Id 1225792.
 - ²⁶ Baptisms: PRs 22/02/1690 Ev Id 114955, 28/8/1696 Ev Id 117466, 26/10/1697 Ev Id 118007. Burials: PRs 08/04/1692 Ev Id 1220834, 02/09/1696 Ev Id 1203694, 30/09/1704 Ev Id 1410786.
 - ²⁷ GL MS 11316.11 008 f.7. COL.CHD.LA.03.17.6 037 f.7.
 - ²⁸ PRs 15/11/1689 Ev Id 12029
 - ²⁹ **MDA REF!** COL.CHD.LA.03.18.4 008 f.7
 - ³⁰ GL MS 11316.14 024 f.13. GL MS 11316.44 060 f.19.
 - ³¹ GLMs 2644_1 Vestry minutes.
 - ³² COL.CHD.LA.03.66.23 008 f.4. COL.CHD.LA.03.25-9.7 015 f.29. TNA E 179/252/23 f.53. COL.CHD.LA.03.68.1 036 f.8. COL.CHD.LA.03.36.6 010 f.5.
 - ³³ PRs 01/08/1667 Ev Id 125296. 22/11/1678 Ev Id 132671.
 - ³⁴ COL.CHD.LA.03.22.2 032 f.6. COL.CHD.LA.03.18.2 029 f.8.
 - ³⁵ COL.CHD.LA.03.13.14A-D 025 f.8. COL.CHD.LA.03.17.6 037 f.7. Misc MSS 9.24 034.
 - ³⁶ COL.CHD.LA.03.22.2 032 f.6.
 - ³⁷ COL.CHD.LA.03.18.2 029 f.8. COL.CHD.LA.03.32.16 008 f.7.
 - ³⁸ COL.CHD.LA.03.17.6 037 f.7. GL MS 11316.11 008 f.7.
 - ³⁹ COL.CHD.LA.03.18.4 008 f.7.
 - ⁴⁰ GL MS 11316.14 024 f.13. GL MS 11316.44 060 f.19
 - ⁴¹ CLRO comp deeds 52:28 8th Feb 1714/15.

ST. BOTOLPH ALDGATE

HAMMERSMITHS ALLEY, MINORIES, EAST SIDE

This plot comprised of a street frontage of numbers of approximately 107-109 at the south eastern part of the Minories on the Portsoken ward map.

1600-1670

The first property erected here was a dwelling house and garden built by Stephen Stephens an armourer who was in 1600 granted a 31 year lease for the plot with a 20 mark fine and a 20s rent. A few weeks later the City Lands Committee increased his lease to 40 years in respect of the 'great charge' he had laid out in this construction.¹

As with the other City properties along the Minories this plot is soon being subdivided into further dwellings and increases in value rapidly. In 1632-3 Anne Stevens is paying the 20s rental for the garden (presumably this includes the dwelling house) that had been demised to Stephen Steevens in 1600. In 1637-8 the rental payer switches to a Samuel Stanton the executor of Anne. Stanton a fishmonger is issued a 32 year lease for the same, now described as two tenants a garden and a yard, in 1638-9 at an increased rent of 30s pa and a substantially increased fine of £100.² From this point on the exact nature of the lease agreements become slightly confused. Although Stanton did indeed pay the fine, the City Cash books record that in 1641-2 Gowen Muzzard (later recorded as a blacksmith) was issued a 32 year lease for the property at 40s pa rent (no fine is mentioned) which he continues to pay until 1646-7 when Elizabeth (his widow?) is recorded as the rental payer. By 1653-4 Elizabeth, now Mrs Woodford and clearly struggling financially, was 10s in arrears with her rent, a sum that had spiralled to £2 10s the year later, although cleared by the following year.³ Perhaps due to Elizabeth's difficulty in paying her rent in July 1656, with 15 years still to run on the existing lease, the City Lands Committee viewed the 'two tenements'. An Andrew Bolt, a cooper, was interested in leasing the same, and had valued the property at £40. The viewing report records that building on the plot had continued apace as there were now in fact five dwellings located there. Bolt was granted a 61 year lease at 40s rent but another massively increased fine of £200. Bolt was covenanted to ensure that a passageway through the premises was provided in order that the City had access to the London Wall.⁴ It is interesting to note that not only was the City Lands Committee apparently blissfully unaware of the continued building on the plot, but they also were clearly unperturbed by it.

1670-1717

In July an indenture between Bolt and the City records both the dimensions of the plot and offer descriptions of the dwellings sited there. The plot measured 49 ½ ft along the Minories, extended 99ft 3inches back from the street front, and measured 46 ½ ft north to south at the rear. Another, apparently empty piece of land associated with this plot abutted it to the rear and measured 44ft north-south, and 51ft east-west. Behind the plot to the west lay the common sewer, and to the north and several tenements belonging to Major Greene and Thomas Thompson respectively. The, now four dwellings on the plot (down from five in 1656) were described as follows. A tenement located 'eastward' was occupied by Henry Ashworth and comprised a small cellar, one shop, a kitchen and a yard. The second and third storeys consisted of two chambers each. Two other tenements, in the occupation of widow Prior and Thomas Davys were similar three storey buildings, with just single chambers on the second and third levels, and a garret each. The final dwelling in the occupation of William

Bates was apparently just a ground floor which contained a washhouse, a kitchen, two rooms, a yard and a garden, and four garrets above this floor. The purpose of the indenture seems to have been to covenant the occupants to pay their rent within 28 days, avoid inmates, and pave and cleanse the passageway, as in terms of the lease itself it merely confirms the existing agreement.⁵

Upon the death of Bolt c.1680 his sons John and Joshua surrendered the lease, and plot was split into three leases. Each related deed contained plans for the properties, which again illustrate that the building density had increased further in the last two decades. The first demise, the southern most of the properties running from the street to the Vineyard at the rear, was to John Smith a baker, for 38 years at 6s rent. This lease consisted of the tenement fronting the street (a shop and a kitchen according to the plan) 'two other small tenements, and a stable with a hay loft over it', sheds outbuildings, a yard, access to the common pump, and a 'house of easement used in common with the neighbouring tenants.' Smith was also granted access to a privy situated over a 'common vault' and used by himself and another lessee, Robert Silke. The lease contained the usual covenants regarding repair and payment of rental, and bound Smith to £100 to ensure he did so.⁶

The second demise was to Robert Silke a gunsmith for 38 years, at 4s pa and consisted of the property in the middle of the plot. This was described as a tenant or messuage fronting the street, with a workhouse or shop to the rear which contained a second floor room with a gallery above that. The lease also included access to the pump and the two privies as noted above.⁷

The final lease, for the largest of the plots, was made to Thomas White a merchant taylor for 38 years at 30s pa rent. The property was described rather simply as consisting of 'meesuges or tenements fronting the street of the Minories, and all those other tenements, buildings, sheds, yards, gardens, backsides and grounds lying behind the same.' John Stanton or John Mason were noted as the current tenants or occupiers. Access to the pump and common privy was also included in the lease, as were the usual covenants, with one additional proviso that White was not to 'darken the lights' of other neighbouring tenants by building.⁸ It appears that the front property on the plot was known as the Two Hammersmiths and presumably this is where the name Hammersmiths Alley originated.⁹

Interestingly the City did not charge an entry fine to any of the lessees, and there was no increase in the 40s pa rental charge that Bolt agreed to back in 1656. Bolt's lease was also due to expire in 1717-8, suggesting that the 38 year leases issued to the three men above in 1680 were effectively sub-leases.

The plans related to these leases also give an indication of density of building and cramped living space that had developed on the plot over the previous eighty years. Behind the small shops and dwellings located along the street front lay workshops and stables and a number of small two-and-a-half storey tenements, with yards, gardens and sheds at the very rear of the plot.

The plots leased by Smith and Silke were combined in March 1715 into a single lease, which was granted to the Reverend Thomas Harwood of Littleton Middlesex, for 21 years at £10pa.¹⁰ Such 21 year leases were known as repair leases, and were generally issued for properties in good condition. A few years later in September 1717 **who???** was granted the lease for the Two Hammersmiths plot, again for a £10 rental, but this time for a 61 year term.¹¹ These long term leases were known as rebuilding leases and were usually issued for properties in poor repair, that would require substantial investment by the lessee. No fine was charged for either lease.

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- ¹ CLRO City Lands Grant book i, f.42 20th Feb 1599-1600. F.43 18 April 1600
 - ² CLRO City Cash accs vols.2-3 1638-40.
 - ³ CLRO City Cash accs vol.1
 - ⁴ CLRO City Lands Grant book iii f.67&68 City Cash accs vol.9.
 - ⁵ CLRO Comp Deeds D25.
 - ⁶ CLRO Comptroller Deeds 12:7 25th May 1680.
 - ⁷ CLRO Comptroller deeds 12:8 25th May 1680
 - ⁸ CLRO Comptroller deeds 40:11 25th May 1680
 - ⁹ CLRO City Leases 1660-90 ff.26-27.
 - ¹⁰ CLRO Comp Deeds 58:27 8th March 1714
 - ¹¹ CLRO Comp Deeds 80:3 7th Sept 1717

ST. BOTOLPH ALDGATE

MINORIES, EAST SIDE

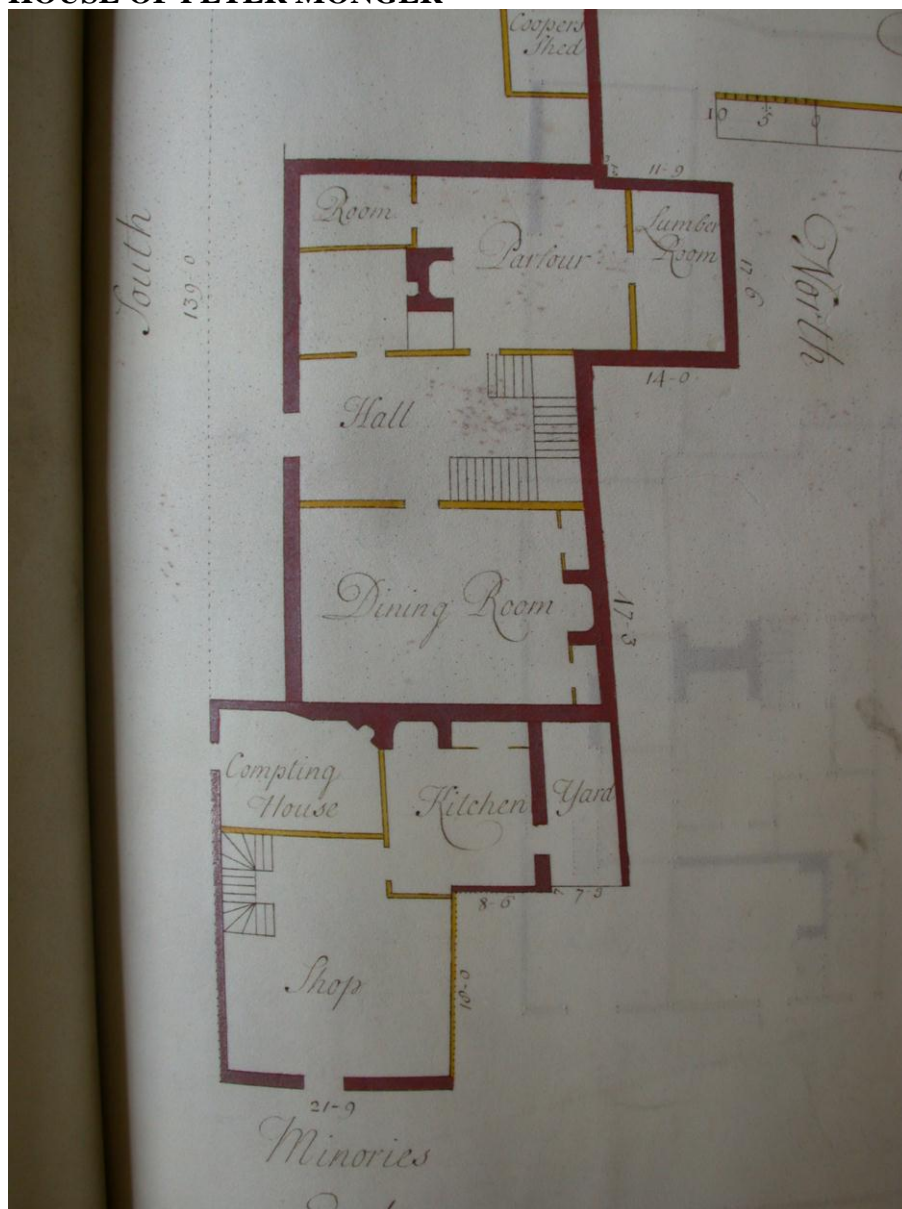
This small plot comprised of street frontage at the southern end of the Minories on the Portsoken ward map.

1618-1712

This is an interesting property, primarily because it remained a relatively large domestic dwelling in an area where infilling, small houses and increasing density was the trend. Originally it was two plots both demised to Robert Ancell. The first comprised of two tenements and a garden leased to Ancell in 1618 for 25 years at 40s pa rent, with the second plot another garden to the rear that Ancell paid 2s 6d pa rent for.¹ By 1632 both had been assigned to Ambrose Kenning a woodmonger, who was, along with a widow Anne Turland, recorded as a suitor for the lease in March 1630/1. The CLC viewed the properties, and perhaps the valuation they established was prohibitive for Kenning, as a few years later the existing leases had been assigned to Richard Bancks a freemason.² He surrendered this lease for the two tenements and yards in May 1639 and was granted a new lease of 30 years for £4 pa rent, and a fine of £100 paid in five yearly instalments of £20 each. Bancks surrendered this lease less than a decade later in June 1647, and was with other lessees for the City properties in the Minories, Bancks was offered a new extended lease on the basis that he agreed to develop the plot. In this case the demise was made for 41 years at £4pa rent in return for the construction by Bancks of five additional dwellings on the plot. The City was clearly content with Bancks as a lessee as they issued him yet another lease in June 1652, when he was granted a 61 year demise at £4pa rent and with a £150 fine.³ This indenture also records the dimensions of the plot as 66ft 7inches along the Minories, 70ft at the rear next to the ditch, and 139ft along its east to west axis.⁴ In c.1655 the lease was assigned to Mary Bancks, Richard's widow.

By the time this lease expired in 1712 the plot had evolved into three distinct components, and the Corporation decided to issue three separate leases. The first was for two small street front dwellings which in March 1712/13 were demised to Adam Skaffe (Staffe?) a gentleman from Shoreditch, for 21 years at £5 pa rent, and no fine. The second and third leases are much more interesting as they comprised essentially of the north and south halves of the plot, and are rare examples of instances of relatively spacious single dwellings located in the City lands in Minories. The second lease for the northern half of no.13 was to a William Smith a cooper for 21 years at £10 pa, with no fine. The property consisted of two dwellings, one the the 'possession' (perhaps occupation?) of Smith, the other a John Grace. The plan attached to the deed shows that one on these dwellings was particularly large measuring approximately 117ft by 28ft. The lease of the southern half of no.13 to Peter Monger, who was probably the current occupier, (with the same terms as Smith's lease: 21 years, £10pa rent, no fine) was accompanied by an even more detailed plan that describes a fairly comfortable dwelling complete with amongst other things a hall, a parlour and a dining room.⁵

HOUSE OF PETER MONGER



¹ City Cash books vol.1.

² CLRO CLGB ii, f.58, 11th March 1630/1, f.61 11th Nov 1631. City cash book vol.1.

³ CLRO CLGB ii, f.79, 12th July 1639, f.108, 2nd June 1647.

⁴ CLRO City Lands 'copies of leases' vol.3 ff.220-224, 22nd June 1652,

⁵ CLRO comp deeds. 53:11 18th March 1712/13, 54:10 7th March 1711/12, 54:5 14th Oct 1712

ST. BOTOLPH ALDGATE

MINORIES, EAST SIDE

This small plot comprised of street frontage at the southern end of the Minories on the Portsoken ward map.

1630-1713

The property with relatively limited street frontage was demised to Captain Edward Ditchfield a salter in 1630 for a 21 year term at 20s pa rent, and a fine of £50 that was to be paid in five six monthly instalments. The grant books record that the current occupant was a William Morecott. The lease also contained the unusual covenant that Ditchfield was to pay £10 to widow Bilberie ‘for her present relief’ and a further £10 to Sir Hugh Hamersly ‘for which he has promised to allow widow Bilberie £5 pa paid quarterly for life.’ Just a few weeks later the lease was extended to 41 years.¹ Towards the end of his life Ditchfield was having problems paying the rent, and fell into arrears every year between 1651 and his death in c.1655. It appears that upon his death the lease passed to Thomas Burrell esq., and then upon his death c.1665 to a (Mr/Mrs?)Hester.² Interestingly in 1652 the city leased a future interest in the property to the existing occupant, a widow by the name of Katherine Trotter. She was granted a 42 year lease that would commence on the expiration of the current lease in 1671. The rental charge was set at 20s pa, with the fine at £80, although this was reduced to £40 after the committee viewed the property.³ The deed described the property as a tenement which measured 15ft 8inches along the street front, and extend back 30ft in depth. Along the north side of the tenement ran a 2ft 9inch wide passage that led to a yard measuring 20ft (n-s) by 41½ft which contained a shed, and behind that a garden 28ft 4inches (n-s) and 60ft deep.⁴

By the time Trotter lease expired in 1713 the garden had disappeared and the property consisted of three tenements and two sheds. The property had probably been assigned to John Rayley, and the lease of 1713 granted the property to Stephen Peters a glover for 21 years at £5 pa rent, and no fine.⁵

¹ CLRO CLGB ii, f.55, 12th March & 14th April 1630

² City Cash books vol.1

³ CLRO CLGB iii, f.18, 19th May 1652, f.21 11th June 1652.

⁴ CLRO city lands ‘copies of leases’ vol.3 ff.232-237 17th June 1652.

⁵ CLRO Comp deeds 54:4 9th Feb 1712/13.

ST. BOTOLPH ALDGATE**MINORIES, EAST SIDE***1607-1713*

After it had been viewed by the City Lands Committee in June 1607 the committee granted the lease for the property, described as a garden, a shed and a stable, to the current occupant William Webb for a 31 year term, a £20 fine and 10s pa rent. Probably due to the close proximity of the common sewer, he was covenanted to observe any orders issued by the commissioner of the sewers. A few years later the committee gave Webb license to assign the lease, as long as it was to a freeman of the City.¹ This he presumably did, as by 1632 the property, which now contained a dwelling house, was in the hands of a George Dunn. The number of dwellings had increased to two, and a stable loft had been added by the time of the next lease in 1638 when a widow Mould Bunbury was granted a 31 year demise at 40s pa, and a £60 fine.² The apparently entrepreneurial Bunbury surrendered this lease in March 1652 by which time she had added a further two dwellings to the plot. She was granted a fresh lease for 61 years at 40s pa rent, and a substantially increased fine of £150 which she was ordered to pay within one month. Besides the four tenements, the property was recorded as having a garden or garden ground, a shed and other appurtenances. The ground on which the tenements stood measured 48ft along the street front, 49ft at the rear, and 26ft along its east to west borders. The garden adjoined this plot and was a substantial 52ft north to south, and 124ft east to west.³ It was not until 1662 that Bunbury assigned the lease for the property, still described as four tenements and a garden, to a John Greene.⁴ Perhaps the most interesting characteristic of this property is how little development took place between the mid 17th and early 18th centuries. The deed of January 1712/13 which granted the property to George Lane a weaver for 21 years at £5pa rent (no fine mentioned) indicates that only five tenements stood on the plot. Therefore, just a single dwelling had been added since 1652 and the large garden remained largely intact, an unusually well preserved open space in the context of the rapid infilling that was occurring on most other City plots along the Minories.⁵

¹ CLRO CLGB i, f.88, 16th June & 6th July 1607. f.109 13th March 1610/11.

² City Cash Books vol.1

³ CLRO City Lands 'copies of leases/deeds' vol.5 ff.39-45, 27th March 1652.

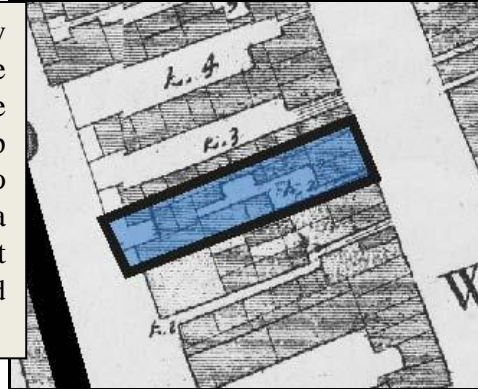
⁴ CLRO City Cash Book vo.1.

⁵ CLRO Comp deeds 53:12 26th January 1712/13

ST. BOTOLPH ALDGATE

BLACK HORSE YARD, No.15 MINORIES, EAST SIDE

This plot was situated approximately where number 121 and John Street are located on the eastern side of the Minories on the Portsoken ward map of 1858. Initially leased as two separate plots it was combined into a single plot in a lease of 1632. The plot is marked as k.2 on the Ogilby and Morgan map of 1676.



1629-1633

No.15A.

The first mention of this property was in 1622 when the City Grant books record that the current occupier, Thomas Smedley a woodmonger was 'heard as suitor . . .to have the City's reasonable favour for a lease when they may lawfully let the same'. Smedley had probably been resident for some time previously, as he is noted as Scavenger for Tower Hill precinct in 1607 and a questman in 1609, and he was married to an Agnes Johnstone in 1604.¹ Interestingly the grant book also records that there was a proviso attached to this bid that Smedley 'lay open his garden.'² However it was not until 1629 that he was actually granted a lease for the 'tenement and stables'. He was granted a 41 year term at 40s pa rental, with the daunting proviso that he spend at least £100 within one year on rebuilding the tenement, and he was asked to give securities to ensure that he complied.³ Whether did indeed bestow the required amount on repairs is far from clear as by 1633 it appears that Smedley had surrendered the lease, and the 'interest' in the property, along with 15B, was in the hands of Josias Devoris a blacksmith who was said to have lavished over £400 on the rebuilding of 15A&B. In recognition of the monies spent the committee granted Devoris a 42 year lease for both properties, at the existing rental charge of 40s, and no fine.⁴ Evidently Smedley continued to dwell in the property however. He was resident in the Minories when Agnes was buried in 1629, and he is recorded as paying £6 moderated rents in the 1637 tithes, and is almost certainly the same Thomas Smedley recorded in the Divided Houses list of the same year. The list noted that he was married, so had obviously remarried after the death of Agnes, he had a child of two, and he was host to inmates Richard James and his wife. It is also possible that he was receiving money from the parish for nursing a Thomas Botolph.⁵

No.15B

As with Smedley, John Coche, a blacksmith, petitioned for his lease in 1622 but was not actually granted one until 1629. The property was described as two tenements one in the occupation of Coche, the other in occupation of Edmond Ridley a carpenter. Cooch (variously described as a blacksmith, gunsmith and freesmith) and his wife Alice (nee Alice Elliot) had probably been resident since at least 1608 when

his son John was baptised.⁶ Another son William was born and died in 1609 and Alice died in 1614. Interestingly the parish register entries associated with William's birth and death notes that the lived 'within ye Redgate neere the Tower Hill' and 'within the Broade gate' suggesting this plot had a local identity. John had clearly remarried by the time his next wife Joanne gave birth to their daughter Marie in 1617 and another daughter Elizabeth in 1620.⁷

As with Cooch, Ridley was resident well before the 1620s. He was living in the Minories when his son Peter was baptised in 1608 and when his wife Christian died whilst giving birth to a son Anthonie in 1614.⁸ She was buried in the common ground accompanied by a knell of the great bell of the church, although 'no cloth was used' for her burial.⁹ Anthonie died a decade later in 1625, presumably a victim of that years plague.¹⁰ As with Cooch Ridley apparently remarried after the death of his wife, as his wife Margaret gave birth to another son, William in 1623. William was buried in 1635, although interestingly by this time Edmond's occupation is noted as Throster.¹¹ A further son Edmond was buried in 1625.¹²

Coche was granted a 41 year lease at 40s rent, with the proviso that he spend £150 on rebuilding the same within a year, provide securities for the rebuilding, and that he allow Ridley tenure for life at £4pa rent.¹³ As with 15A it appears that Coche surrendered the lease in 1633, and Devoris was granted a new lease for 42 years.¹⁴

Cooch was recorded in the 1637 tithes paying £3 moderated rent, although it appears that by this point Ridley had been replaced by an Abraham Boyce who was paying £8 moderated rents.¹⁵ Boyce (also Boyse) was recorded in the list of divided houses as hosting inmates in his dwelling, John Atkinson and his wife. Interestingly the list records them as 'in the cellar inmates' presumably indicating that it was the cellar of the house that they lodged. Cooch was buried in 1640.¹⁶

Demise of the lease 1633-1712

The probate will of Deverex (Dovoris), who died sometime in late 1666/early 1667, offers some very interesting information regarding the type of men that leased such properties, and the pattern of their landholdings. To begin with Deverex gave to his grandson Samuel Neale his executors and assigns 'all those my six messuages or tenements' in the Minories for the remainder of the lease. Such a description again suggests that further two dwellings had been added to the plot since Deverex took the lease for 'four tenements' in the 1630s.¹⁷ The will records that Deverex himself was fairly wealthy, with £450 in bequests made to various grandchildren including Samuel, and Samuel's brothers Henry and John. All three were apparently under 21 years of age, and Samuel was married to a Sarah Neale. Deverex himself lived in Goswell Street in Middlesex (St Ann's Lane, Finchley?) and as well as the lease for the properties in Minories he held the freehold to two crofts or parcels of meadow or pastureland in Finchley, and a parcel of land in St Ann's Lane London, where two tenements stood (one occupied by Samuel Neale) before they had recently burnt down.¹⁸

Interestingly Neale, a blacksmith, was not granted a new lease until November 1682, seven years after the expiry of the 42 year lease assigned to him by his grandfather. The indenture describes the property as 'several tenants, yards, gardens or garden plots', and notes that Neale had incurred charges 'in new building one of the front houses' of the plot, presumably those on the street front. Neale was granted a 21 year lease, at £4pa rent, and a £208 fine.¹⁹ According to the City cash books the

lease for the ‘several tenants and grounds’ was assigned to Thomas White in 1689. Interestingly in 1703 the same cash books record that the property had been demised (presumably meaning assigned) to Mary Peters from the late Thomas White, and that Peters, Robert Morris ‘and the other inhabitants of the houses . . . were immediate tenants to White’. It then records what these sub-tenants were paying white in rent, £16pa for Peters, £8 pa for Morris, and £25 10s pa for the rest of the unnamed tenants combined, for a grand total of £49 10s pa rent that White was receiving from his sub-tenants.²⁰

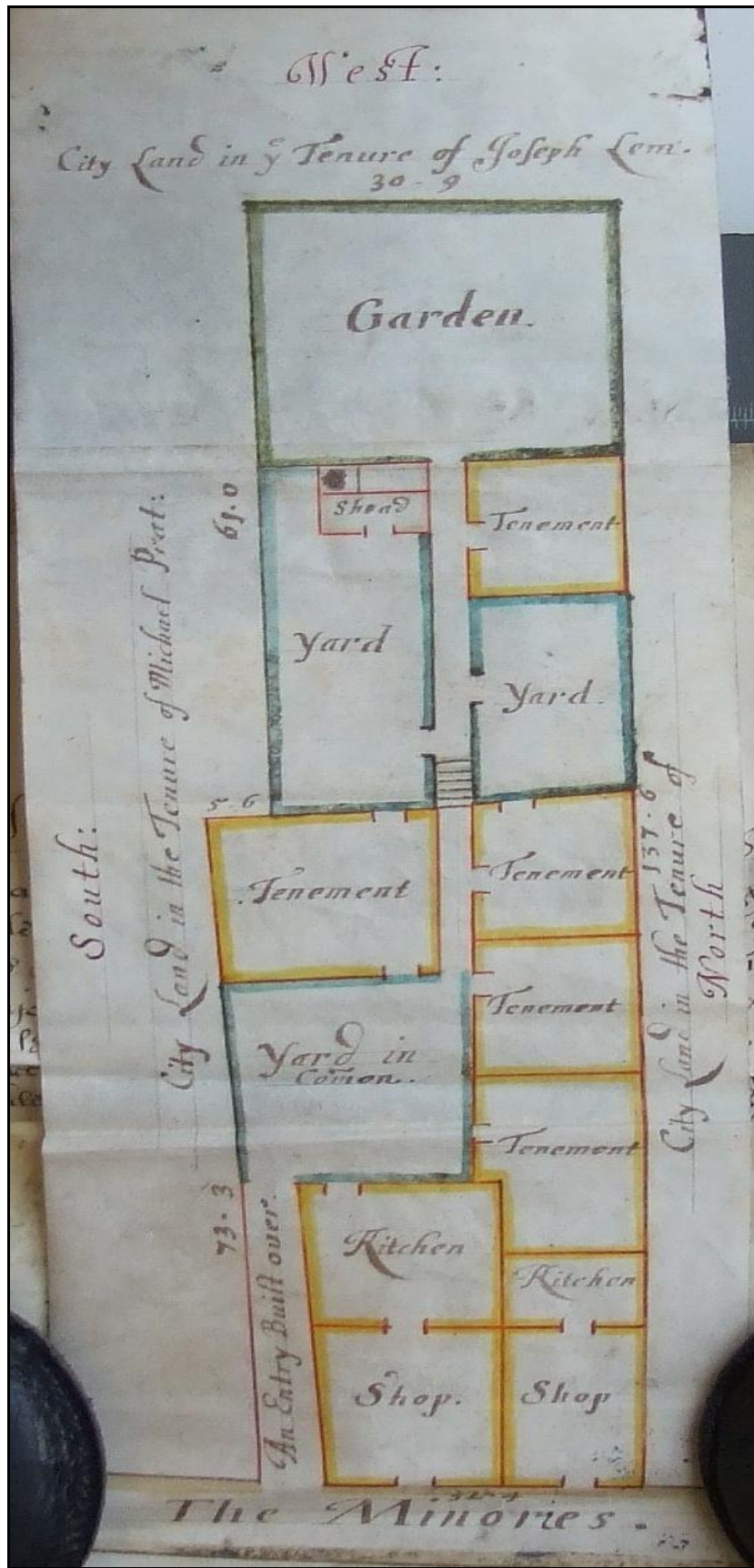
The subsequent lease issued for the property in 1704 was unusual in many respects. Firstly, it was granted to widow Peters and it is uncommon to find widowed females amongst the ranks of those *granted* leases. Secondly, it was for just 9 years, a remarkably short term in a period when the City was moving towards a standardised system of 21 repair and 61 year rebuilding leases. Thirdly, the almost peppercorn entry fine of £10 was dwarfed by the £20pa rental charge, an rare inversion of the normal state of affairs where the fine was substantial and the rental charge often negligible. Amongst the usual covenants regarding the payment of rent, and the repair of the property, the lease also contained a dictate that Peters was to ‘set up the City arms on this and any new building.’ She was also covenanted to ‘put the premises in good and sufficient tenantable repair’ suggesting that they were in a rather shabby state (also see section iii below) The property is described as a parcel of ground ‘with several houses and sheds thereupon’ and the dimensions of the plot are given as 32ft 3inches along the street front, 134ft 3inches east to west along the northern border which abutted the property of widow Watts, 29ft 1inch at the rear, and a total of 135ft east to west along the southern boarder which abutted the property of Robert Arthur.²¹ Peters was granted a further lease for the property in 1712, this time for the standard 21 years, with a £16pa rent, and a fine of £20.²²

Physical development of the property 1650s – 1710s

There is something of a lacuna in our knowledge of the physical development of the property between the 1630s, when it is probably fair to assume that three dwellings were located there, and 1660s when six dwellings are recorded. It is likely that the original three dwellings were located to the east of the plot along the street front, and the subsequent development occurred in terms of off street housing additions. However by the latter 17th century the picture becomes much clearer.

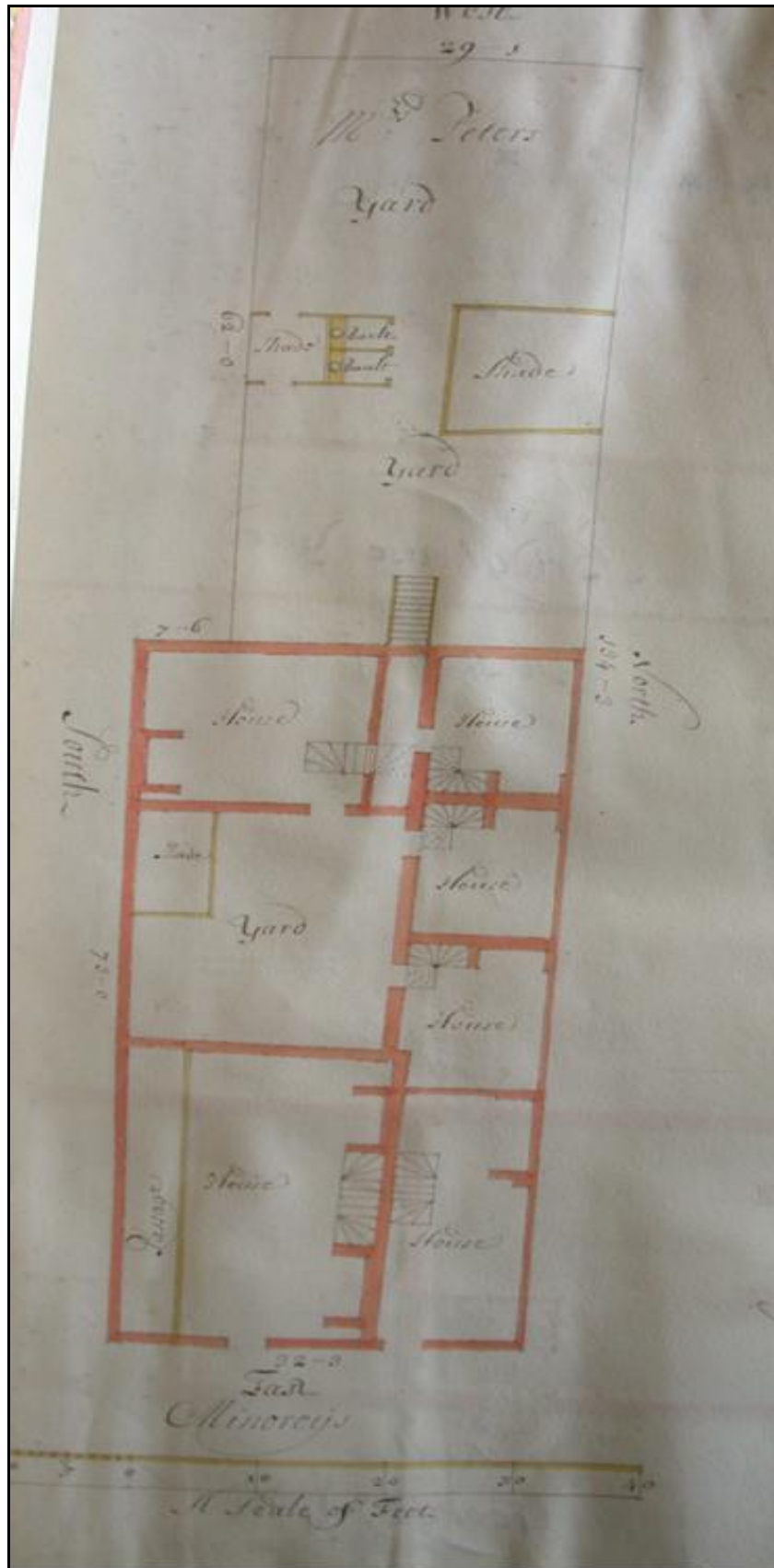
One of the outstanding features of this property is the two relatively detailed floor plans that survive from 1682 and 1704 which allows a comparison of the property at two separate points in time. As we can see the basic layout of the plot remains the same, but there are subtle but significant differences between the two plans. Perhaps the two most significant apparent changes are the fact that the two street front properties are no longer designated as shops by the time of the 1704 plan, apparently having been given converted solely into dwellings. Whether this is a genuine revision of use, or simply an issue of semantics is unclear. However, the left hand street front dwelling has clearly seen some alterations, with a wall recorded in 1682 apparently removed by 1704 and the doorway to the yard no longer marked by the time of the latter plan.

Black Horse Yard 1682



Comp deeds 33:42 plan for 1682

Black Horse Yard 1704 and 1712



Plans of City Lands and Bridge House Properties' CLA/008/EM/03/018-9.

The second notable divergence between the two plans is the existence of a ‘tenement’ in the back yard. By 1704 this apparently wooden structure was now being designated as a ‘shade’.

Again this is probably more likely to be a matter of a change of description rather than a significant alteration to the structure itself – any structure such as a storehouse or outbuilding could be converted to a dwelling or vice versa with relative ease – but it does suggest that the building was no longer utilised as housing.

Throughout the latter 17th century there did seem to exist a strong distinction between the housing to the front of the plot and the housing in the yard to the rear. As we shall see in the section on occupants below, those houses on the street front contained several hearths and occupants that were often assessed for stock. In comparison those dwellings to the rear were often contained only a single hearth. It is also apparent from the taxation listings that household density on the plot peaked in the 1670s when 10 households were recorded. Interestingly it also appears that by the 1700s a number of the rear dwellings were empty and a ‘proof house’ is located in the yard. Strype notes that many gunsmiths were present in the Minories and it is likely therefore that the yard was being used as another workshop or testing area for gunsmiths. By the 1713 land taxes only assess the actual lessee, Mary Peters who also occupied one of the street front properties, for herself and ‘her tenants’ - presumably those individuals who still lived in dwellings to the rear of the plot. Similarly Strype describes the Yard as ‘containing two small courts, which are but ordinary’ suggesting that any dwellings located there were of a fairly low standard.²³

Occupants 1660s-1710s

Thanks to the various taxation listings of the latter 17th century we are able to trace the occupants of the two street front properties over several decades. It is also possible to identify others who lived in the various off street dwellings on the plot.

Street front property 1

This was the most southerly of the two along the street front and abutted the passageway into the yard. It was by far the largest dwelling on the plot containing six hearths. It occupied in the late 1660s-early 1670s by Jone Garratt/Garrit/Garnet a widow however by 1673 the occupant is a Hugh Garritt.²⁴ Garratt and his wife Elizabeth were possibly resident there as late as 1677 when their son Hugh was born.²⁵ The 1678 Poll taxes give the first indication of the size and composition of the household dwelling there. The head of the household, by this time a Joseph Hilyard was accompanied by his wife two children, two apprentices, and a maid servant by the name of Eliza Piles. Hilliard’s wife was called Elizabeth, and one of the children was a son by the name of Joseph who was born in 1683 and buried in 1688.²⁶ Interestingly it appears that Hilliard moved houses to an address a little further north along the Minories sometime in the 1680s (number 13a). He was assessed for stock in the 1680 six month taxes, indicating that he was a man of at least some wealth, as was indeed the next occupant a cook by the name of Edward Peters.²⁷ Peters was resident from at least 1689 when he was also assessed for stock. In 1690 the size of his household was similar to that of Hillard with his wife, two children an apprentice, and a maid in residence. The 1692 poll records that only his wife and an apprentice were present, although the Marriage Duty Assessments of 1695 suggest that this may have been an under-recording as Peters and his wife Mary were joined by four children Moses,

Aron (baptised 1687)²⁸, Edward (baptised 1689)²⁹ and Mary (baptised 1691)³⁰, along with two servants John and Rebecca Whittington.³¹ Peters was paying £12pa rent according to the early 1690s land taxes. He died in late 1699.³² As previously mentioned widow Mary Peters leased the entire property in 1704 and was recorded as resident of this particular house in the 1703 land taxes, by now paying £16pa rent. She is also noted in the 1713 land taxes, by which time unlike in previous years she is being assessed for the entire plot and her ‘tenants’ rather than just her dwelling. It is also interesting that it appears that she is paying £15pa rent rather than the £16pa recorded in 1703.³³

Street front property 2

This property, to the north of property 1, is perhaps most remarkable for the long tenure of the Davis family. Henry Davis is first recorded in the three hearth property in 1668 and it is not until 1693 that the Davis family are replaced.³⁴ In 1678 the household consisted of Henry, his wife, one child, and a maidservant called Grace (no surname).³⁵ Henry was last recorded as the head of the household in 1680 but by 1689 he had died leaving his widow and two children in residence.³⁶ However, the household had swelled by 1692 and apparently consisted of Mary Davis (presumably the widow) her children (not named) another Mary Davis noted as ‘the drafter’, Henry Davis (perhaps a son?) and his wife.³⁷ Unfortunately, given the large number of Davis and its variant spellings in the parish registers and other parish documentation it has been impossible to clarify the situation regarding the Davis household at this time, or indeed offer any further details on Henry and family from the late 1660s onwards. Widow Davis, who was paying £8pa rent, left the property in 1693 to be replaced by Thomas Cooke.³⁸ The Marriage Duty Assessments record the head of household as a Richard Cooke rather than a Thomas, so whether this the same individual mis-recorded of a father son combination is not clear. There appears to be no death of a Thomas Cooke in the period between 1693 and 1695 record in the St Botolph parish documentation. As with the Davis family, the sheer volume of individuals with matching forenames and surnames has made it difficult to establish with any sort of certainty any further details for the Cooke family from sources such as the parish registers or church warden accounts. The MDAs do however give the names of Cooke household, which comprised Richard, his wife Anne, a daughter Mary and two apprentices William Smith and Thomas Foster. Later occupants of the property were Robert Morris or Norris (noted in the 1703 land taxes) and Widow Watts (1713 land taxes). As with property no.1 next door the rental charge for the dwelling seemed to decline between 1703 and 1713 from £8pa Morris was paying, to £7 10s paid by Watts.³⁹

Occupants of the rear properties

Given the constant changes in occupants and the number of individuals involved, it is perhaps best to present the information according to the chronological order of the sources. It is interesting that a number of individuals appear intermittently in the lists over periods of several years suggesting that they were either absent for particular assessments or, more likely, that they were so poor that they simply fell into the classes of exemption for the various taxes.

The first inhabitants list from 1668 records four heads of households: Michael Maylin, Anne Mitten, John Hodgkin and John Frith. As we shall see Hodgkin and Frith were resident for over a decade. The hearth taxes of 1670 show five dwellings. The houses of Maylin (possibly spelt Mollines), Hodgkins, and Frith, along with that

of Benjamin Page contained three hearths each, with Mitton's possessing four. Yet the hearth taxes of 1673-1674 and 18month taxes of the same years show that there was a fairly rapid turnover of occupants, and that a number were exempt from the tax.⁴⁰ All this suggests that the occupants were fairly poor. In the 1673 18month tax listings Mitton, Hodgkins, and Frith are still recorded but Page and Maylin are replaced by John Stodard and George Wright. A year later Stodard is replaced by Robert Raydone, and presumably Robert's wife Sarah who died that year.⁴¹ The hearth tax of 1674 shows that Frith, Hodgkins and widow Mitton were still resident, however whereas the Frith and Hodgkin's properties still contained three hearths, Mitton had reduced her hearth from four to one, presumably as a method of reducing her tax burden. The properties of Rayen and Wright contained three hearths each, with those of Mr Neale (listed as the 'owner' so presumably this is Samuel Neale the current lessee) widow Fox and someone by the surname of Anderson, each containing only a single hearth. Anderson, Mitton, Fox and Neale were exempt from the hearth tax in 1673, Mitton and Neale were recorded as having no hearths, with Anderson and Fox two. The case of Mitton (who died in 1679⁴²) in particular illustrates how the number of hearths per dwelling could vary across time, presumably as the occupant's economic circumstances waxed and waned.⁴³

The poll of 1678 sees the dwellings occupied by a number of childless couples; a Thomas Cooke and his wife, Henry Antonis and wife, and Robert Archer and his spouse. Neither Cooke nor Antonis are mentioned again in reference to this property. Jane Thrift also occupied one on the properties apparently alone.⁴⁴ Thrift is probably the same person as widow Frith who was resident in 1680, along with Archer and widow Hodgkins.⁴⁵ Hodgkins, whose husband John had died in 1680, had probably been resident for the 1678 poll but was presumably exempt from the tax.⁴⁶ This postulation is reinforced by subsequent polls in the early 1690s where Hodgkins is not recorded, but is clearly still resident in the property as she is listed in the 1689 six month taxes, the 1693-4 land taxes and the 1695 Marriage Duty Assessments. Other residents appear to have been similarly exempt from the poll taxes. As well as Hodgkins the 1689 six month taxes record the occupants as Archer, William Browne, Edward London, Richard Addams and John Slade.⁴⁷ Only Archer, his wife and three children are recorded in the 1690 poll, and Archer his wife and his apprentice in the 1692 poll. Yet London, Adams, and Slade are assessed for the land taxes of 1693 and 1694, along with Archer, Hodgkins and a new face, Henry Warwine (his surname is also noted as Varnon and Vernon).⁴⁸ The rental each was paying varied between £2 and £4.

The MDAs indicate the households varied significantly in size. Archer lived with his wife Joyce, two daughters Sarah (born in 1678)⁴⁹ and Katherine (probably born in 1685)⁵⁰ and two apprentices Richard Collier and John Reynolds. Henry Varrill (almost certainly the aforementioned Henry Varnon/Vernon) lived with his wife Anne, sons Henry and James, and daughter Elizabeth. London's household consisted of his wife Joane, and children Thomas (born 1683)⁵¹ and Elizabeth (born 1686)⁵². Richard Adams had presumably died with his widow Anne and possibly daughter, also Anne, living in the property along with a bachelor by the name of Mordica Potts. Joyce Hoskins (probably the aforementioned widow Hodgkins) headed a household of herself, Anne Harris and Elizabeth Pheeps, presumably lodgers or, less likely, servants. John Slade lived with just his wife Sarah. The final occupant of the properties, William Browne, lived on his own and 'received alms'. Interestingly the number of dwellings appears to thin out by the early 1700s. Archer, Slade and Henry Vernon's widow were still present, as were a William Rose and Edward Williams, but

the land taxes of 1703 also record several empty houses, and by 1713 the separate occupants of these yard dwellings are no longer recorded.⁵³ The rents they were paying had risen slightly to between £3 and £5 but were still very low.

Clearly, all this evidence indicates that the residents of these off street properties were by most measures fairly poor, but what is interesting is that a number of them remained resident for significant time periods.

¹ BOD MS RAWL D796B f.100-101. PRs 03/06/1604 Ev Id 315168

² CLRO City Lands Grant books ii f.29, 11th Nov 1622.

³ CLRO City Lands Grant books ii f.52, 24th July 1629.

⁴ CLRO City Lands Grant books ii f.68, 29th Jan 1633.

⁵ PRs 23/02/1629 Ev Id 211654. Dale 1637. Divided and Inmates f.95 & f.100. GLMs 9237_1 Church wardens accs 1622-78 f.68, f.72, f.77, f.79.

⁶ PRs 07/04/1605 Ev Id 315265, 08/05/1608 Ev Id 104638

⁷ PRs 13/08/1609 Ev Id 104978, 20/12/1609 104545, 30/11/1614 Ev Id 203890, 01/03/1617 Ev Id 107473, 28/09/1620 Ev Id 108243.

⁸ PRs 19/02/1608 Ev Id 104856, 22/05/1614 Ev Id 203720. 01/05/1614 Ev Id 106354

⁹ PCM 22nd May 1614 f.188.

¹⁰ PRs 05/08/1625 Ev Id 208865.

¹¹ PRs 11/05/1623 Ev Id 109067, 05/08/1635 Ev Id 214117.

¹² PRs 14/08/1625 Ev Id 209250,

¹³ CLRO City Lands Grant books ii f.29, 11th Nov 1622, f.51 24th July 1629.

¹⁴ CLRO City Lands Grant books ii f.68, 29th Jan 1633.

¹⁵ Dale MS.p.367a

¹⁶ PRs 19/12/1640 Ev Id 218109

¹⁷ CLRO City Cash Books vol.1 1634-5.

¹⁸ GLRO: Acc/351/18.

¹⁹ CLRO Comptroller Deeds 33:42 (Nov 1682)

²⁰ COL/CHD/CT/01/019 City Cash books 1689. & COL/CHD/CT/01/023 1703.

²¹ CLRO Comp deeds 39:23 (Nov 1704)

²² CLRO Comp deeds 54:9 (June 1712)

²³ Strype 1720 vol.1 book 2., p.28.

²⁴ COL.CHD.LA.03.66.23 010 f.5. COL.CHD.LA.03.25-9.7 016 f.31. TNA E 179/252/23 f.53.

COL.CHD.LA.03.14.11 065 f.13. COL.CHD.LA.03.24.7 038 f.37.

²⁵ PRs 12/5/1677 Ev Id 506332

²⁶ PRs 10/06/1683 Ev Id 508997. 24/08/1688 Ev Id 1226688.

²⁷ COL.CHD.LA.03.68.1 039 f.11. COL.CHD.LA.03.36.6 012 f.7.

²⁸ PRs 18/12/1687 Ev Id 11194

²⁹ PRs 11/08/1689 Ev ID 11916

³⁰ PRs 20/12/1691 Ev Id 115297.

³¹ COL.CHD.LA.03.22.2 033 f.7. COL.CHD.LA.03.18.2 031 f.9. COL.CHD.LA.03.32.16 010 f.9.

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³² PRs 16/09/1699 Ev Id 1205646.

³³ GL MS 11316.14 029 f.18. GL MS 11316.44 065 f.24.

³⁴ COL.CHD.LA.03.66.23 010 f.5. COL.CHD.LA.03.25-9.7 016 f.31. COL.CHD.LA.03.14.11 065 f.13. COL.CHD.LA.03.24.7 038 f.37. TNA E 179/252/23 f.53.

³⁵ COL.CHD.LA.03.68.1 036 f.11.

³⁶ COL.CHD.LA.03.22.2 033 f.7. COL.CHD.LA.03.18.2 031 f.9.

³⁷ COL.CHD.LA.03.32.16 010 f.9.

³⁸ GL MS 11316.11 010 f.9. COL.CHD.LA.03.13.14A-D 028 f.9.

³⁹ GL MS 11316.14 029 f.18. GL MS 11316.44 065 f.24.

⁴⁰ COL.CHD.LA.03.66.23 009 f.4. COL.CHD.LA.03.25-9.7 016 f.31.

⁴¹ COL.CHD.LA.03.24.7 037 f.37. PRs 07/06/1674 Ev Id 233297.

⁴² PRs 14/07/1679 Ev Id 133049.

⁴³ TNA E 179.143.367 012 f.27.

⁴⁴ COL.CHD.LA.03.68.1 036 f.11.

⁴⁵ COL.CHD.LA.03.36.6 012 f.7.

⁴⁶ PRs 25/05/1680 Ev Id 125663.

⁴⁷ COL.CHD.LA.03.22.2 033 f.7.

⁴⁸ COL.CHD.LA.03.18.2 031 f.9. COL.CHD.LA.03.32.16 010 f.9. GL MS 11316.11 010 f.9.
COL.CHD.LA.03.13.14A-D 028 f.9. COL.CHD.LA.03.17.6 038 f.8

⁴⁹ PRs 21/04/1678 Ev Id 506735

⁵⁰ PRs 08/11/1685 Ev Id 510163. Another daughter by the name of Katherine was born to the couple in 1678 but although there is no record of her burial it is likely that she had died prior to the birth of Katherine in 1685. PRs 21/04/1678 Ev Id 506735.

⁵¹ PRs 09/03/1683 Ev Id 509384.

⁵² PRs 04/07/1686 Ev Id 510502.

⁵³ GL MS 11316.14 029 f.18. GL MS 11316.44 065 f.24.

ST. BOTOLPH ALDGATE

POPES YARD AND WINCH YARD, MINORIES, EAST SIDE

This was originally a very large plot that comprised of no.18-21 and corresponded to the street frontage of numbers 125-135 on the middle of the eastern side of the Minories on the Portsoken ward map. In 1645 the plot was split into five separate leases : 18, 19a, 19b, 20 and 21. This gazetteer entry will detail the history of this property up until 1645, and thereafter no.18. Each of the other four leases will be dealt with as separate properties.

1610-1645

In February 1610/11 the current lessee John Cowper surrendered his existing demise on this garden and was issued a new lease for 35 years at 40s pa rent and a £20 fine. A few years later he was granted licence to assign part of the property to a Mr(?) Richardson a preacher and in June 1616 he again surrendered his lease of the 'two gardens' in order that he himself and Richardson could be granted 30 year leases for each at the former terms. The cash books record that 'Phebe the relict of John Cooper' was assigned the two gardens in c.1638.¹

No.18

1645-1715

In order to establish an up-to-date valuation the city viewed this property described variously as 'tenements in the Minories', 'messuages, tenements sheds and other edifices' and 'divers old tenements' in the teanancy of William Startute a fishmonger in May 1645. They subsequently granted him a 50 year lease at 40s rent and a sizeable £300 fine (although for some reason the indenture itself was not signed until June 1650). The plot measured 112ft along the street front (between the houses of Mr Tunlie(?) to the north and Widow Jones to the south) 107ft along the rear, and 132 ft east to west. He was covenanted to 'substantially new build the same according to His Majesties proclamations within seven years.'²

Two later demises and plans indicate that by the turn of the 17th century the plot had developed into two yards by the name of Popes Yard and Winch Yard, and as the plans below illustrate, they had seemingly become a warren of diminutive dwellings with small shops located along the street front. The first of these leases to Robert Silke a gunsmith in May 1696 was for 21 years at £40pa rent (although a peppercorn rent for the first year) and a £500 fine. The second lease 19 years later was to the Reverend Thomas Harwood of Littleton Middlesex for 21 years at £60pa rent, although no fine is mentioned.³

¹ CLRO CLGB i, f.109 8th Feb 1610/11, f.140 28th Feb 1615/16, f.142 19th June 1616. Cash books vol.1.

² CLRO CLGB ii, f.99 2nd May 1645, f.102 20th June 1645. CLRO city lands 'copies of leases' vol.1 ff.135-137 25th June 1650. City Cash vol.5.

³ CLRO comp deeds 61:3 27th May 1696, 58:10 8th March 1714/15.

ST. BOTOLPH ALDGATE

PRESTONS YARD, MINORIES, EAST SIDE

This plot comprised of approx street frontage of number ??? at the south eastern end of the Minories on the Portsoken ward map.

1575-1693

Described as a recently enclosed garden, this property was demised to Christopher Canton in 1575 for 41 years at 10s pa rent. No fine was recorded.¹ The city cash books indicate that this grant was subsequently revised up to 60 years in 1580. The same cash books show that the lease was at some point assigned to a John Jackson, and then upon his death c.1632, onto Simon Warren. Upon the death of Warren c.1636-7, the tenancy passed to his widow Rebecca and her new husband Edmond Fisher.² The next lessee in 1644 was Isaac Preston a woodmonger (Isaac may have also gone by the name of James) Initially Preston was granted a lease of 31 years at £4pa rent for the 'divers old tenements' and grounds, but in 1647 this lease was extended to 45 years on the basis of the 'charges bestowed and to be bestowed' on rebuilding by Preston.³ He paid a substantial £300 fine for the lease over three instalments between May 1645 and March 1646. This lease expired in 1693-4 and in March of that year Richard Tilden a carpenter was granted a demise of 51 years at £20pa rent and no fine. The property was described as a parcel of land 'commonly called Prestons Yard' that measured 59ft 6inches along the Minories, 169ft east to west along its northern edge which abutted land of Mr Gibbs, 149ft on its southern edge next to property of widow Sears, and 69ft 3inches along the western edge to the rear which bounded the town ditch. It contained just three messuages, messuages that had recently been new built by Tilden. Again as with other plots in the Minories, it seemed that the City was actively encouraging Tilden to develop the land. The deed noted that he had spent £130 on the recent rebuilding of the three tenements and amongst the usual covenants he was ordered to spend within with years a truly considerable total of £1200 on 'substantial new building' on the plot, work that was to conform to the standards set out in the numerous building acts.⁴ (comp deed 65.4)

¹ CLRO Rep 18, f.417 6th Sept 1575.

² City cash books vol.1

³ CLRO CLGB ii, f.99 2nd May 1645, f.108 2nd June 1647.

⁴ CLRO Comp deed 65:4, 1693.

ST. BOTOLPH ALDGATE

WALL COURT, MINORIES, EAST SIDE

This plot comprised of a street frontage at the south eastern side of the Minories on the Portsoken ward map.

1599-1681

This 'garden and garden house' began its recorded life in May 1599 in the hands of Edward Gardener a fishmonger thanks to a 21 lease for which he paid a rent of 20s pa, and a fine of 20marks. The lease is then rapidly assigned, first to Henry Sacheverell a vinter in June 1600, and from Sacheverell to Arnold Hatfield a stationer in August 1600.¹ Hatfield was granted a further 21 year lease at £3 pa in 1618, and upon his death c.1632 the interest was transferred to Isaac Gould a draper. In 1622 Gould was also allowed to be a tenant-at-will for the 'void ground' behind the house at 20s pa rent, although it appears that he never actually bothered to pay the rent, as by 1637 he was 15 years in arrears.² In March 1638/9 he was granted a 41 year lease for the tenement and garden at £4pa rent and a £60 fine which was to be fully paid within a year.³ In June 1681 the indenture signed between the City and the new lessees Thomas Firmin a girdler and Joseph Lem a tiler and bricklayer, upon the expiry of Gould's lease, covenants Firmin and Lem to build on the plot. The property was described as 'messuages or tenements, yards, gardens and ground' and on the basis of the sums Firmin and Lem were expected to expend on building, they were granted a 61 year lease at £20pa rent and a fine of just £20. Within two years the two men were to 'new build in place of the tenements as now front the high street on Minories other messuages with good bricks and oaken timber as in the acts for rebuilding', and they were ordered 'not to make any common passage through the tenements to the vineyard', the void ground behind the plot next to the city wall. The dimensions of the plot were given as 63ft 7inches along the street, 55ft 6inches to at the rear, 139ft 9inches along the northern edge, and 143ft 9inches along the southern.⁴

¹ CLRO CLGB i, f.38 14th May 1599. f.45, 18th June 1600 & 15th August 1600.

² CLRO CLGB ii, f.29, 11th Nov 1622. City Cash books vol.1.

³ CLRO CLGB ii, f.78, 20th March 1638/9.

⁴ CLRO Comp deeds 63:15 23rd June 1681

ST. BOTOLPH ALDGATE

WALL COURT, MINORIES, EAST SIDE

This plot comprised of a street frontage at the south eastern side of the Minories on the Portsoken ward map.

1575-1660

Wall Court began life as a garden in the hands of John Highlord who held a 21 year lease for which he paid 12s pa rent, and a £5 fine. Highlord, a skinner, was granted a further 21 year demise in April 1600 for a 13s 4d rent and £10 fine. Interestingly, in relation to the property, the grant books appear to contain a rare recorded instance of the City agreeing to a sub-letting, when in July 1601 Highlord is given permission to ‘let the little house and garden’ for the remainder of his lease.¹ Perhaps Highlord found no takers, as in July 1604 he was licensed to assign the lease to Richard Barmwell a cordwainer, who within a year had surrendered his interest in the ‘tenement and garden plot’ and had been granted a fresh lease for 25 years at 13s 4d rent (no fine is mentioned) ‘in respect of his great charges in building.’² This lease was surrendered by widow Elizabeth Clark in July 1626 and she was granted a new demise for 21 years, at the previous rent of 13s 4d. No fine is recorded. The grant book described the property a ‘tenements’ (plural) suggesting that building had occurred there since 1604.³ There has certainly been substantial building on the plot by 1632 as the cash books note the property as consisting of five tenements and a garden. However what is interesting is that, as with a number of the Corporation’s properties in the Minories this infilling and building seemed to occur in bursts rather than in a progressive fashion. The next three decades under the remaining tenancy of Clark, and latterly Thomas Thompson saw a hiatus in development with no dwellings added to the plot. Yet towards the latter decades of the 17th and early decades of the 18th the plot witnessed further construction activity.

Thompson a merchant taylor has presumably been assigned the lease by Clark as he surrendered it in May 1644 and was promptly issued a demise for 31 years at 40s rent, and £100 fine. For reasons that are not recorded Thompson was issued a new lease in March 1651/2 for 61 years. A sub-committee of the City Lands Committee was ordered to view the same (as well as a number of other leases) a few years later to establish the value of the plot.⁴ The property was still described as five tenements when in December 1661 Christopher Wall surrendered the lease that had been assigned to him some years previously by Thompson. Wall was granted a 61 year demise at 40s pa rent, and a £170 fine.⁵

The plan affixed to the next related deed in 1720 illustrates how densely occupied Wall Court had now become. On a plot that measured 49ft along the street, 40ft 7inches at the rear, 142ft 8inches on its northern edge and 145ft 10inches along its southern, were located nine dwellings. Four houses fronted the Minories with five located to the rear. There were several small yards, gardens, sheds, a workshop, two washhouses and a bake house on the plot that was demised to Benjamin Boss for 21 years at £20 pa rent (no fine recorded).⁶

¹ CLRO CLGB i, f.52 17th July 1601.

² CLRO rep 19, f.331 22nd April 1578. CLRO CLGB i, f.43 18th April 1600. ff.71-72, 20th & 27th July 1604. f.75 & f.162, 15th March 1604/5.

³ CLRO CLGB ii, f.41. 19th July 1626.

⁴ CLRO CLGB ii, f.94, 20th May 1644. CLGB iii, f.10, 17th March 1651/2. f.35, 17th August 1653.

⁵ City Cash books vol.1. CLRO CLGB iii, f.95, 6th December 1661.

⁶ CLRO Comp deed 65:8 13th Oct 1720.

ST. BOTOLPH ALDGATE

WHEELERS YARD, MINORIES, EAST SIDE

This small plot comprised of approx street frontage of number 100 at the southern end of the Minories on the Portsoken ward map.

1615-1715

The City cash books record that this property initially comprised of just a single tenement with associated grounds, which in 1615 had been demised to William Stanley a Merchant Taylor for 21 years at £6.13.4 pa. The City Land Committee viewed the property in March 1630/31 and clearly felt the properties located there need to be rebuilt as when Stanley was granted a fresh lease in May 1631 he was ordered to 'new build the same' within two years. The lease was for 26 years and entailed a fine of £66.13.4 and a rent of £6.13.4 pa. Stanley clearly complied with this order as by November 1631 the City granted him an additional 19 years on his lease 'in respect of his great charge of building' on the plot. His lease was again extended in January 1633/4 on the same basis, taking the term of years for the demise up to 51.¹ The indenture, signed in May 1634 illustrates that Stanley had set to his task of rebuilding with gusto.

Again as with other City properties in the Minories this seems to be another instance of the Corporation clearly sanctioning, indeed almost actively encouraging development and building on their lands in the Minories.

In 1644 the lease founds its way into the hands of Daniel Jackson, the executor of Joane Stanley who was in turn the executrix of the now deceased William. The documentation relating to the property becomes somewhat contradictory for several decades after this. An entry in the City Cash books records that in 1651/2 Daniel Jackson paid £100 in respect of a fine for a property, suggesting he may have surrendered the lease and been issued a new one, although we have no record of this. A memo entered in the 1634 lease to Stanley notes that in February 1652/3 Jackson was given licence to assign the lease to George Day a cooper, however the cash books record that Day was assigned the lease in 1651/2. Day is recorded as surrendering a lease for 'tenements in the Minories' in March 1651/2 and being issued a 61 year agreement at 20s pa rent, and a £25 fine, and this is almost certainly in relation to Wheelers Yard.² Day died soon after and by August 1653 the City was viewing the property, now in the hands of widow Ann Day, to establish an up-to-date valuation. Anne subsequently surrendered the lease and in May 1654 was issued a demise for 61 years, at £6, 13s 4d rent and a £70 fine. Interestingly the grant books note that the demise agreed with George in March 1651/2 was 'to be vacated upon report of the late view and valuation of the said tenements', possibly indicating that George's demise was way below the market value.³ As with her husband, Ann died soon after the lease was granted, and her son George Day a linendraper (along with John Cleare a merchant taylor and possible widower of Ann?) was licensed to assign the lease to Richard Hayward a cooper. Another memo added to Stanley's 1634 demise claims that Hayward's sons Richard and John were given permission to assign the lease to Thomas Allyn of the parish of St Clements Danes a button seller in August 1688.⁴ However it is more likely that the Cash Books record the actual chain of events which is that the property was assigned to Cicilia Day the relict of Richard Hayward (snr) and was demised to another Ann Day (perhaps related to previous George and Ann Day?) in 1685 for a term of 30 years at £6 13s 4d rent. The Cash books do record the chain of demises and assigns from Ann Day's 30 year lease in 1685 back to William Stanley's lease in 1634. The

following lease in December 1714 does note that the property was 'late in lease to Ann Day' although this of course could be referring to Ann Day's lease of 1654.

Frustratingly the last description we have of the property is from the cash books in 1663 which continue to record the property as seven tenements. However, by the time of the 1714 demise to Christian Levie a weaver (21 years, £30pa rent, no fine mentioned) the number of dwellings had doubled to fourteen.⁵

¹ CLRO CLGB ii, f.58 11th March 1630/1, f.59 6th May 1631, f.61 11th Nov 1631, f.67 29th Jan 1633/4.

² CLRO CLGB iii, f.8, 10th March 1651/2.

³ CLRO CLGB iii, f.35, 17th April 1653., f.46, 31st May 1654.

⁴ CLRO city lands 'copies of leases' vol.7 ff.23-28 30th July 1656.

⁵ CLRO Comp deeds 58:13 7th Dec 1714.

ST. BOTOLPH ALDGATE

WINDMILL AND BALL ALLEY MINORIES, EAST SIDE

This large plot comprised of a street frontage of numbers 96-99 at the southern end of the Minories on the Portsoken ward map.

1616-1712

This messuage and garden was originally demised to John Stubbes in 1616 for a 20 year term at £10 pa. By 1633 the plot had been developed substantially and the now six messuages were leased to William Hubbersty (Hubberstie) a leatherseller for 25 years at £10 pa. Hubberstie paid a £100 fine for the same, but managed to persuade the City into agreeing a very unusual payment plan whereby he paid the off the fine in instalments at a rate of £10 per year.¹ Hubberstey, clearly keen to ensure he remained the lessee, surrendered his lease in February 1651-2 in order that he could be granted a fresh lease of 61 years, at £10 pa, and with a £200 fine. The lease recorded the dimensions of the plot as 49ft along the Minories, 114ft along the rear, 115ft along its southern edge, and 138ft along the northern. The property was of course indented by No. 4 and 6 on its north east and south east corners. The lease also contains valuable details regarding the layout and specification of the seven tenements located there, and names of the tenants. The first tenement next to the street was in the occupation of John Pitts a carpenter and consisted of a cellar which extended ‘to the street’, a parlour, a kitchen, and a buttery on the ground floor. There were four chambers, two garrets and three closets in the ‘upper stories’, and a washroom with a room over it to the outside. The second street front tenement was occupied by George Smith, and contained part of a cellar, a kitchen, a chamber and a garret. The third dwelling, possibly located in the alley, was occupied by Archibald Pickars and comprised of just a kitchen, and chamber and a garret. Edward Taylor’s dwelling located in the alley was again a small affair, with a kitchen, two chambers and a little yard. The remaining three dwellings occupied by Robert Welbank, James Simpson and Enock Garnett were similar three room abodes, comprising of a kitchen and a chamber; a ‘low room’, chamber, and garrett: and a ‘low room’, chamber, and cockloft respectively.² Over the course of this 61 year lease the development of the plot continued apace, and by 1712 the seven tenements had grown to fourteen dwellings clustered around the yard. The plot was demised to a Rachel Brand a widow in July of 1712 for 21 years, at £25 rent and a £250 fine.³

¹ CLRO City Cash accs vol.1-3. CLGB ii f.67 29th Jan 1633

² CLRO CLGB iii f.4 11th Feb 1651-2. CLRO city lands ‘copies of lease’ vol.6 ff.57-64 4th May 1652

³ CLRO Comp deeds 54:2 and 54:29

ST. BOTOLPH ALDGATE

Merchant Taylors properties (including Almshouses), North side of Rosemary Lane

Have a look for:

M.T. Ancient MS BK 24 (estate plans 1684) p.16 (GL) *as per Derek's notes*. Looks like plans of the Almshouse site.

This property occupied the plot defined by Princes Square on the Portsoken ward map 1858. The plot was initially a number of small messuages.

The dimensions of the entire site were 158 feet north to south, 147 feet east to west along the Rosemary Lane street front, and 120 feet along its northern boundary.¹

Descent of the freehold to Merchant Taylors

The title of this property passed through a number of hands in the mid 1550s. In 1556 Nicholas Heath the Archbishop of York delivered the title of the property to a William Heath, and a year later he passed the title on to a John Ayland. Barely another year had passed before Eyland, a cutler, and his wife Alice, sold their interest to Richard Hyll, a Mercator Scissor, and William Peterson, a Haberdasher. The property was described as consisting of 3 messuages with 5 gardens adjacent.² It appears that a further tranche of, presumably adjoining land in Hog Lane was delivered to Hills by the will of a John Hugenson in 1565. The Merchant Taylors minute books record that Hills had 'promised to redeliver' the property 'to this house very shortly'.³ Hill died in 1588 and his will transferred the entire freehold to the Taylors with a handful of provisos. The first of these being that for the duration of his son Garson's⁴ life 25s per quarter would be set aside from the rental received in order to make a lump sum payment to his nephew Daniel Hills. The second was that after the death of Garson the company was to pay £5p.a. to 6 'impotent aged poor of good name of the said fraternity', or those that had 'occupied the broad shears or rowing at the perche'.⁵ If no such individuals could be found then the money was to go to the same number of widows or unmarried men of the company, and if not them the 'poorest of the fraternity'.⁶ The various dwellings on the plot were surveyed in 1588 in order to establish their rental value.⁷ The Taylor's Renter Wardens accounts of that year notes that subdivision or infilling had occurred since the 1550s, as the plot now consisted of 6 tenements and 2 gardens with the following tenants and rental values:

- 1) William Cobbett for a tenement with a backside: 16s. Cobbett continued to rent this property until 1593.
- 2) Richard Butler for a tenement with a little backside: 26s 8d. Butler continued to rent this property until 1593.
- 3) Widow Sparrowe for tenement: 23s 4d. Sparrow rented the property until 1591, when it was occupied by a John Richards.
- 4) Andrew Markes for a tenement with a little backside: 26s 8d. After 1590 this property was rented by a Peter Atkinson, who had by 1592-3 fallen a year in arrears with his rent.
- 5) John Gregory for a tenement: 26s 8d. John Gennister occupied this property after 1590.
- 6) Michael Hill for a garden: 20s. Hill continued to rent the property until 1593, although by this time he was a year in rental arrears.
- 7) Daniel Peterson for a messuage with a garden: 20s.
- 8) Daniel Hilles for a garden late in occupation of Richard Hillies: 20s. After 1590 this garden was rented by Mr Wilford, who by 1592 was a year in rental arrears.⁸

The construction of the Almshouses

The construction of these Almshouses, which necessitated the demolition of all but number 7 of the above mentioned dwellings, was one of the most contentious episodes in the history of early modern St Botolphs Aldgate.

The Taylors minute books record that the company resolved at a meeting on the 5th Feb 1588/9 that the Hilles property should be used to house widows of almsmen, who had previously been housed in the almshouse by the Taylors hall in Threadneedle Street. One of the Aldermen, Ratcliffe, offered a hundred loads of timber for this purpose, on the proviso that a small tenement be let to him rent free. The minutes note that the houses were to be built from 'foundation to 2nd story of brick'. Work on the almshouses began in late 1592, with Daniel Peterson (lessee of plot no 7 to the east) in charge of overseeing the workmen. The cost of the project ran to £436 16s 1d.⁹

In 1603 Dow added 4s pa to his former deed of charity for the lantern light at the houses, bringing total to (£3 12s pa for 18 years(?)).¹⁰ Dows name appears again the records in 1611, however this time rather than dispensing charity he bemoaned the 'disorders' occurring in the almshouse, and informed the company that 'care must be taken to redress them'. A committee was convened to report, although no report survives.¹¹

Payments for repairs to the houses included 1609-10 17s to carpenter for scaffolding, £9.8.10 to a bricklayer for a wall, and 5s 1d for a new lantern.¹²

Again in 1623/4 money was spent on new rails in front of the houses, repairs to the paving, and repairs to the houses and the 'seats before their doors'. Perhaps more interestingly the minute books recorded that the writing over the gate of the almshouses were 'much decayed so that it cannot be understood'. The company ordered that the following words be installed:

'These almshouses were built at the proper costs and charges of the worshipful company of Merchanttailors in anno 1592 for the dwelling of fourteen poor widows maintained by the said company.'¹³

By 1636 the company had resolved to construct a further 7 almshouses in the vicinity of the existing stock, although the documentation suggests that this was a project that had been under consideration from early on in the decade. The project had already secured a £500 donation from a Robert Grey. In March a committee viewed the tenements at the back of the existing almshouses and next to Mr Exall's property (no.7) and agreed that this spot was preferable. The land was a garden in the tenure of Mrs Elner (see 7a below) who agreed to accept £20 to relinquish her interest in the land, and similarly an individual by the name of Hutchins, a lessee of Elner agree to accept £20. Another undertenant of Elner, Mr Coe, who held a garden which he used as a vinegar yard, promised to allow the company to purchase his interest if it was to be required. A part of the project, which was to be overseen by a Mr Bardolf and Mr Langham, the existing almshouses were to be renovated and be made 'uniform and equal to the new almshouses.'

The final folio relating to the project gives a fascinating insight into how the work was to be funded. Alongside the £500 Grey had donated, £300 of the cost was derived from a bequest of £500, left to them by John Brown for charitable purposes. In July 1634 the alderman Sir Robert Duey had left £500 in his will to be put towards the construction of these seven new two roomed almshouses, and his wife Elizabeth's will of 1735 had bequeathed £100 towards the maintenance of the women. Interestingly the minutes note that 'most of the legacies have been spent in building, and little left for maintenance', indicating that the undertaking of such projects was financially challenging even for a company as wealthy and influential as the Merchant Tailors. Robert Grey averted any crisis by agreeing to 'take charge of maintenance himself and he would shortly confer sufficient money which would ensure their maintenance in future'. In return for this largesse he asked the company to furnish

the 12 almswomen of his choosing with 'gowns of cloth at 8/6 or 9/0 a yard with his crest plated in silver and gilt on the left sleeve.'¹⁴

Parish involvement in the Almshouses

It is perhaps unsurprising to find that Robert Dow a noted member of the parish donated funds to the almshouses. In 1590 Dow promised £20 10s to the charity, apparently on the basis that he had some input into the choosing of the almswomen.¹⁵ The churchwardens accounts also record that in 1594-5 the parish itself paid for 'one long pew and one short pew' to be installed at the almshouses, with the words '1594 for the Marchantteylors almsewomen' (sic) to be 'set on the doors'.¹⁶ The PCMs and Vestry Minutes from the same year also give a fascinating insight into the selection process that the women had to pass through in order to be admitted to the almshouses. On 8th October 1594 a vestry meeting comprising of the Alderman's Deputy, 8-9 'ancient and discreet men' including a churchwarden, and the parish clerk, was called to nominate four women of the parish, one of whom would be chosen to replace the recently deceased Collyn Whyte as an occupant of the houses. The women had to be 'four of most ancient and needy on grounds of age, necessity and good decent', and the vestry were obliged to adhere to strict guidelines for selection that are worth quoting in full:

- '1 – None of the nominees to be under 60.
- 2 – Not to have any contagious sickness.
- 3 – To have lived in honest and virtuos behaviour and not detected of any notorious crime.
- 4 – To have lived in the ward or parish above six continual years at least.
- 5 – To have no maintenance above 12d the week or yearly pension above 40s.
- 6 – A freeman's widow be preferred before other of like necessity.
- 7 – All friendship and affection be excluded in this election respecting, only the necessity.
- 8 – If two poor widows cannot be found within the ward then to choose throughout the parish being an English born woman.'

The four women selected were Johann Gyles, a widow living in Ship Alley in the Minories; Alice Horner, another widow from Ship Alley;¹⁷ Rose Allin a widow from Crosse Gonne Alley (noted as 'being in the precinct as we go towards Whitechapel Barrs); and Johann Silverster, a widow dwelling in Houndsditch. The selection was whittled down to Gyles and Horner, and Robert Dow was allowed to make the final decision, choosing Gyles as the replacement for Whyte. Interestingly, the vestry minutes also mentions that Dow had 'formerly maintained but one women and now two' presumably referring to the almswomen, but also that 60 (sixty) other women were receiving 6s 8d of his gift.¹⁸

In the subsequent decades the parish documents continue to yield patchy information on Dow's gift and the selection of women for the almshouses. For example in 1605 the vestry minutes record that Dow's gift to the sixty poor women had increased to £10pa, and apparently to £20pa in 1610. In 1610 the two women selected to enter the almshouse were Jone Gyles, who had been chosen by Dow, and Mary Darcy, who had been chosen by Dow and Gregory Smythe. The minutes note that Gyles and Darcy would be 'placed in the Companies almshouse marked with the daisye flower'.¹⁹ Both women were also to have 2s 4d per week pension, 'houserom', and fuel. The selection criteria for the women had changed slightly since 1594. They were to be 'quiet women of good name, no usual beggar' but the qualifying age was lowered to 57, and it was stipulated that they be 'void of children'. Preference was to be given to Merchanttaylors widows, as it was for them that the houses were first intended. Finally the number of men allowed to receive money from the gift was limited to ten or twelve, or which five or six were allowed to be married. Perhaps these last two stipulations regarding the merchanttaylors widows and the male poor gives some indication as to the increasing demand in the parish for such poor relief, and therefore the need to narrow the parameters for eligibility.²⁰

The vestry minutes continue to give information on the women who entered the almshouses. In August 1612 Mary Darcy, who had entered the houses in 1610, died and was buried on the 8th of the month. In her place a Rose Peart, a widow from Nightingale Lane was admitted. In February 1613/14 Joane Gyles died (possibly the Jone Gyles of admitted in 1610) and Mabel Creamer and

Agnes Day were candidates, with Creamer, a resident of Houndsditch chosen. Finally, on 11th July 1630 Sarah Lacye was buried, and her place in the almshouses was taken by widow Jane Gyles.²¹

Although the information is limited the parish documentation suggests that the widows remained in the almshouses for only a handful of years before their death. Mary Darcey last just two years and possibly Jone Gyles four year. In October 1648 Elizabeth Baylie entered the houses in place of Judith Redings, but within four years (March 1652) she had died as was replaced by Katherine Plum.²²

Dow's gift appears to have engendered some kind of ceremony in August 1654 as the parish spent up to 30s on 'entertainment of Merchant Taylors company when bringing in Mr Dowe's gift at Christide'. Presumably this was some sort of vestry celebration commemorating Dow's munificence.²³

Plot 7 and 7a

7a merged with 7 1636-7

Plot 7 was located east of the almshouses at the

Plot 7 escaped the development of the Almshouses and continued to exist as a separate freehold.

Peterson held a 50 year lease for the property

Dimensions = 158ft n-s, 44ft northern edge, 63ft southern.

Interestingly two further leaseholds on the plot were created after the completion of the Almshouses in 1596

7a

It appears that in 1596 and after the completion of the Almshouses part of garden 8 was divided off to form a separate plot, 7a, which was described as a 'length of garden behind the almshouses at Hog Lane end'. This was leased for a 21 year term to a John Leake for £2pa and no fine. The plot was, at least on some level, desirable as Leake bid three times for the lease, increasing his offer from 26s, to 30s and finally to 40s.²⁴ Widow Leake was noted as the lessee in 1603-4, before in 1604-5 the lease was assigned to a Richard French who had married the executrix of John Leake. The lease expired in 1616 and it was at this point that a long running dispute erupted between French and the Taylors. French was keen to sign a new lease for the land, however the minute books record that the Taylors had 'long resolved to lay the garden to the almshouse for use by poor women' as soon as the previous lease had ceased. By March 1617 the plot was clearly operating as the Almshouse garden as 4 of the 14 poor women in the houses attend a session of the Taylors court to convey their gratitude, and laud them for their 'great and tender care' in providing them with the use of the garden, an amenity that they had 'not requested.' They requested that an officer of the company, William Harrison, be given the use of a house in the garden for his dwelling, and so that he might see to the 'safekeeping' of the garden and 'for the avoiding of all occasion of complaints', and so that the women be free to 'walk, dry their clothes, gather herbs and flowers.'²⁵

However, French was clearly unhappy with having his bid for the lease rejected, and he petitioned the Taylors to be allowed permission to use the garden during his lifetime, a request that was denied. He then became militant. When an order was issued to him to return his key and deliver possession (seisen?) of the garden to the company he simply ignored it. It appears that the Taylors then used a letter of attorney 'for delivery' of 'possession' to Thomas Juxon, a member of the company, in order that it could then be leased to the company clerk for 3 years. A few months later French again petitioned the Taylors, this time for the use of the house in the garden for his washing during his lifetime. The court was more accommodating on this occasion and allowed him the use of this building for drying his clothes, at a cost of 20s pa. The 20s was then to be divided amongst the women of the almshouse.²⁶ French continued to rent the property until his death in 1623-4. In May of 1624 the property was actually *leased* for a 21 year term to a Bartholomew Elner, an assistant of the company, in consideration of his service to the company. However Elner had to pay a substantially increased rent of £5pa, up £3 for from the sum French had been charged.²⁷ A covenant in the lease allowed for a watercourse originating from the yard of the neighbouring property of Mr Exul, to pass through garden. Interestingly the property was noted as a tenement and garden, indicating that at some

point after 1619 the property had evolved into a dwelling house with its own garden. Such information, in particular the leasing of the property, and the much increased rent, seems to indicate that the initial desire of the Taylors in the mid 1610s to simply incorporate this plot in to the almshouse garden, many well have receded by this time in view of the realisation of the significant rental revenues to be derived from the property as a dwelling. The rent was reduced by 10s however just a year later, in consideration of the ‘great charge’ that Elner was having to endure due to tithes and other payments on the property.²⁸ The account books record that Mr Elner probably died between 1635 and 1637 as a Mrs Elner is noted as the rent payer in 1637-8.²⁹ That year the lease was probably assigned to a Hutkins although this individual was unlikely to have seen much use of the garden as a few months later the land was being purchased for the expansion of the almshouses. (see almshouses entry)

¹ MT ancient Ms Bk 24 estate plans 1684 p.16

² MT ancient Ms BK 8 p.147. HR 249 (59) 3 Oct 1558.

³ MT court min books 1 p.185, 28 May 1565.

⁴ Gerson was a lunatic maintained by the Taylors after Hills death. MT’s Ms BK28 (benefactors book 17th c) p.10

⁵ ?

⁶ HR 269 (24) 8 July 1588

⁷ MT court min bks 3 f.178, 7 May 1588.

⁸ MT wardens accounts bks 6 & 7 receipts.

⁹ MT ct min bk 3 f.189, 190,252, 253, 262

¹⁰ MT court mins 5 1601-11 p.88

¹¹ MT ct min BK 8, p.19, 20 Nov 1611

¹² MT wardens accs

¹³ MT court Min bk 8 (1620-36)

¹⁴ MT court Min bk 9 (1636-54) f.1, f.4, f.7, f.36, f.40-41

¹⁵ GL Ms 2630 19th c ‘Trust money’ bk f.129

¹⁶ GL MS 9235/2 CW accs 1586-1691 receipts.

¹⁷ For Gyles and Horner see Aldgate Gazz 43/7/7A vi.

¹⁸ GL MS 9234/4 PCM bk 1593-4 8th Oct 1594; GL MS 9236 vestry mins bk f.77-79.

¹⁹ Perhaps this suggests that the women had to wear daisies to signify that they were the beneficiaries of Dow’s gift?

²⁰ GL Ms 9236 vest mins 1610 f.230-1

²¹ GL Ms 9236 vest mins 1613 f.229. It appears that the information regarding Lacye and Gyles was added retrospectively to this 1613 volume.

²² Bodl MS Rawl D796B (GL micro 427) PCM f.138

²³ GL Ms 9234/8 PCM 7th Aug 1654

²⁴ MT ct min books 3, f.288.

²⁵ MT min bk 7 (1611-20) p.225, 237, 382, 388.

²⁶ MT min Bk 7 (1611-20) p.390, 413, 423, 430, 432.

²⁷ MT min bk 8 (1620-36) p.201, 209, 215.

²⁸ MT ancient Ms BK 14 (abstract of leases) p.91

²⁹ MT Wardens Accs vol.7.

ST. BOTOLPH ALDGATE

THE STIRRUP & No.52, ALDGATE HIGH STREET, SOUTH SIDE

These properties occupied a plot on Aldgate High Street. The plot corresponds to the area covered by numbers 36 and 37 on the Portsoken ward map of 1858.



Demise of the freehold

Initially in the 1570s these two properties were apparently two separate freeholds, probably in the possession of George and Elizabeth Elyott, and Ann Munders. There is a record of an Indenture of a fine between William Newton and these parties in June-July 1576.¹ Newton leased no.52 from Simon Wilson a gentleman in March 1577, and a minstrel of London named Richard Frithe, leased the adjoining property to Christopher Benne in January 1579-80. It is probable that Elyott, Munders, Wilson and Frithe all held various interests in the properties, although the exact nature of these is unclear. It is probable that the Elyott's and Munders were indeed the freeholders as in May 1588 they agreed a bargain and sale between themselves and Newton for the two houses.²

The Stirrup (no's. 53 & 54 High Street)

This property first etches its presence into the historical record in January 1579-80 with the lease between Frithe and Benne a saddler for 18 years with a fine of 20s and a rental charge of £40pa. The usual covenants of lessee repair and the right of the Frithe to re-enter the property if the rent was over 28 days overdue were stipulated. The property was abutted to the east by a tenement in the occupation of William Holmes a butcher, and to the west by a tenement and garden occupied by Martin Decuster a coach harness maker.³ Benn was apparently something of a parish notable, presumably due to the fact that the Stirrup was a local tipping house, because Benn was involved in parish life (acting as an assistant vestryman in 1587 and coroner in 1592⁴), and because he lived to an exceptional age. However, the same could not be said of several of the inhabitants of the Stirrup. In November 1593 Margaret Saunders a servant to Benn died at the age of 25. The cause of death was given as 'tipler'. Later that year a bachelor carter by the name of Robert Deacon perished of the plague aged 45 whilst dwelling at the Stirrup, as did another servant in March 1594, a boy aged 14 by the name of Richard Besto.⁵

The affection and esteem in which Benn was held was illustrated in 1596 when the parish held a collection to raise money to for him as he was currently held in Ludgate prison for owing £34 to his creditors. On Sunday the 5th of September at the parish church John Goswell and Richard Riptonn 'did gather and collect the good wills of the well disposed parishioners . . . for the use and behalf of Christopher Benn an ancient parishioner being old

and in need.’ They raised the sum of 32s and 5d for Benn ‘to relieve his said necessity and to pay his charges there in prison.’⁶

His wife Philis/Fillis/Phillia who he had married in 1560 died in 1599. It was noted in the PCMs that she was ‘of great age’ and as befitting a women of such longevity her burial was conducted by the minister, using the best church cloth. For her burial 14d was also spent on ‘the pit and knell’, 8d was spent on ‘three passing belles’, 14d on four bearers, and 4d ‘for the searchers’.⁷ It is probable that Benne was issued a further lease sometime in the 1590s as he continued to lease and occupy the property until his death in 1613.⁸ At the time of his death it was claimed that he was ‘aged about 100 years’, and as befitting for such a long lived member of the parish he was buried in the south churchyard and his funeral was accompanied with the black cloth and a knell with the great bell.⁹

The property was in the hands of the parish in 1594 as part of Newton’s gift (see entry for Woolsack Alley for details of the bequest). But by the mid 1610s they seemed to be unsure as to what course of action to take regarding the property. They allowed it to be let to a tenant-at-will by the name of John Sutton a joyner (who was occasionally employed by the parish¹⁰) for a short period between Benn’s death and the granting of a new lease for both this and the adjoining property to ‘our minister’ John Brigges in April 1614.¹¹ Interestingly the record of this agreement in the vestry minutes does not include the terms or charge of the lease. The reason for this becomes clear in July as at a general meeting of the vestry a ‘conference was had’ to debate whether it was ‘more Convenient to have them Newlie Built, or to be lett as they are for yearly Rent’. In other words the parish was deciding whether the properties should be rebuilt, which would thereby entail the issuing of a lease for a number of years, or simply lease the properties as they were on a rolling yearly basis, presumably similar to tenancy at will. There is no information in the parochial documents to suggest that the buildings were in poor repair, or give any indication as to quite why rebuilding was necessary. The vestry decided that ‘it was most fitting that the Parish should Build them’ and therefore took the very unusual decision to rebuild both the properties at the parish’s expense, and presumably lease the properties to Brigges for a number of years.¹² Briggs himself was at the meeting. Yet the same document also records that ‘this agreement took no effect’, and in December 1614 it was agreed at a vestry meeting that Sutton should receive a lease of 21 years at £18pa rent for both properties combined.¹³ This rental of £9pa was a relatively high charge. Sutton was to be ‘put in good security to keep the said houses in good reparations’. Whether this suggests that some work had been undertaken by the parish to improve the dwellings, or whether Sutton was essentially being covenanted to undertake the works himself is not clear. However, the vestry minute entry for 15th December notes that ‘There is another Course taken, about these two houses’. In May 1615 the vestry minutes record that Sutton was to be granted the lease, but this passage is subsequently crossed out. Underneath this is instead written that Sutton came before the vestry and ‘promised to surrender uppe his lease’, after returning home to fetch his lease, he returned to inform the vestry that ‘he would not stand to his former promise.’ Although rather confusingly worded it does appear that Sutton was surrendering his lease on the basis that he was unable or unwilling to conform to the stipulations set out in the lease of December 1614. It is possible that Sutton had simply over extended himself financially. Instead in November 1615 Sutton was granted a lease for just one property, the Stirrup, at £9pa, and agreeing to ‘performing such Covenantes as in his Former lease is expressed, and giving to the parish the like Securitie as he did before.’ The other property was granted to Abel Oliffe for £7p.a. (see property no.52 below).¹⁴ There is still no indication as to whether the property was ever rebuilt, but interestingly, the parish is recorded as paying a carpenter (£1) for work on the house in December 1616.¹⁵

It appears that the Stirrup continued to be used as a tippling house, as upon his death in 1629 Sutton’s occupation in the parish registers was recorded as a ‘victualler free of the

joiners'.¹⁶ The church wardens accounts record that he was buried in the north churchyard to the accompaniment of the knells of the church bells and the use of the best cloth, and at the cost of 9s 4d.¹⁷ It is not clear who occupied the property after Sutton's death but at the expiration of the lease in 1635 the Stirrup becomes divided on a north to south axis into two properties, which are leased separately.

The Stirrup A

The first documented entry for this part of the Stirrup is in December 1635, when it is leased by the parish to Edward Lawson and his wife Anne who were the current occupants, for 21 years, at £10 rent pa, and a fine of £15. Lawson is variously described as a cook and a victualler. It is possible that they had been living in the property since 1630 when their son Edward is born.¹⁸ The lease contains the usual covenants regarding repair by the lessee, and the right of the parish to view the property, but it also notes that Lawson was forbidden to 'sell' (presumably meaning assigning the lease) unless the first offer was made to the parish.¹⁹ A sum of 10s 6d was spent by the parish 'at ye Stirrup about ye parish business' in 1635 so presumably the vestry was holding meetings or official gatherings at the tavern.²⁰ In 1636 Edward Lawson junior was buried. He was described as an 'infant' so whether this is indeed the same son born in 1630 is not clear. His mother is recorded as Agnes Lawson rather than Anne.²¹ Edward senior is noted in the 1638 tithes paying £8pa moderated rent, and he himself dies in 1641.²² A Mr Lawson is still recorded as the rental payer in 1645 although this is probably a mistake and more likely to have been the widow Mrs Lawson. The church warden's accounts of 1646 note that a Thomas Sparkes is now the occupant, and had probably been assigned the lease.²³ It is possible that Lawson was survived by his widow who in 1651 was in receipt of some form of relief from the parish.²⁴ Sparkes who was noted as a victualler in the vestry minutes continued to pay the rental until the end of the lease in 1654. Interestingly there is some evidence that nursing may have occurred at the tavern as a 1647 entry in the church wardens accounts notes that £1 6s was paid to Goody Peirson 'for keeping Reads childe at ye stirrup.'²⁵ Sparkes may have been the same Thomas Sparkes who, with his wife Margaret, a son by the name of Thomas in 1646 although the individual involved was recorded as a Merchant Taylor living in the High Street rather than a victualler.²⁶

The next lease was signed for the property in January 1653-4 saw a considerable increase in both the length of the lease, but also most notably the level of the fine. The property was valued by the parish at £15pa, yet despite this presumed 50% increase in rental value they leased the Stirrup to a butcher called Alexander Hall for a 51 year term at £10 pa rental, albeit with a substantial £100 fine. The covenants not that repairs to the property, in particular the 'pales and fences' to the backyard, were the responsibility of the lessee, but whereas in the lease of 1635 to Lawson the parish was allowed to view the property twice per year, in Hall's lease this surveillance was increased to four times per annum. Similarly whereas Lawson was given 6 months grace to affect repairs, Hall would be allowed just three. The parish's motivation for keeping such a close eye on Hall's tenancy is not immediately clear.²⁷ Hall entered into bond to pay the fine in yearly instalments of £25, the final one received by the parish in 1658.²⁸ He continues to be listed as the rental payer as far as 1680.²⁹

The Stirrup B

This half of the Stirrup is apparently in the tenure of Michael Strettons in 1637 was coveted by William Ardington, although judging by the terms he offered the property was in some disrepair. In return for a 51 years lease, Ardington offered the parish £7 pa rent (including £12 pa for the 'remainder of the term', which presumably meant the remainder of the existing lease) and the promise to rebuild the property within seven years. He also apparently offered to resolve an issue over a piece of ground behind the property, although the nature of this issue is not recorded. No fine was mentioned.³⁰ The plot was measured by the parish in June 1640, presumably to include in the lease, which sadly appears not to have survived.³¹ It is almost certain that a lease was signed as William Ardington pays £7pa rental on the property until his death in 1651-2. Upon his death the parish order that Michael Stretton's name was to be 'put in the rent roll in the room of William Ardington', whether this indicates that Sretton was again assigned the lease is not clear, although his name does appear in assessment list of 1652-3.³² The resident or potentially the lessee then appears to have been a Nicholas Adames from 1653-4 till 1655-6,³³ although this particular relationship may have soured somewhat by 1656-7 as the church wardens accounts note that the parish had paid 2s 4d for the 'arrest' of Adames.³⁴

The death of William Ardington does seem to have triggered some form of legal dispute between the parish and a Mr Ardington, presumably William's son Lawrence. After the death of Williams senior members of the vestry were instructed to 'look through the writings and see what they can find concerning the house that was in the tenure of Mr Ardington deceased.'³⁵ No reason is given for this instruction. Whatever it is that is vexing the vestry continues to do so for several years, and in September 1656 the PCMs record that the vestry was to meet to 'consider the state of business between the parish and Mr Ardington, there being a suit now depending' between them.³⁶ It is probable that this suit was between the parish and Lawrence Ardington over the fact that Lawrence's father William had not rebuilt the house prior to his death, and as was stipulated in his lease, and it is probable that the disagreement was ended by Lawrence being given a new lease on the property in return for him rebuilding.³⁷ Unless Lawrence had been assigned the lease by his father it is difficult to see how he may have become liable for the covenants in his fathers lease agreement. Whatever the case the whole incident indicates the parish's determination, not only to get the property rebuilt, but also to ensure that, at least part of the costs, were borne by a lessee. The lease that Ardington was granted was for a term of 51 years, although unfortunately no rental charge or fine is recorded. What is recorded however is the building materials and dimensions. Ardington was ordered to build a house 'with good oaken timber three stories above the cellar besides the roof and to raise the ground to carry the water unto the street'. If it was not possible to build in timber then it should be built 'substantial and workmanlike with brick.' The dimensions were given as 17ft 11" along the street front, 63ft on the eastern wall, 17ft across the rear, and 64ft on the western boundary.³⁸

Ardington continues to be assessed for the property for a short period until 1658-9. It likely that it is then sub-tenanted by Mrs Ingolsbie until 1666-7, a Mr Burges for two years after 1667-8, with the final two recorded tenants as widow Burges in 1671³⁹ and a widow Mullings 1678-80.⁴⁰ The rental charge was recorded as £10pa both in 1665-6 and 1678-80.⁴¹ A plan of the property is contained in a late 18th century lease which confirms the division of the property into two units, although it is almost certain that both dwellings had altered markedly by this time (GL MS 3486/1 no.62 31st Jan 1788).

Number 52 the High Street

As with the Stirrup only one record exists for this property prior to its purchase by Newton in 1588, this was the indenture for a lease between Simon Wilson a gentleman, and Newton. In return for a 21 year term, a fine of £7 was paid, and rental charge was set at 39s. The covenants note that Wilson was allowed to view the property once per year, and give warning if repairs were needed. The property was described as possessing rooms, chambers, a kitchen, a cellar and a yard, and judging by the covenant for repair, it was mainly a timber construction and also possessed a privy. The dwelling was currently in the occupation of William Holmes a butcher, and was abutted on the east by a tenement in the occupation of George Curwyn, and on the west by a tenement and garden occupied by Christopher Ben a saddler.⁴² Holmes was still resident in the property according to Newton's will in November 1594, although by 1614, when John Brigges was offered the lease a butcher called Abel Oliffe was dwelling there.⁴³ As with the Stirrup (see above) there was debate as to whether the properties should be rebuilt, and eventually a lease was granted to Oliffe rather than to Brigges. The lease was for a 21 year term at £7pa, with the stipulation that Oliffe give a 'good security.'⁴⁴ It is possible that by 1616 the property was occupied by John S---ey (the name is obscured) possibly now married to Oliffe's wife/widow.⁴⁵

As with The Stirrup at some point after this the property becomes divided into two, with separate leases issued for each dwelling. No.52 A was the west tenant, whilst no.52 B was the easterly of the two.

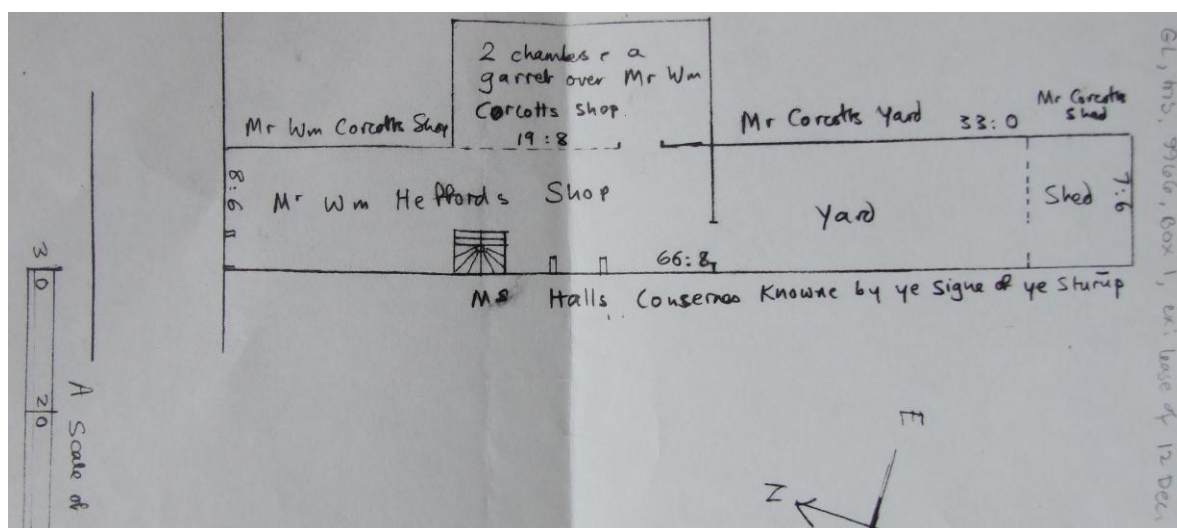
Number 52.A

It appears that both number's.52 A&B were 'butchers houses' by the mid seventeenth century according to a vestry meeting of June 1649 which requested that a committee of the vestry sought to 'agree' with the current lessees, John Warren a draper in 52A, and Mr Marshrother in 52B, about the terms of new leases. The committee, comprised of five men 'for the ward', and six 'for East Smithfield', was also required to 'consider about the shops under the church wall whose they shall be', and report back about the agreements they had reached by the 1st August that year.⁴⁶ The contents of that "report" are unrecorded, however in mid August a vestry meeting agreed that Warren and Marshrother, should pay the £6 for the previous half-years rent, and £6 for the oncoming half yearly charge, and then 'surrender their houses unto the church wardens for the use of the poor, and after they shall be put in reparation they are promised the refusal of them.' Quite what this proposal meant, and what the parish is attempting to achieve here is unclear, however by February 1650 the parish had agreed to lease the property back to Warren for 21 years at £6pa, albeit with another proviso that he would have to bestow £10 within two years 'upon the entire reparations' of the house.⁴⁷ The lease itself, sealed in March 1650, notes that the work to be carried out by Warren 'new building and reedifying the said premises' had to be evaluated by two 'honest workmen, indifferently chosen' in order to ensure that £10 had indeed been spent. The lease also contained the covenants that any repairs to the pavements, privies, sinks, gutters, widdraughts, and the property in general must be carried out within six months of warning being given by the parish. Finally the document records that William Addington occupied the abutting property to the west.⁴⁸

Warren continues to appear in the various rent rolls and parliamentary assessments, up until the assesment of 1657-8 when the tenant of no.52B Nicholas Adams is noted in the assessment list, presumably having been assigned Warren's lease.⁴⁹ In 1667 the vestry minutes record that Adams (noted as a butcher) was offered the lease for 21 years from Christmas 1670, with a £14 fine and £6pa rental. Presumably Adams entered into the lease as again he continues to appear in the churchwardens account, but interestingly paying just

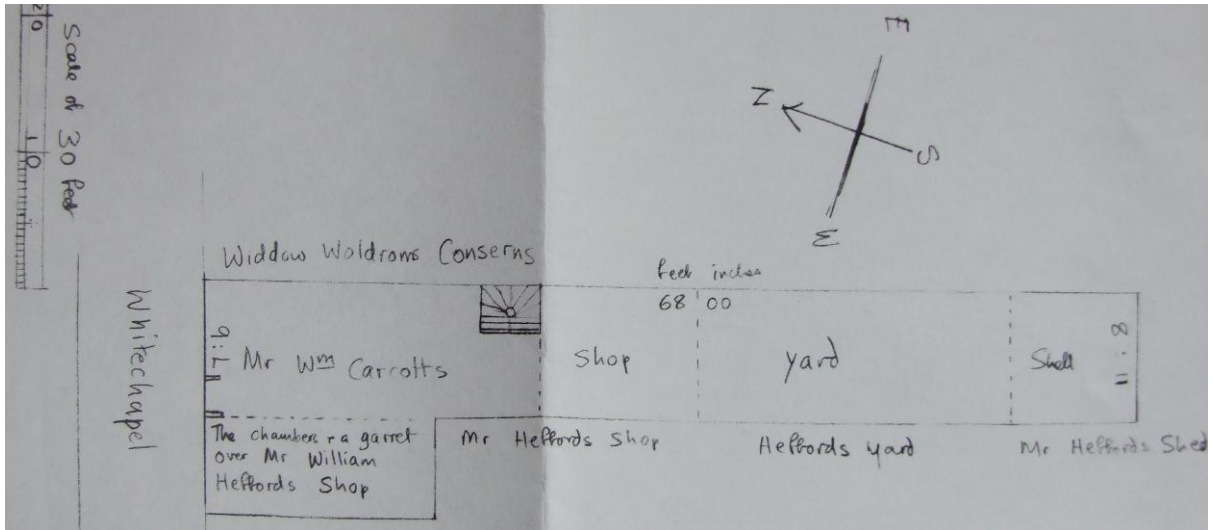
£12pa rent for the two properties rather than £14.⁵⁰ The accounts also record that between 1674 and 1678 a Thomas Braiayne was the rental payer for both 52.A and 52.B. He continues to pay the rent on just 52.A from 1679 until 1683, when the lease is apparently assigned to a Mr Hyott.⁵¹

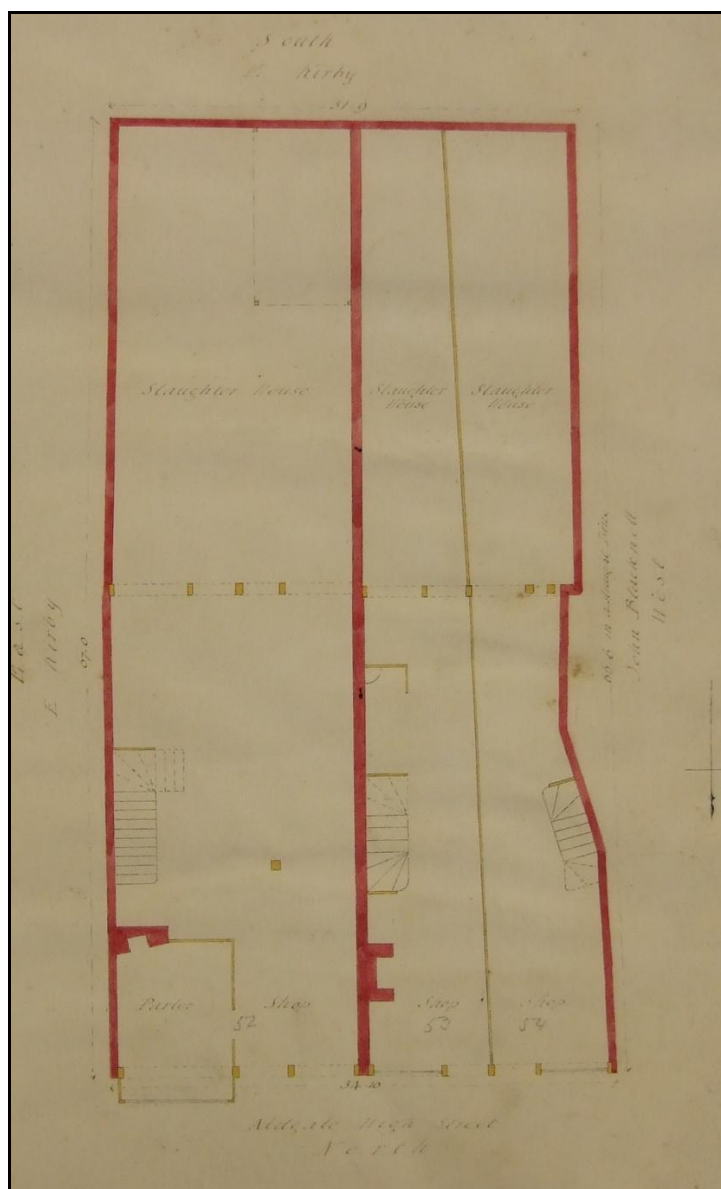
A lease of December 1706 to William Halford a butcher, contains a plan of the property, described as a 'messuage and yard' with 'shed behind the same'. The lease was for 41 years, at £9pa, and no fine. To the east was the dwelling of Roger Alton, and the west William Corkett.⁵² P69/BOT2/D/029/MS09966 **Get photo!!!**



Number 52.B

After the deliberations over the lease in 1649 (see 52.A above) Marshrother a butcher was granted a 21 year lease at £6pa in March 1650. As with Warren, he was required to spend £10 on repairs to the property, and see to its upkeep as detailed in Warren's lease. His neighbours were noted as John Warren to the west and the 'tenement or tavern now in the tenure of Thomas Sleightholme' to the east.⁵³ The churchwardens accounts recorded that John remained the rental payer until his death in 1653-4, with his widow subsequently taking over for a single year before Nicholas Adams is presumably assigned the lease and adopts the property as 'his dwelling house.'⁵⁴ Adams is also assigned the lease for the neighbouring property 52.B in 1657-8 (see above), but as with property 52.A it appears that the lease was in the hands of Thomas Braiayne between 1674 and 1678. Oddly, Adams is again recorded as the rental payer from 1680 until 1689. By 1690 the property, along with 52.A is in the hands of Mr Hyott.





¹ GL Ms 2630 19th c trust money book f.169

² GL Ms 9236 vest mins

³ GL Ms 9965 box 1 28th Jan 1579-80

⁴ PCM 21st June 1587 f.93. PCM 11th April 1592 f.62.

⁵ PCM 1st Nov 1593 f.65. Feb 1593-4 f.127. March 1594 f.142.

⁶ PCM 5th Sept 1596 f.32.

⁷ PRs 27/01/1560 Ev Id 311780. 12/10/1599 Ev Id 301648. PCMs 16th Oct 1599 f.160.

⁸ GL Ms 9236 vest mins 27th Jan 1613 (14?) GLMS 9235_5394 f.23

⁹ PRs 09/08/1613 Ev Id 203481

¹⁰ GL Ms 9235 CW accs vol.2 1613-14 f.236.

¹¹ GL Ms 9236 vest mins 28th April 1614. GL Ms 9236 6th July 1614

¹² GL Ms 9236 6th July 1614

¹³ GL Ms 9236 vest mins 15th Dec 1614 f.35. 12th May 1615 f.38

¹⁴ GL Ms 9236 vest mins 12th May 1615 f.38. 2nd Nov 1615 f.44

¹⁵ Bodl MS Rawl D796B (GL microfilm 427) 23rd Dec 1616 f.103

¹⁶ PRs 06/07/1629 Ev Id 211377.

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- ¹⁷ GL Ms 9235 vol.2 pt 1. 1628-29 f.361.
¹⁸ PRs 24/10/1630 Ev Id 111393.
¹⁹ GL Ms 3486/4 (no.15) 16th Dec 1635
²⁰ GL Ms 9235/2 CW accs 1635-6
²¹ PRs 16/11/1636 Ev Id 215666.
²² PRs 03/01/1641 Ev Id 218938.
²³ GL Ms 9235 vol.2 pt 1. 1628-29 f.448 and f.450. Dale 1638.
²⁴ GL Ms 9235/2 CW accs 1645-6, 1648-50. GL Ms 9237 CW poor accs 1651
²⁵ GLMs 9237-1 CW accs 1647 f.111.
²⁶ PRs 13/09/1646 Ev Id 406149.
²⁷ GL Ms 9234/8 PCM 5th May 1653 f.278. GL Ms 9966/1 15ht Jan 1653-4
²⁸ GL Ms 9234/8 PCM 29th Nov 1653. GL Ms 9237 CW poor accs 20th June 1654. 1658.
²⁹ PRO SC11/32 rent roll of poor lands.
³⁰ GL Ms 9236 vest mins 7th June 1637 f.99.
³¹ GL Ms 9236 vest mins 14th June 1640
³² GL Ms 9234/8 PCM 3rd June 1652 f.276. GL Ms 9235/2 CW accs 1652-3.
³³ PRO SC11/32 rent roll of poor lands. GL Ms 9235/2 CW accs 1655-6.
³⁴ GL Ms 9235/2 CW accs 1656-7
³⁵ GL Ms 9234/8 PCM 19th July 1652
³⁶ GL Ms 9234/8 PCM 22nd Sept 1656 f.280
³⁷ GL Ms 9234/8 PCM 7 Dec 1656 f.281
³⁸ GL Ms 9236 vest mins Box. E.
³⁹ GL Ms 9235/2 Cw accs parl assessments 1657-8 to 1671-2
⁴⁰ PRO SC11/32 rent roll of poors lands STB 1678-80.
⁴¹ PRO SC11/32 rent roll of poors lands STB 1665-6 and 1678-80
⁴² GL Ms 9966 box.1 23rd March 1577
⁴³ Bodl MS Rawl D796B (GL microfilm 427) 19th Nov 1594. GL Ms 9236 vest min 27th Jan 1613 & 28th April 1614.
⁴⁴ GL Ms 9236 vest mins 2nd Nov 1615
⁴⁵ GL Ms 9223 Reg BMB 1616
⁴⁶ GL Ms 9234/8 PCM f.272 27th June 1649
⁴⁷ GL Ms 9234/8 PCM f.273 14th Aug 1649 & 5th Feb 1650
⁴⁸ GL Ms 9966/1 (no.22) 10th march 1650
⁴⁹ GL Ms 9235/2 CW accs STB parl asses 1657-8
⁵⁰ PRO Sc11/32 rent rolls poor land STB 1679-80
⁵¹ GLMs 9235/2 CW accs
⁵² GL Ms 9966 box.1 12th Dec 1706
⁵³ GLMs 3486/2 (no.23) 10th March 1650.
⁵⁴ GLMs 9235/2 CW accs

ST. BOTOLPH ALDGATE

FREEHOLD OF THREE DEATHS ALLEY (aka COCK COURT) HOUNDSDITCH, EAST SIDE:

Descent of the freehold 1397-1557

In 1397 Walter Napper the heir of Joan Strausburgh the sometime wife of John Strausburgh a 'bronderer', 'gave and conferred' the 'fee forever' to Thomas Brounflete, Gregory Ballard, Richard Mawardyn, And John Ormesby of 'all his tenements with one columbar and gardens adjacent' in Houndsditch. The land was bounded by street to west, the tenement of William Founder to the south and Robert Risby to the north, and the garden of Holy Trinity priory.¹ A year later Mawardyn quit-claimed to the other three men all right in the property, who then subsequently 'demised, enfeoffed and conferred' part of their interest to Thomas Barton and Ralph Uphaving in 1399.² The same day another feoffment was granted by the three men to Richard Hamme. By 1418 had granted and conferred this interest to his son Simon alongside the 'reversion of the four messuages grantors sister Agnes holds there by his grant for the term of her life', and on the same day Barton and Uphaving had similarly granted and enfeoffed their interest to Hammes.³ After his flurry of transactions a few decades pass before the freehold again becomes the object of activity when on 12th July 1455 Simon and his brother Henry Hammes granted and conferred the lands, tenements, columbar and gardens to Thomas Brian gentleman and John Lok a mercer. A few days later Bryan and Lokke 'granted a farm' to the Hammes of the lands for the term of one year, in return for a payment of 11lb of pepper to Bryan and a dozen pigeons to Lokke.⁴ In August 1456 an indenture between the two parties agreed that if the Hammes' paid Bryan and Lokke £120 on 12th July next, in the parish church of St Mary de Arcnbus, 'that then the charter of seisin and the statue staple will be void and the Hammes' should be able to re-enter the premises.'⁵

In July 1505 the heir of Thomas Bryan (who is noted as Knight and formerly Chief Justice of the Common Bench) Sir Thomas Bryan granted and conferred 'the lands, messuages, tenements, columbar and gardens' to Sir William Capel, Richard Broke gentleman, John Howder and Edmund Burton 'to use of William Capell his heirs and assigns for ever.' Seisin was delivered a few days later. The property abutted that of William Byrd to the north, Christ Church to the south, and the garden of the priory to the east.⁶ A few years later Henry Hammes, son of Henry Hammes quitclaimed to the aforementioned men 'to use of William' his remaining interest in the land, as did Bryan in 1511.⁷

In April 1516 Sir Gyles Capell the son and heir of Sir William 'bargained and sold' to Richard Gresham a mercer, the property described as 'messuages, lands, tenements, gardens and dovehouse'. Capell was to deliver to Gresham 'all and every the deeds, charters, evidences, escripts and muniments concerning the said messauges, lands and tenements', and it seems clear that Gresham was keen to ensure that he was purchasing the property without any hidden interests. So much so in fact that the indenture appeared to make Capell responsible for any legal costs should such hidden interests arise, and he was bound to Gresham for the sum of £200 to ensure his compliance with this covenant. The indenture also notes that Gresham was prohibited from amending or cancelling a lease agreement that had been signed in July 1511 between Capell and three lessees William Smyth a skinner, William

Sever a salter, and Walter Smyth a stacyoner, regarding the lands. Sadly the indenture offers no further information on the terms of these lease, or indeed whether these three men were also the occupants.⁸ The deed, which granted and conferred the property to Gresham and fellow mercers Phillip Meredith and John Gresham, was signed two years later in April 1518, and seisin was eventually delivered in October 1521.⁹

The fee was sold, granted and conferred to Thomas Gygg(s) a mariner, Thomas Armeston a clothworker, John Hancock a draper, and Christopher Draper an ironmonger, in 1541, and for the use of Gyggs.¹⁰ However, Gyggs died soon after, and a marriage settlement dated December 1546 recorded that his widow Margaret was intending to wed a gentleman by the name of Richard Staverton. The document notes that Thomas Gyggs had sold some lands in Dover acquired by his wife through inheritance and in 'recompense' of this 'bequeathed by his testament and last will' his messuages and lands in Houndsditch to Margaret. The document records that John Hancock and other persons (presumably Armeston, and Draper) 'stand and be seised in their demesne as of fee for and to use of the performance of the last will of Thomas Gygges.' Staverton also agreed to relinquish any legal rights to the freehold by stating that 'I shall not bargain, sell, put to mortgage or otherwise by any means of law charge' the property of Margaret. In practice this meant that Gyggs' interest was effectively held in trust for Margaret, as it was conveyed to Hancock et al for the uses of Margaret during her 'natural life', and Staverton therefore could hold no interest in the fee once he had married Margaret. He gave license to Margaret and her counsel that he would not challenge or contest any deeds or agreements that she chose to make regarding the fee, including her last will and testament.¹¹

A decade later Margaret died, and interestingly her surname, along with her husband was now Martyn rather than Staverton. The will notes that her body was given a 'Christian burial' within the parish of STB, and at the funeral 5s was to be bestowed to the priests, clerks and the poor people of the parish.

Margaret made a series of complex bequests both to individual parishioners and to the parish itself, the largest of these being her interest in the lands in Houndsditch. In terms of the individual bequests, Margaret's servant Elizabeth Worlynton was given a frock of black cloth. 'Good wife Jerome of Wolsacke Alley' was the recipient of 'a smocke and two rayles'. To goodwife Gryse of St Mary Axe went a 'rayle', and the wife of Patrick Whyett of Houndsditch was given a similar gift. Finally, the aforementioned John Hancocke of Barking parish was bequeathed a 'hope ryng of golde esteemed worth a ryatt', whereas the Margaret's godson, John Jaykes received a gold ring 'worth a noble.'

In terms of the lands themselves, Margaret bequeathed them to her husband and his assigns for the period of his natural life, although it is clear from the rest of the will that he is effectively a trustee of the land. Margaret's first proviso was that from time-to-time Richard 'sufficiently repair' the tenements located there, and that her servant Elizabeth Worlington was allowed to live in the property now occupied by 'the paynter' for the rest of her life. Similarly Margaret's friend Handcok and his wife (and assigns) were allowed the use of the 'garden and room' that they currently occupied, 'freely' and for the duration of their lives.¹² Richard Martyn was also required, for the remainder of his life, to make annual payments of 10s each, derived from the profits of the land to Richard Wallett, William Wallett and John Swerer of Moche (sic), men Margaret describes as her 'kinsman', and Joane and Mary Curtyes the daughters of one Thomas Curtyes (Curties). The two prisons of Southwark, the Kings Bench and the Marshalsea, were also to be the joint recipients of another annual 10s bequest. Furthermore the poor of STB and Barking parishes were to have benefited from the 10s pa that was to be granted to the Church Wardens.

The will stipulated that the current occupiers of the tenements were to be allowed to continue to reside there on the proviso that they paid their rent as due. Yet the document also

takes steps to ensure that Richard fulfils his obligations by stating that if he did not pay the aforementioned bequests ‘within six months after every one year during his time if he be lawfully asked’ then John Hancock and Robert Cobstake of STB were ‘enter the lands’ thereby effectively conveying the lands to them alongside the obligations to administer the various bequests. Any residual monies generated by renting the properties were to be ‘bestowed on the poor people of STB’ by Hancocke, Cobstake and the Church Wardens (or their assigns), and for their performance of this duty the former were to be paid 10s jointly, with the Church Wardens allowed 5s between themselves.

Finally the will concludes by establishing the procedure that was to unfold upon the death of Richard. The lands were, in the language of the will, to ‘remain to following use and purpose’, in other words Margarets interests in the property was to be conveyed to the parish for a series of stipulated uses. Although the Church Wardens of STB were allowed to ‘take the profits for ever’ from the lands, the will ensured that they had little discretion in how this money was to be spent. The wardens were required to ensure the repair the properties, and they were bared from removing the tenants dwelling there, unless they ‘do consent or offend the law and will not pay rent’. John Hancocke was to shoulder the duties of disbursing the annual 10s payments to those named above and the prisons, and the poor people of Barking parish were to be the beneficiaries of 26s 8d, with the Church Wardens receive 20d p.a. forever in remuneration for administering this money. Once these various obligations had been met the remainder of the rental income generated by the lands was to be ‘bestowed yearly among the poor’ of STB by the CWs who could look forward to receiving 3s 4d for their troubles. By way of monitoring their activities the Wardens were to be accountable each year to the ‘whole body of parish at their accustomed accounts by a vestry assembled.’ If the Wardens refused to submit to this scrutiny then Margaret’s interest was to be conveyed and divided amongst her ‘kinsfolk’ Richard and William Walleth, John Swerer, Joanne and Mary Cuties, and their lawful heirs.

The will was sealed in the presence of her executors Hancock and Cobstake, and her overseer, the curate Richard Wilson, Roger Taylor, William Towres (churchwarden) and Robert Jaky.¹³

The Renter Wardens accounts note that the parish received £15 17s 8d for the rental of the court in 1559-60, increasing that sum by an additional 10s to £16 7s 8d in 1561-2 via the construction of a shed on the plot.¹⁴ However, the situation took an unfortunate turn for the parish as it soon emerged that one of the ‘heirs’ of Margaret Martyn a skinner by the name of Thomas Frenche was keen to claim his interest in the property. This was the beginning of a period of intense activity regarding the freehold during which the parish had to work through a number of trails and tribulations to establish its right to the fee simple.

In July 1562 Frenche claimed that the parish had ‘been seised . . . of an estate of inheritance in fee simple’, yet he was the son and heir of John Frenche the ‘uncle and next heir’ of Martyn and therefore on that basis he was making ‘claim and title as cousin and next heir’. The foundation of Frenche’s claim appears to have been that the property ‘was not conveyed (to the parish) in her (Martyn’s) lifetime’, thereby ensuring that the title should have descended to her heirs.¹⁵ It seems that a fine was used to break this entail, with Frenche receiving a payment of possibly £80 to convey his interest to feoffees Richard Duffeld, John Hogette, Roger Taylyos, Thomas Cordye and Thomas Shepard.¹⁶ The vestrymen celebrated the purchase of these lands by treating themselves to breakfast at The Pye tavern at the parish’s expense, however such satisfaction proved to be short lived as in June 1564 another fine was required to break the entail relating to Thomas’s cousin William Frenche, and on this occasion it appears that the sum involved was £220.¹⁷ A later indenture (see below) notes that it was indeed the named feoffees who paid these sums from their own pockets, rather than it being from parish funds.¹⁸

The description of the lands contained in the indentures confirms that substantial building had occurred on the plot since the early 16th century. The indentures from 1562 record the plot as 'all those messuages, cottages, lands, tenements, gardens, cellars, solers, edifices and buildings' in Houndsditch, with the 1564 documentation describing a densely built plot containing 10 messuages, 6 cottages and 7 gardens. The surrounding properties were 'one great garden' previously in the possession of the prior of Christ's Church and now in the possession of Magdalen College Cambridge, a tenement in occupation of Thomas Owen a gunfounder to the north, and the lands of the recently deceased John Austen to the south.

The issue of the freehold continues to rumble on throughout the decade. In September 1564 in an extensive and detailed indenture the five feoffees noted above conveyed the fee simple to eight named parishioner feoffees, whilst a separate group of eighteen parishioners were noted as feoffees to uses. The uses was the right (in essence the obligation) to gather the rents, to ensure the good repair of the buildings, and to pay to the Church wardens any the remaining monies. The money owe to Duffelde et al for the purchase of the lands was to be repaid to them through the rental income within the next five years. Once this debt had been cleared the revenues could then be dispersed to the poor of the parish, with 18 parishioners appointed by the church wardens and curate for that purpose, and apparently 12 parishioners as feoffees to the fee simple. As if to symbolise the value of these lands to the parish, this indenture was to be kept in a three key 'chest or coffer' that was 'to be for that purpose made and prepared'. This chest was to be kept at the church and once per year on the feast day of St Thomas Apostle the indenture, along with 'all other writing, evidences, muniments' kept within the chest 'shall be openly shown in some convenient place' in order that the parishioners could view them.¹⁹ The interest of the Frenche family in the lands was finally ended in June 1570 when John Frenche a husbandman from Hereford, William a cordwayner from St Martyns le Grande parish, and Thomas a skinner, signed an indenture between themselves and six parishioners of STB to that effect, and were bound to the tune of £80 to ensure they adhered to the agreement. The indenture notes that 'a certain sum of money' was paid the Frenche's to facilitae this agreement, presumably by the indentured parishioners Anthonie Higges (alias Anthonie Anthonie), Richard Duffielde, John Hodgett, Roger Taylor, Thomas Cordie and Thomas Shepparde.²⁰ An indenture later that year between two of the feoffees Hodgett and Shepparde who were 'seised of the land' and 12 parishioners noted that Hodgett and Shepparde, purchased the lands with their own money, the money of the 'parties to these indentures', and other unnamed inhabitants of the parish. Hodgett and Shepparde conveyed to the 12 parishioners the seisin. As a covenant of the deed four parishioners were to be selected yearly to oversee the management of these lands by ensuring their maintenance, funded from the rental revenues, with the remaining rents 'forever to employ in and upon the honest godly poor parishioners . . . towards their relief and maintenance so often as thought by them to be most convenient, needful and necessary.' For their troubles in this duty these four men were allowed 6s 8d to share between them yearly. They were as required to deliver accounts of their activities, in particular the distribution of the relief to the poor, to the Church Wardens and 20 parishioners. In order to ensure the continued possession of the title by the parish the deed stipulated that once the number of parish feoffees had been reduced to 3 they would convey the fee to 12 fresh feoffees. Crucially the indenture states that 'whatever assurance or conveyance shall be made of the premises or any part to any persons shall to be the only uses and interests before'. Such stipulations meant the parish was creating a situation where the parishioners were essentially trustees charged with ensuring that the lands would always be employed for the benefit of the parish poor. As we shall see this holding of the lands in trust became more clearly defined over the next century. The right of the vestry, and the vestry only, to lease the parish lands

had been set down in a memo of 1562²¹ (the church wardens, renter or their deputies were explicitly forbidden from doing so) and in 1570 the regulations were further defined. Twelve parishioners were to have the right to lease plots for a 'term of 21 years or for term of three leases and not above so that their be reserved the yearly ancient rent and services or more during continuances of same demise and same yearly to be distributed to uses above.'²²

Unfortunately the parish's woes regarding these lands did not end there. In August 1571 the crown granted the 'fee simple' to Thomas Jennynis and Edward Forthe of London, men who were apparently acting as trustees for Lord Thomas Wentworth. As Martyn had 'died unexamined without an heir' the lands rightfully passed to the crown by escheat. Jennynis and Forthe 'procured the discovery' of these concealed lands, which now comprised of 'twelve tenements or gardens'.²³

It again fell to individual parishioners Hodgett, Thomas Goodman, Richard Casye, Anthonin Duffylde & William Woode to fund the purchase of Wentworth's estate for the parish. They lent the parish £55 5s which covered the £50 purchase price plus the associated legal and scriveners fees. Seisin was delivered to the aforementioned parishioners on 29th December 1571. The deed gives us the first recorded dimensions of the plot: 120ft north to south along the street front, 113ft N to S at the rear, 235ft east to west on its northern boundary and 238ft along the southern. It now abutted on the north a tenement of Henry Elsynge that was tenanted by Thomas Owen, to the south by three properties; a tenement and garden of John Warren, a the gardens of William Domber, Robert Dove and George Fyn, and to the east the gardens of Magdalen now is possession of Casye. The indenture notes that the current tenants agreed the transfer, and each paid Jenyns and Froth 1d for their holdings. Thanks to this agreement for the first time we are furnished was a complete listing of the tenants of the dwellings.²⁴

By the time of the next conveyance to fresh feoffees in June 1585 the number of parishioners required to administer the lands had been reduced from four to two, and the vestry, presumably scarred by its previous experiences over the title, was to appoint 'one honest godly towardeman learned in the laws of this realm' who was to offer 'advice and council' to the vestry during all future conveyances. The individual was also to meet with the vestry once per year to 'consider the state of the premises and have conference with the vestry concerning the same', for which he would receive 20s pa remuneration. The deed also stated that the two 'renters' were to be appointed by six parishioners from the upper and six from the lower ends of the parish, and specifically noted that the decisions regarding leases were to be take by the vestry. The deed also noted the John Phillips a gun founder was the occupant of the property to the north.²⁵ The conveyance of the property to new feoffees occurred again in 1609. It is this indenture that apparently codifies the operation of the trust, with all subsequent indentures referring to the covenants enshrined in this document.²⁶ The conveyance in March 1644 actually involved a sale and enfeoffment between five parishioners, (presumably the remaining feoffees from the deed of 1609) William Carpenter a brewer, Peter Shipman gent, James Duppa esq, Eliezar Barnes a cooper, and Toby Reynolde also a cooper, to 28 other parishioners (along with all the other parish lands?) for 5s.²⁷ The conveyance of this property via a sale may have been part of a broader project by the parish to ensure that all parish lands were enrolled(?). As with the preceding deeds it records that the parishioners were feoffees to uses, and by presumably enrolling the sale this gave further legal backing to the concept of the lands being held in trust. A similar sale was used to convey the property (again with other parish lands) to a new set of feoffees in 1663 and again in 1677.²⁸ The terms 'trust' and 'trustees' are being used for the first time in this latter indenture.

Building and Repairs 1558-1663

Besides the several hundred pounds the parish spent on its efforts to secure the title of the lands it also invested in repairs to the buildings on the lands, particularly after the initial bequest by Martyn in 1558. The renter wardens accounts record that a wide variety of building materials were purchased including brick, lime, sand, lead, timber, eves borde, lath, lome, nails, tiles, rafters, tiles and tile pins, boards, locks and bolts, wainscots, reeds and iron, and payments were made to numerous artisans. This labour and material was put to use an assortment of repairs and renovations to the properties, such as the construction and repairs of several chimneys, the building of a shed, pailing gardens, installing repairing and cleaning privies, installing locks and windows, repairs to paving, and the renovations (possibly the installation) of a communal water pump in 1578. At least £70 was spent on repairs by the parish between the late 1550s and 1570s indicating that the parish was attentive to the need to Pay heed to the physical state of the dwellings.²⁹ However it is notable that throughout the 1580s such payment for repairs to Cock court are absent from the accounts. It is tempting to link the subsequent events of the late 1580s and early 90s to this apparent withdrawal of maintenance funds by the parish, however closer inspection of the documentation reveals a more intriguing narrative.

On 15th December 1588 a simple memo records that an order was taken that the poor lands should be viewed on the ensuing Tuesday by eight named vestrymen. Who proposed this, or indeed why is not documented. The viewing discovered numerous ‘fawltes to be reformed’. These included a couple of issues regarding the decay of the properties, particularly that William Simcott’s house should be repaired ‘otherwise it will not long stand.’ However at least eleven of the fourteen reforms ordered were, broadly speaking, related to improving the environment of the area. William Brooke was ordered to pull down a shed he had built ‘without licence . . . for it is noisome’, and to refrain from tawing skins in his garden, an activity that was ‘noisome to the rest of the inhabitants’. Similarly all doors in the dwellings in the court which opened outwards ‘should be made to hang on the inside and open inwardly otherwise they be thought to be noisome.’ Besides the concern over noise, the report also exhibits a determination to ensure the tenants no longer used the common privy in the court. Several of the orders require pairs of tenants (and all the courts tenants are named) to construct privies that will serve their households, or those tenants that possessed gardens were to construct privies within them. Indeed one order notes that three tenants John Balderstone, Robert Sharp and widow Thomson, already had privies within their dwellings, and it expressly forbids them from continuing to use the common privy.³⁰

One of the eight vestrymen who complied this report was a certain Mr Robert Dow, the same Robert Dow who had just two years earlier managed to obtain a lease for the lands abutting Cock Court to the east, in order that he could use them for the garden to his large mansion house located just to the south east of the court. The otherwise random nature of this viewing, and the issues it focuses on, suggest that it is not improbable that Dow may well have been instrumental in instructing this viewing in an effort to sanitise the area abutting his new garden.

The issues over the parish lands continue to rumble on. In December 1591 another complaint made by the ‘tenants’ of Three Deaths Alley (CC) referred to ‘certain things in same to be reformed and amended being defective’. No names of the ‘tenant’ plaintiffs are recorded, although the fact that thirteen of the tenants (effectively all the tenants bar Robert Dow) were sanctioned in the subsequent report again raises questions as to the origin of these complaints.³¹ The report recorded that most of the dwellings were in a ‘ruinous state . . . which were needful to be new built and repaired or otherways the parish should not be able by the rents of same to relieve poor.’ Whether there is an element of rhetoric in this statement

regarding the 'ruinous' state of the properties we will never know (it is notable that no specific deficiencies regarding the properties were mentioned) however it is interesting that the parish has apparently identified another related concern regarding their lands, the possible diminution of rental returns due to decaying housing stock. The parish appeared to adopt a hardline stance towards the tenants after this viewing.

The 1588 viewings noted that one of the tenants William Brooke, was '*bownd by His Leace*' to undertake the necessary repairs, and that another tenant should take a '*leace of his newe Howse . . . and So to be bownd to make it tennantable*' and it seems that by 1591 the parish believed that getting tenants on leases, agreements that were after all legally binding, was one way of solving the dual issue of exerting control over the built environment of Cock Court whilst avoiding costly repairs and rebuilding at parish expense. To this end the viewing of 1591 orders that the offending tenants take leases for their dwellings, and the parish was prepared to take more proactive and radical action to ensure that their properties were leased. In April 1592 a small group consisting of the Alderman's deputy, one of the renters, and several other vestrymen apparently visited the tenements in the court in order to 'confer with the tenants of the parish lands but because the divers of the said tenants were not at home there was nothing done.' So in May 1592 a vestry was held to 'confer with the tenants and to assign them to take leases of same tenements and repair same or else to give them warning to avoid the said tenements by a certain day.'³² The tenants were being forced to take rebuilding leases or they would basically be evicted in order that 'the parishe might build the same and so make the best there for the benifit of the poore.' (Casey in this vestry)³³

There is a real sense here that the parish, perhaps triggered by Robert Dows concerns over his neighbourhood, is determined to exercise strict control over the physical state of the parish lands, to the extent that they were seemingly prepared to evict the current tenants if they refused to become lessees, and employ parish funds in rebuilding. In particular the provision of privies seems to be a central issue over the duration of this dispute.

A few weeks later in May 1592 eight of the tenants were offered leases for their properties, offers which for several of them essentially amounted to ultimatums. Widow (Isabell?) Tomson and her son Robert were to have a lease for a house and garden for 21 years at £4 rent, with an apparent covenant that a vault would be located under the property that would serve the privies of the tenements of widow Simcott and William Smith. Thomas Pilkington was offered a lease of 21 years at 40s rent for his house, with the covenant that he 'build and to kepe the same sufficiently repayred for the said tyme'. If he refused this offer 'he is to take Twentie nobles of the p'rishe to go his way from the same.' Thomas Garland was to have a 21 year lease as 20s pa, and ordered to 'kepe the house sufficiently repaired.' Reynold Holloway was to receive a 21 year lease at £4pa with a £10 fine with the covenants that he build a privy, and enlarge his cellar. If he refused he was to vacate the property within a year. Nicholas Barefoote, widow Leake and widow Heathcott were told that 'in consideration that the parish must new build their houses' that if they did not accept the parishes rental terms (which were not mentioned) then the parish would give them 5 marks each 'so that they depart from the said houses.' Robert Tomkins was offered a 21 year lease for his garden and two tenements and was to 'make them tenantable and to repair them and have them sufficiently repaired at the end of his years and to make several houses of office'. Widow Simcotts and William Smith were simply offered 5 marks and £5 respectively to 'depart' their houses. Finally Robert Dow was offered the lease for the gate to the parish lands, for 6s 8d rental pa.³⁴ The parish clerk was each of the tenants copies of the orders so that they could 'consider' the orders and let the vestry know whether they intended to accept the leases or not.³⁵ However the parishes terms were far from enticing to many tenants, and engendered controversy within the vestry itself.

The PCMs record that on 26th July at a vestry meeting to hear the answers of several tenants to the orders issued in the two May vestries, and the response was far from favourable, and from this point on the issue of the court and its tenants evolves into a fractious dispute between tenants and parish. One tenant John Balderstone was to seek ‘counsel’ and give his response in writing within eight days, as did Thomas Garland. Robert Sharp was more accommodating and agreed to take a lease. A final tenant Thomas Pilkington ‘did desire . . . that the parish would make his house tenantable’ and once this was done he would then give as much ‘as any honest godly man would give’. Interestingly at the same meeting one of the vestrymen, Richard Casie (Casy) was suspended due to his behaviour towards and comments about other vestrymen, seemingly in relation to this whole episode of the cock court lands. The PCMs record that Casie ‘disclosed such matters’ that were discussed by the vestry since the meeting of 17th May 1592, and that he also ‘declared and published that he was not content . . . but very disliked of such matters and things as was then aswell done by himself as by all the rest.’ Presumably Casie was publically decrying the vestry in its approach to the issue of the parish lands, and uncomfortable with efforts to effectively force the tenants onto leases. Casie himself had been on the relevant vestries that had formulated this policy. Furthermore, Casie had ‘given out words in discredit of the said vestry and disgrace of certain young men being vestrymen that they go about to undo and cross certain things and orders before by their Elders there set down.’ Clearly Casie was railing against what he saw was some sort of lack of deference within the vestry. As punishment he was to be suspended ‘until he shall purge himself.’³⁶

The tenants then began to dig in their heels. In August Holloway informed the parish that he was unable to take a lease, and Balderstone ‘would give but five marks a year’ for his two tenements. Others tried to extract concessions from the parish, or pleaded for leniency and more favourable terms due to penury. On the one hand these residents seem to be openly defying the vestry, yet on the other appealing to their sense of paternal duty. William Smith said that he ‘was not willing to depart from his house’ and asked that the parish ensure his house was ‘tenantable’ by constructing a privy, and ‘craved’ that he might have the property ‘at a reasonable rent with the favour of the parish.’ Similarly Henry Wiles who was representing his sick mother-in-law widow Leake promised that if the parish repaired her property he would see to its continued maintenance as long as she dwelt there for the same rent as she currently paid, namely 20s pa. Widows Simcott and Heathcot were ‘not willing’ to leave their respective houses, with the latter appealing for a lifetime tenancy. They both desired that the parish would construct privies for them, and again ‘craved favour’ with the parish that they may have a ‘reasonable rent.’ Finally, Nicholas Barefoote and his wife stated that they were ‘old and past labour and therefore lothe to go from their house’. The vestry softened its stance in this instance, and agreed to construct a privy whilst allowing the Barefootes to rent the property for the duration of their lives at a reasonable rent.³⁷ Thomas Pilkington also later agreed to take a lease, however few disputes were resolved with such equanimity. Widow Holloway presumably reject the offer of a lease and was ordered to leave her property within six months, and the combative John Balderstone continued to resist the vestry, defiantly stating ‘that he would nether take any such lease of them nor pay any such rent but willed them to sue them for the said houses and do what they will, for he would agree to no such thing.’³⁸

It appears that the parish did indeed take legal action against intransigent parishioners as in late 1595 the vestry ordered that there was to be a ‘trial of the tenements in Houndsditch . . . which some say they (the tenants) hold by lease’ but that they have ‘no such thing’ and ‘will not be confirmable’ to the vestries former orders and become lessees. To facilitate this legal action the vestry assigned the parish lands, described as fourteen tenements and a garden and not including Dow’s property, to John Ansell the churchwarden, and William

Thomas.³⁹ Armed with the will of Martyn, which had been temporarily extracted from the red chest in the church, Ancell and Thomas alongside deputy Nicholas Reynolds, Dow, Toby Wood, the apparently rehabilitated Richard Casey and several other ‘ancient parishioners’ were ordered to attend the house of Mr Judge Owen on Saturday 9th April 1597, as were the offending tenants of Cock Court, in order that Owen and Dr Seazar the Master of the Requests could hear the case against the tenants. Once both sides of the case had been heard Owen and Seazar effectively issued the parties an ultimatum. Four vestrymen, Wood, Reynolds, Casey and Henry Conway were to meet with the tenants to resolve the dispute once and for all, or Owen and Seazar ‘would end it themselves.’ The ultimatum clearly worked as the PCMs record that at a meeting of the various parties at Wood’s house on the following Monday ‘matters were . . . for the most part concluded upon and ended.’⁴⁰

Frustratingly the PCMs offer no further direct information as to what was indeed agreed, however we can deduce from subsequent documentation that agreement was reached, but it was an agreement that seemed to require substantial concessions from the parish. Leases were granted to six of the tenants: Thomas Pilkington, George Mason, John Somner, William Smith, Garland (presumably Elizabeth), and Robert Sharpe, this despite the first attempt at sealing the leases being rejected a week earlier as they had been ‘drawn contrary to the liking of the parishioners.’⁴¹ The dispute however continues to rumble on. In 1599 the PCMs record that the vestry viewed the leases made to the tenants in order to ‘give answer to Mr Alderman Hallyday’ the alderman of the ward

concerning a supplication made by the parish Tenants to the Lord Maior & the benche to have a common privie contrarie to their Leases at which vestrie it was thought good that answer shold be made to the alderman that if the Tenantes did suppose that the pishe weare by their Leases Inioyned to make them a comon privie & that they shold comence there action agaynst the pishe and the pishe wold answer them by Lawe

In other words the lessees apparently believed that their leases entitled them to a common privy built by the parish. They had petitioned the Lord Mayor to that effect, but the parish was willing to resist them in court. Quite how this impasse was resolved is not clear but a number of vestrymen, along with the bricklayers Thomas Walters and Thomas Butler, viewed the properties in TDA in October 1599. The viewing party included Richard Casey, but interestingly not Robert Dow. The subsequent report made a number of demands on the residents of TDA primarily regarding the titling of the properties, and it orders a number of the tenants to construct privies. It is also interesting that it censures the behaviours of some residents. Again this document seems to be an attempt at regulating the environment in general, rather than simply the physical state of the properties. The tiling and ground plate of Elizabeth Garland’s shed was found to be ‘greatly decayed’, and it was ‘thought good’ that Garland and her tenant John Linkes should built themselves a privy, and Garland did indeed ‘promise to make a house of office in her garden.’ The house of John Somners had been ‘lately repaired’ and the vestry notes agreeably that ‘he hath made therein a privy.’ The ‘valie’ at widow Barefootes house was ordered to be raised, and a widow Michell ‘is to be talked with for her disquietness.’ Widow Tomkins was ordered to repair the garden fence, repair the plate on the west side of her kitchen, and to construct a privy in the ‘void place before her house’ which was let to a Mr Lee and occupied by a Daniel Braband. Robert Tonson was required to amend the tiles and plate (particularly that in the kitchen) on his house which was occupied by Richard Lymar. William Smyth was told to put a new plate in his hall, and ensure that his house was ‘wholly new tiled and lathed.’ The house of Edward Hill (previously in the hands of Thomas Pilkington) was to have the plate in the kitchen

mended, the ceiling ‘on the upper floor’ of the kitchen was to be repaired, as was the party roof in the upper loft. John Balderstone was to repair the guttering that ran from his shop to his yard, as it was currently ‘hurtful to Mr Abjohns house.’ Finally, Abjohn had the longest list of repairs to undertake. His house, which was in the occupation of John Chester, had a shed in the yard that was ‘utterly decayed’. This was to be taken down and amended. The ceiling in his shop and the plate by the sink was to be repaired, as was the house of office. The wooden guttering between his house and Balderstone’s was to be repaired, as was the floor in his fore chamber, and a piece of plate was to be installed in the ‘wash place in the kitchen.’⁴²

The frustrating absence of the PCM’s between 1600 and 1614 means that we have no further information on how this dispute was resolved, and the lack of information on the dwellings themselves means that we are similarly unable to suggest whether the inhabitants did indeed install the privies that were proving so contentious.

The alley, now known as Cock Court, continued to make appearance in the parochial records throughout the rest of the 17th century. Several of these appearances related to payments made by the parish for repairs or viewing of the lands.⁴³ However, it is clear that in the 1630 rebuilding within the court was taking place. The vestry minutes of 1635 record that the vestry ‘desired to move Sir Jo Fennors executors to have our proportion, to build Cock Court.’ Presumably the ‘proportion’ refers to a cash sum from a bequest by Fennors.⁴⁴ By June 1636 the vestry minutes note that there would be no rents from the dwellings in Cock Court thanks to the ‘new building of them.’⁴⁵ The rebuilding apparently took some time, as it was not until 1640 that a vestry meeting was sent to view the lands ‘to see what charge the new building will be.’⁴⁶

¹ GL Ms 9965/1 deed no.1. HR 125(48) 22 Jan 1397

² GL Ms 9965/1 deed no.3 and deed no.4 1st March 1399

³ GL Ms 9965/1 Deed no.5 1st March 1399. Deed no.6, 7 & *. 18th Sept 1418.

⁴ HR 183 (39) 23rd July 1455.

⁵ GL Ms 9965/1 deed 10 & 11

⁶ GL Ms 9965/1 deed 13 23rd July 1505

⁷ GL Ms 9965/1 deed 12 16th May 1507. HR 236 (5) 25th Oct 1512. GL Ms 9965/1 deed 14 3rd July 1511

⁸ GL Ms 9965 Box.1 no.22 28th April 1516

⁹ GL Ms 9965/1 deed 15

¹⁰ GL Ms 9965/1 deed 39

¹¹ GL Ms 9965 box.1 no.24 STB parish deeds 7th Dec 1546

¹² Whether ‘freely’ indicates free from rent, of merely unhindered occupation is unclear.

¹³ GL ms 3485 no.25 STB par deeds.

¹⁴ 9235/1 pt.2 RW acc’s STB receipts of rents

¹⁵ GL Ms 3485 no.27. 20th Sept 1564

¹⁶ GL Ms 3486 box.1 no.1 18th July 1562. GL Ms 9965 box.1 no.41 18th July 1562. GL Ms 9235/1 pt.2 renter wardens accounts payments 1562-4

¹⁷ LG Ms 9235/1 pt 2, RW accs 1562. GL Ms 9965 Box.1 no.29 1st June 1564. GL Ms 9965/1 deed 26

¹⁸ GL Ms 3485 no.27

¹⁹ GL Ms 9965/1 deed 31 24th Sept 1564. GL Ms 3485 no.27 20th Sept 1564

²⁰ GL Ms 3485 no.44, 2nd June 1570. GL Ms 9965 box.1 no.18 2nd June 1570

²¹ GL Ms 9235/1 pt RW accs 25th April 1562

²² GL MS 3485 (no 32) 8 Aug 1571 & GL MS 9965 box1 no.32 & deed 33.

²³ Cal Pat R Eliz vol.5 pp.273-6 10th Aug 1571

²⁴ GL Ms 3486/1 deed no.2 29th Dec 1571. GL Ms 19945. GL Ms 2630 trust money bk ff.157. GL Ms 9235/1 pt2 RW accs

²⁵ GL Ms 9965 box.1 no.36 & 37 24th June 1585

²⁶ GL Ms 9965 box.2 30th March 1609.

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- ²⁷ GL Ms 9965 box 2 no.45, 20th March 1644. GL Ms 9965/2 deed 38A.
²⁸ GL Ms 9967 2nd & 3rd Oct 1663. GL Ms 9965 box 2 30th July 1677.
²⁹ GL Ms 9235/1 pt.1 CW & RW accs 1558-1590
³⁰ GL Ms 9234/2 PCM 15th and 17th Dec 1588.
³¹ GL Ms 9234/2 PCM f.4,8&9, 12th, 15th & 17th Dec 1591
³² GL Ms 9234/2 PCM f.74 4th May 1592
³³ GL Ms 9234/2 PCM 17th Dec 591.
³⁴ GL Ms 9234/2 PCM 17th May 1592 f.82-3
³⁵ GL Ms 9234/2 PCM 6th July 1592 f.103
³⁶ GL Ms 9234/2 PCM 26th July f.110-111
³⁷ GL Ms 9234/2 PCM 1st Aug 1592 f.113-4
³⁸ GL Ms 9234/4 PCM 19th Dec f.97-8
³⁹ GL Ms 9234/5 PCM 4th Nov 1595 f.138. GL Ms 9965 box.1 25th March 1596
⁴⁰ GL Ms 9234/6 PCM 25th March 1597 f.227. 9th April 1597 f.234
⁴¹ GL Ms 9234/6 PCM f.260 & 265 7th and 17th June 1597.
⁴² GL Ms 9234/5 PCM 16th Oct 1599 f.163 and 18th Oct 1599 f.165.
⁴³ GLMs 9236 vestry mins STB 5th July 1619 f.63. GLMs CW accs 1626-7
⁴⁴ GLMS 92236 vestry mins 7th March 1635 f.96.
⁴⁵ GLMs 9236 Vest mins 8 June 1636 f.97.
⁴⁶ GLMs 9236 vest mins 14th June 1640 f.103.

ST. BOTOLPH ALDGATE

WOOLSACK ALLEY, ALDGATE HIGH STREET, NORTH SIDE

This property occupied a plot behind the street front on the north side of the Aldgate High Street. The plot corresponds to the area covered by numbers 36 and 37 on the Portsoken ward map of 1858. It can be identified on the Ogilby and Morgan map of 1676 (g.17) by which time it was known as Anchor and Hart court.



This existence of the tranche of land that eventually contained the alley can possibly be traced back to 1278-9 when a widow Margery Cele ‘remised, granted and quitclaimed’ to a fishmonger Geoffrey Horn ‘all right and claim’ in one messuage with appurtenance on the site.¹ The property continues to get described as a ‘tenement with garden’ in the various transactions throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. John Romenay held the title until his death in 1349, and by 1397 it is being described as ‘a tenement called le Wollesakonthehop (sic).’² It appears that Alex Sprott a vinter bequeathed the ‘Wollesakk’ to the prior of Holy Trinity Aldgate, the rector of St Botolph’s Aldgate, and the churchwardens and parishioners of St Botolph’s, in a probate will of 1438. A lease indenture of 1486 between the aforementioned authorities and William Benyington records the property as ‘the tenement brewhouse called the wolsak.’³ After the dissolution the property was amongst a number granted by the crown for 31 years to Henry Codenham a gentleman, and William Pendred a founder. However by this point the plot essentially comprised of two elements. The first was the ‘tenement and messuage called the wolsacke and all shops cellars, solar, garden and appurtenances situated in Aldgate street’, also described as ‘one great messuage . . . and garden adjoining’ that had been in the tenure of Thomas Newman, and was currently occupied by William Grene. This was to cost Codenham and Pendred £4pa. The second element was ‘fourteen chambers and one tenement and buildings and gardens’ and it is this gathering of small dwellings that probably constituted the actual Woolsack Alley. The tenement was in the occupation of Edmund Bakster for 6s 8d pa, and the chambers were occupied by the following individuals: John Holland, Robert Richardson, Agnes Holden widow, Thomas Hardinge, Richard Welshe, John Brickman, Margaret Pounce, John Williamson, John Hopkyn, Agnes Goodwyn widow, Alice Peche, John Holmes, Humphrey Chadde, and John Barnard. Each paid only 3s 4d or 4s for their rental, giving a combined income for the dwellings of just £6 15s 4d pa, yet even so in 1548-9 they were a combined 66s in rental arrears, suggesting that these were individuals who struggled to make ends meet.⁴ When, how and why these properties had been constructed is not at all clear. It is possible that some of the garden belonging to the original Woolsack had been sectioned off to construct these dwellings, but it is equally plausible that the land they stood on had simply been packaged together with the Woolsack stood to create a single plot. The existence of the

Woolsack itself becomes something of a mystery after this point. A dispute in 1550 between William Grene and James Adlington (Alyngton) ‘concerning a variance in parish of St Botolph Aldgate’ recorded that Grene had ‘taken down a house in his own backside’ which lay to the east of Alingtons dwelling and stable.⁵ Whether this refers to the Woolsack is open to conjecture.

Similarly it is difficult to offer with any certainty information on the above mentioned inhabitants of the Woolsack and the alley. A farmer by the name of William Grene is recorded in the Church Wardens accounts as a church warden and a benefactor to the parish. He appears to have died in 1554 and was lauded in the accounts for his ‘good will and zeale that he hath borne ever unto the said Churche’ and for ‘at his proper costes and Chardges’ restoring ‘the fore parte or Fronte of the highe Awter and the upper parte of the sepulker . . . and reedyfienge the said churche.’⁶ It is possible that this is the same Grene as was resident in the Woolsack. In terms of the alley dwellers only Chad, can be identified with any certainty, when his name is mentioned in relation to the burial of his wife Margaret in 1579.⁷ A John Holland and a John Barnard are mentioned in the church wardens accounts in the 1550s and 60s but there is no evidence to link them to the men that lived in the Woolsack Alley.

By the time of an indenture signed in August 1574 only the alley itself is being referred to, but there is evidence for the continued existence of the Woolsack. The indenture was for the bargain and sale of the fourteen small chambers and single small tenement by William Barlie a merchant tailor and his wife Dorathie to William Newton a saddler for the sum of £50. Barlie was the nephew of William Grene (recorded as a merchant taylor) had been granted the freehold in the will of his uncle in September 1564. According to a recognisance regarding the sale, dated 14th June 1575, and witnessed by the Recorder and Alderman William Kympton, the tenants or occupiers of the fifteen dwellings were as follows: John Davys, Hugh Evans, Robert Finche, Roger Kirkham, Robert Pendleton, Margaret Humphry widow, Johane Pennington widow, Johane Richardeson widow, Elizabeth Powell widow, Elizabeth Moodie widow, Katherine Hopkins widow, Alice Holmes widow, John Marshall, John Ballarde and Thomas Hopkins.⁸ The indenture contains only one really non standard covenant, that Barlie would allow Newton to have ‘free passage with all watercourses . . . into the backside of that capital messuage . . . being also part of inheritance of Barlie commonly known by the name of the Woolsack.’⁹ Sadly as with the inhabitants in the 1540s no further information on the inhabitants is forthcoming from the documentation for this period.

The Woolsack, the alley, and their inhabitants 1580s-1610s.

The existence of the ephemeral Woolsack becomes increasingly difficult to deduce from the historical record, yet the documentary material on alley itself and its occupants becomes increasingly dense thanks to the existence of the PCMs from 1583 onwards. It looks likely that at least part of the Woolsack was operating as some kind of inn or coach-house by the late 1580s. It also seems that William Newton continued to live at the site of the Woolsack in a property known as the Blew Bore, although no mention of a property by this name is made until his will of 1594 and Thomas Gillpin’s apparent occupation of the property in the mid 1590s (see below).¹⁰ Perhaps the Blue Bore was a separate property Newton had carved out from the original Woolsack, although without further information this is speculation.

In a number of instances the PCMs record that individuals lived near ‘the sign of the woolsack in the high street’. The sign was probably related to the large dwelling house rather than the alley, but it also indicates how by this time the “Woolsack” had become a recognised

local landmark and taken on a stable identity.¹¹ It is probable that the resident of the Woolsack by 1584 was a carter called John Jones. His servant Christopher Reede was buried on 25th May 1584, and his wife Jone was buried a few weeks later on 22nd June. Another carter Davye (David) Jones was recorded as living at the sign of the Woolsack in 1588. His daughter Elizabeth was christened in August of that year.¹² It seems that David Jones was letting out the yard of the Woolsack to various carmen/carters for dwelling space. His servant, another carter by the name of John Potter was living in the yard in 1588 when his daughter Ann was christened on 13th April 1589.¹³ Similarly, in 1591 Ellinor Wright, the daughter of Richard Wright a carman was buried (after being christened just a few months earlier¹⁴) and William Sawyer the son of John Sawyer a wheelwright was christened on 20th August 1592. Both the Wrights and the Sawyers were noted as ‘dwelling in David Jones his yard being at the sign of the woolsack’.¹⁵ The PCMs record that Jones was involved in an unfortunate incident in 1590. The body of Margaret Pemerton the ¼ year old daughter of an unnamed mother and a waterman called Nicholas Pemerton was left by her mother ‘before the door’ of Jones. The mother had been ‘going up and down the street gooding’ (begging) before the child had died in her arms and she had deposited the body of the child at Jones’ door. Margaret was buried on the 7th October ‘being no parishioners child’.¹⁶

Interestingly, the yard of the Woolsack is referred to ‘David Jones’ rents’ in one instance, when the PCMs record the burial of Mary Sawyer, the wife of a Wheelright John Sawyer in September 1593.¹⁷ The use of the term ‘rents’ is interesting given the connotations of the word in the context of early modern accommodation. Sawyer’s son William was buried on 24th November 1593 having died of the plague aged a year and half. However the entry also records that William was nursed at the house of a Woolsack alley resident widow Wingfield, referring to Ellin Wingfield (see below)¹⁸

It seem that by the mid 1590s the property was in the hands of a Thomas Gillpin. In 1595 the PCMs record that his son Richard was christened, and that his one year old daughter Margaret was buried. But they also variously noted that Thomas was an innholder or a butcher but ‘by trade a carter’ dwelling at the sign of the woolsack in the high street.¹⁹ Another individual William Pulleyn (a stationer, but by trade a porter) was recorded as ‘dwelling in Thomas Gillpins yard . . . at the sign of the woolsack’ when his daughter Jeane was christened in September 1595, when she died a few month later, and when his wife Katherine was buried in January 1595-6. This suggests that Gillpin was now the occupier of the woolsack.²⁰

It also appears that the Woolsack may have resorted to the name of the Blue Bore in the mid 1590s. When Gillpin’s unnamed stillborn daughter was buried in 1596 the PCMs record that Gillpin was ‘keeping an Inn and dwelling at the sign of the Blue Bore in the high street’. The yard continued to be used for dwellings for fellow carters, with the likes of Henry Matthew noted as dwelling there.²¹ It also appears that Gillpin was excommunicated, and later readmitted to the congregation.²² Perhaps after the death of William Newton in 1594 Gillpin took on his property the Blue Bore and adopted the name for the entire Woolsack complex. It is impossible to offer any concrete evidence for this suggestion. It is also possible that the Bore, or at least part of it, was occupied by a William Hall by 1599.²³

A number of the residents of the alley (also being referred to as ‘Mr Newton’s rents’²⁴) in this late 1580s period were recorded either in the inhabitant lists of 1575 or the later list of 1599 (see below).

- William Bowers the son of the taylor John Boweres was christened on 16th January 1588. William was buried on 30th October 1592 aged 4 having ‘died of a rupture’.²⁵
- The silkweaver John Dutton’s daughter Elizabeth was also christened in July 1589 with another daughter Bridgett christened on 7th November 1591. Bridgett died from the plague a

year later in October 1592, and a similar plague induced fate befell her sister Elizabeth in November 1593. Dutton's servant Richard Walter died of the plague aged 13 in October 1592 as did another servant the 31 year old Thomas Allin in September 1595.²⁶ Another daughter was stillborn in 1595.²⁷ His son Richard was christened on 9th July 1597 and buried the next day.²⁸ Finally, daughter Mary Dutton was christened on 19th April 1599.²⁹

- Hugh Fraunce, the son of the silkweaver Hugh Fraunce was christened on 15th October 1590 and buried a week later. Another of his sons Peter was christened on the 12th September 1591 and buried on 23rd September, and a third son John was christened on 24th June 1599.³⁰ Fraunces also lost a daughter, Barbara, who was ½ a year old when she died in November 1593. Interestingly she was 'nursed at the house of John Barnes a cobbler dwelling in Richard Carters rents in houndsditch where she died.' She was buried on 18th November.³¹ A fifth son Lewis was christened on 26th May 1594.³² A second daughter, Ann, was christened on 8th June 1595.³³ An additional member of the household, servant James Oliver, was buried on 21st March 1599.³⁴

- William Pond a cooper lost his wife Agnis in 1589. She was a poor pensioner aged 40(?) and was buried on 17th August 1589.³⁵

John Bowers, John Dutton, Hugh Francis, and William Pond were still residing in the alley in 1599. Similarly, Marie Hopkins, wife of labourer Thomas Hopkins was buried in 8th February 1588.³⁶ His daughter Jeane was christened on 10th October 1595.³⁷ Roger Kerchamm a poor pensioner was buried on 19th February 1583 probably aged 74.³⁸ The labourer John Ballard was buried in 28th February 1588 aged 55.³⁹ The widow Alice Holmes another poor pensioner was buried on 18th April 1589.⁴⁰ Hopkins, Kirkhamm, Ballard, and Holmes were resident in the alley in 1575.

Other residents of the alley were given as:

- Jone Greeneseed, an 'owld widowe wyfe' of the recently deceased William Greeneseed. Jone was a poor pensioner supported by the parish and buried on 7th March 1588.
- John Bull a bachelor, householder and silkweaver who was buried on 10th October 1589.⁴¹
- John Lingham the servant to Thomas Winkfield a glover dwelling in the alley was buried on 28th March 1592 aged 21.⁴²
- Katherine Pearson, the daughter of another alley resident Thomas Pearson a gunmaker, was christened on 11th July 1592. It appears that Pearson or more likely his wife was engaged in nursing. A PCM entry in 1593 notes that a ¼ year old child by the name of Edward and son of a butcher died at the house of Pearson whilst being nursed there.⁴³ Thomas himself was buried in July 1594 having died of the plague aged 42, and his daughter Katherine died of the flux aged 6, and was buried on 11th August 1598.⁴⁴
- Grace Smith the daughter of Richard Smith a painter stainer was buried on 30th October 1592 aged 6.⁴⁵ Richard himself was buried on 14th August 1597, having died aged 55 of the 'puples'. His wife Ellin was to die 'of the black' aged 50 a week later.⁴⁶
- Katherine Eveson wife of John Eveson a waterbearer was buried on 7th May 1594 aged 58.⁴⁷
- Francis Gittins son to the labourer Richard Gittins (and resident in 1599 list) was christened on the 1st September 1594. A second son Thomas was christened on 23rd January 1596.⁴⁸ Francis died four years later and was buried on 16th March 1598, whilst a daughter Dorothy was christened on the 16th September 1599.⁴⁹ His wife Joane, one of the poor pensioners of the parish, was buried on 11th June 1598.⁵⁰
- Other residents of the alley had non-family members dwelling with them. In January 1594 Ellin Miller a 30 year old servant dwelling in the alley at the house of Thomas Boad a stringer was buried, and later that year the PCMs record that Joan Hamon a 70 year old

widow 'who did lye at the howse of John Donn a labouring man dwelling in woolsack alley' was buried.⁵¹ Both Boad and Donn were noted in the 1599 residents list.

- Samuel Jones the $\frac{3}{4}$ year old son to Roger Jones a taylor was buried on the 2nd May 1595.⁵²
- William Chauncelor son to Robert Chauncelor a clothworker but 'at this time being a waterbearer' was christened on 13th July 1595.⁵³
- Julian Loye a widow and pensioner of the parish was buried 16th November 1595. She 'had been a long time bedridden'.⁵⁴
- John Yewin a sadler whose son Francis was christened on 23rd January 1596.⁵⁵
- Joane Rooke the $\frac{1}{4}$ year old daughter of Thomas Rooke a sawyer we buried on 24th February 1596. She perished 'by mischance being laid on a cushion by the fire whilst the mother did go for milk and crawled into the fire whereby she was so burnt by the fire' she died.⁵⁶
- Margaret Reynolds wife to Matthew Reynolds a pavier, was buried on 29th March 1597 aged 25.⁵⁷
- Mary Willimott daughter to the pavier Thomas Willimott was christened on 29th March 1597. The PCMs later note that the child of an ostler dwelling in Goodmans Yard was nursed and died at Willimots house.⁵⁸
- Thomas Linsie was a 'Hacknie man' dwelling at the alley whose daughter Sara was christened on 6th November 1597.⁵⁹
- John Styles was a pavyor dwelling in the alley and whose daughter Alice was christened on 19th May 1598 and buried a week later.⁶⁰
- Ellin Winckfield's (Wingfield) servant Thomas How was buried on 19th August 1598. Wingfield was a widow and glover by trade.⁶¹
- Agnis and Peter Graunger. Peter was a cook and Agnis was 'one of the poore pentioners of this parish'. She died and was buried on 6th September 1598. He died in October 1598 aged 60.⁶²
- Thomas Mearston a merchant taylor and the Beadle of the ward dwelt in the alley when his daughter Elizabeth was christened on 7th September 1592 and when his son Thomas was christened in May 1596 and buried on the 1st October 1598. Another daughter Mary was christened on 5th April 1600.⁶³
- Mary Fletcher the daughter of Thomas Fletcher another Woolsack alley silkweaver was christened on 7th October 1598.⁶⁴

An indenture from 1599 (see below) gives the following as residents of the alley: Thomas Fletcher, Nicholas Richardson, Richard Gittins, John Bowers, Peter Toway, widow Ellen Wingfield, Hugh Frauncis, Robert Huntley, Robert Granngge, Thomas Boade, William Ponde, John Styles, John Dune, widow Elizabeth Mountfield, John Dutton, widow Johan Provis, widow Agnes Masters.

- Toway, a labourer died aged 50 of 'a sore leg' and was buried 11th May 1600.⁶⁵

Demise of the freehold to the parish, rebuilding and renaming 1594-1672

Upon the death of Newton in 1594 his will delivers the freehold to his widow Margaret.⁶⁶ The PCMs record Newton as 'an old householder keeping an inn and dwelling at sign of Blue Bore in the High streete, was buried in the south Churchyard neare the inner

vestrie window the 28th day of November 1594 aged 76.⁶⁷ Just prior to his death Newton entered into a bond which delivered the freehold of the alley upon the death of Margaret to the parish in the form of Henry Conwaye a stationer, George Clarke a vinter, John Ansell a carpenter, and Arthur Norton a musician. The parish was to use the 'clear rents and profits' generated by Woolsack alley to distribute yearly amongst the 'poor people . . . and most needful' of the parish, suggesting that the residents of Woolsack alley were not thought of as part of this particular demographic.⁶⁸

However it appears that the bond was 'not good in law for that said poor was not body natural, politique or corporate' and so the reversion of the freehold descended to John Newton, a tailor from Burntwood in Essex, and William's nephew. A rather long and costly legal battle⁶⁹ between Newton and the parish over the freehold ensued, orchestrated on the parishes side primarily by Toby Wood it seemed, whose advice and guidance was sought by the vestry on a number of occasions. The parish took out a writ from chancery for Newton to prove the will at the same court, and after some further quarrelling by November 1595 Newton signalled he was willing to end his suit, and the parish was clearly happy to oblige. Robert Dow, Mr Norton and Mr Casey were sent to visit him to 'pacify him with a small sum' so that 'they should end the same without further suit.'⁷⁰ £11 was paid to Newton to allow the parish to continue to utilise the rents from the lands, and in May 1599, after the death of Margaret, Robert Dow and Nicholas Reynolds, a goldsmith purchased the freehold from Newton for an unspecified sum. A month later they granted the same to the parish via an indenture that named the individuals of the vestry as feoffees.⁷¹

The indenture records the residents of the alley (see above) and also notes that the alley now consisted of seventeen dwellings, up from fourteen in 1574. The vestry was indentured to ensure that once repairs and maintenance to the properties had been provided for the residue of the rental was to be bestowed on 'honest, godly, poor parishioners' of the parish. To avoid any future confusion or difficulties over this deed the indenture stated that once there were only six feoffees left alive the lease would be granted to the current vestry, again as individual feoffees. In such a way the freehold was to be securely held by the parish. The indenture as contained an unusual covenant, that once per year a man 'learned in law' should 'come into the parish church' where the deeds were to be stored, and 'peruse and consider' the documents and confer with the vestrymen to ensure that all legal requirements were being satisfactorily observed.⁷² All documentation was to be safely stored in the notorious 'red chest' in the vestry.⁷³

By the mid 1600s it appears that the physical state of the alley becomes a cause for some concern. In May 1604 the vestry ordered a committee of five to view and survey the plot and its buildings, and present the report to a vestry meeting a few weeks later.⁷⁴ At some point between this meeting and Michaelmas 1606-7 the vestry decided that it would demolish the existing housing located on the plot and replace them with six rebuilt dwellings.

Unfortunately the historical record is silent between May 1604 and January 1607-8 so we cannot know the mechanism through which the inhabitants of the alley were coerced into leaving, however they clearly did so under duress as they proved to be rather intransigent in terms of vacating their premises. The PCMs record that the tenants had been warned to 'avoid' the tenements at last Michaelmas and depart at Christmas, and then again to 'avoid' at Lady Day, however by March 1607-8 they were still in situ. They were called into the vestry and warned 'expressly' to depart in the week after Easter, as that was then the workmen would begin to 'untile the houses and pluck then down to be new build again.'⁷⁵ Six poor petitioners of the parish inhabiting the alley, widow Joane Provies, Elizabeth Carryll described as an old maid, Thomas Boade, widow Elizabeth Mumfield, widow Ann Twoe and William Pond, were to be re housed in parish properties. Provies and Mumfield (Mountfield) had been resident in the alley since at least 1599, and Boad is first recorded as a inhabitant in

1594 (see above). Little regard it seems was given to the rest of the inhabitants of the seventeen dwellings in the alley.⁷⁶ The cost of re housing the pensioners was to be split equally between the upper and lower ends of the parish, and once this was agreed the vestry ordered that work on the project begin by St James' day (25th July) 1609. The work was to be overseen by four men from the upper end of the parish (John Ansell, Christopher Walker, William Allen, William Burnham) and four from the lower end (Augustine Johnson, John Jackson, William Carpenter, George Selbye) these gentlemen were to provide the workmen for the project and that if any controversy should arise a majority decision between the overseers would suffice.

The thoughts of the parish then turned to how the rebuilding was to be paid for, and in this respect the minutes and PCMs give some very interesting information on how such capital projects were funded and the cost incurred⁷⁷ - costs that included 4d for beer supplied to a vestry meeting regarding Woolsack Alley.⁷⁸ In July 1609 an initial payment of £50 each from both the upper and lower parts the parish were sought to begin the work, and by December that year the vestry agreed to collect a further £225 from both districts. The vestry was clearly eager to ensure the work was completed by 24th August 1610 so that they could be re-tenanted. The accounts of the rebuilding are contained in both the PCMs and vestry minutes, and show that out of a total of £243 19s 9d spent on the project. The breakdown of these payments records that the carpenter, Mr (William?) Burnam was paid a total of £114 13s, the Bricklayer Christopher Walker £68 17s and the plasterer John Shambrooke £29 10s indicating that these were probably fairly sturdy wooden and brick constructions. Other bills include £2 to William Blakoe for repairs to the well, £4 3s to the glazier to glaze 'all the new houses', and £13 17s to the plumber, again suggesting that the some housing amenities must have been provided. The accounts note that £243 'laid out in the building' of the houses by the 'upper end of the parish' predominantly comprised of £160 gifted to the parish in 1606 by George Clarke, the parish itself contributed £40, the fines from Deputy Liddon, Mr Carpenter and Mr Blower provided £30, the renter warden Mr Hurtle £3 15s and finally John Waddys contributed £10 from '£20 of wards money in his hands.'⁷⁹ The exact breakdown offers a rare chance to identify some of the building materials used and so is worth replicating in full.

For The Building of Woolsack alley.

A not of all such money as hath beene laied out by Mr Willm Allen about ye new buildinge of ye p[ar]ishe houses in ye olde Woolsack alley from Decemb. 20 1609 vnto Decemb. 28. 1610 the p[ar]ticulers hereafter followe vitz

	li s d
Inprimis pd Mr Burnam carpent[e]r in part for his worke	27.10.00
It. pd to xpofer Walker bricklay[e]r in p[ar]t for his worke	14.15.00
It pd for making od writings for both to Mr Abbott	00.01.03
It pd by him for p[ar]t of a supper when ye agreem[en]t was made concerning ye said worke	00.08.09
It. pd more for p[ar]t of a supper at another time as touchinge the said buisines	00.01.10
It. pd Jon Shambrooke plaisterer in p[ar]t of his agrement for his worke May 30 1610	10.00.00
pd for making writing touching ye said agrement	00.01.00
pd Mr Walker his second paym[en]t May 17	14.15.00
pd more to Mr Walker in full for ye brick wall Est	03.06.08
pd him more for [deletion] emptying ye valt & digging stones	02.10.00
pd Mr Burnam his second paym[en]t June 18 1610.	27.10.00
pd Jon Shambrooke augs. 21 & Sept. 15 his second paym[en]t	10.00.00
pd Mr Burnam august 28 1610 his third payment	27.10.00
pd Mrs Walker septemb. 6. 1610 her third paym[en]t	14.15.00
pd Jon Shambrooke octob. 15 1610 his third payment	09.10.00
pd Mr Burnam octob. 15 in full of his task worke	27.10.00
total	190.04.06
Paied more by Mr Allen for other charges touching the saied new buildings. vitz.	

<oct. 16>	
pd to Georg Howson smith for the half p[ar]t of ye casem[en]ts	00.14.00
<No: 7>	
pd Wm Blaco in full for ye valt & well. for our part is	02.00.00
pd out more in petty charges as apeareth by a note	01.09.10
<Dec. 18>	
pd Mr Burnam more in full of all his worke for out p[ar]t	04.13.06
pd ye glazier in full for ye wards p[ar]t for his worke	04.03.08
pd more in other charges for ye wards p[ar]t as p[er] p[ar]ticulars	03.00.03
pd Mrs Walker in full for her task worke. No: 8.	14.15.00
pd her more for ye wards p[ar]te for 5 chymneys in ye garret[e]s	03.02.06
pd more for ye wall on ye west side. for ye wards p[ar]t	00.10.00
pd her more for inclosing 3 houses for the wards p[ar]t	00.09.00
pd Henry Dyamond for coulouringe the houses. ye wards p[ar]t	02.10.00
pd Jon Shambrooke p[er] vestrie for ye wards part	02.10.00
pd ye Plomer for ye wards p[ar]t in full as p[er] bill	13.17.06
total of this latter	053.15.03
total of the former	190.04.06
total	243.19.09

A note of all such money belonging to the vpper end of the Parish as was in the hands of Mr Allen, wch he layd out about the aforenamed buildinge as followeth

Inprimis he had the some of	040.00.00
It of Mr Geo: Clarks giuen to ye ward.	160.00.00
It of Mr Deputy Lyddon for his fine	010.00.00
It of Mr Carpent[e]r for his fine	010.00.00
It of Mr Blower for his fine	010.00.00
<Mr Waddis had 20li of ye wards in his hands & pd him 10li. of ye s[ai]d money>	
It he receaued of Mr John Waddis	010.00.00
It he receaued of Mr Hurtley rent[e]r ward.	003.15.08
It he receaued of ye lower end of ye p[ar]ish for posts for ye pales taken out of ye Churchyard	000.04.01
total	243.19.09

As a result of this rebuilding a site that had comprised of seventeen dwellings, with the majority of the inhabitants non pensioners, was now just 'six fair tenements', all in the occupation of the worthy pensioners of the parish.⁸⁰

In February 1614 only five of the fourteen original feoffees from the deed of 1599 were still alive so in order to ensure the freehold remained firmly in possession of the parish an indenture was signed to grant the freehold to a new set of parishioners.⁸¹ A few months later in June 1614, and presumably related to this conveyance of the freehold from one generation to the next, a sermon 'of trinity sun' was given for remembrance of William Newton.⁸² The parish continued to adhere to its obligations under Newton's gift and saw to the regular repairs to the alley and the dwellings, including the plumbing and in particular the paving of the alley and the street in front.⁸³

They also ensured that the freehold continued to be conveyed to a fresh set of feoffees once the existing number had been reduced to six.⁸⁴ In 1663 it appears that rather than simply grant the freehold to a new set of feoffees, the freehold was actually conveyed to the contemporary vestry by its sale (along with all the other parish lands) for a nominal sum of 5s. A day after this sale a the land was siesed to all the vestrymen in a procedure that effectively established the parish lands as a kind of trust. The deed called for two 'honest discreet parishioners' chosen yearly by a vestry of at least six men from each end of the parish to act as renter wardens. By this deed they would be have the power to receive the yearly rent from the parish lands, which they would then use to ensure the upkeep of these lands, pay themselves 13s 4d (between the two). Once these obligations had been satisfied the

wardens were to bestow the remaining cash ‘upon such honest godly poor parishioners’ as the vestry saw fit, and suitable accounts were to be kept detailing their disbursement of these monies. Finally the deed noted the vestry’s power to grant leases, re-asserted the requirement that at least six feoffees be alive, and that every subsequent conveyance ‘is to uses expressed here.’

The name Woolsack seems to fade from the records by the 1630s (the few occasions the name appears seem to relate to the other Woolsack alley/yard in Houndsditch) and by the 1670s is recorded as Anchor and Hart Court. It is also under this moniker that it appears in the 1676 Ogibly and Morgan map.⁸⁵

In the initial period after the rebuilding the parish leased the properties to individuals a number of who did apparently dwell in the houses themselves. However, by the mid 17th century it is clear that properties are being sub-leased by the head lessees. Due to this, and the absence of the PCMs beyond the 1620s, material on the inhabitants is sporadic compared to the earlier periods. Similarly, although we can continue to identify the head lessee from the church warden accounts, a gap of 9 years in the 1680s when no assessment lists survive (between the 6 months tax listings of 1680 and those of 1689) it has been impossible to continue to trace the occupants with any certainty beyond 1680. The apparent use of a renter by the parish from the 1690s onward also makes identifying the exact lessee problematic after this period.

Inhabitants 1610 onwards of unknown dwelling

A John Clark is noted as resident in the alley in January 1616. Similarly, later that year the PCMs note that Edward Palmer and his ‘reputed’ wife ‘lodged in the house of Robert Porter silkweaver’ in the ‘parish rents’ in Woolsack alley on the high street. A Robert Dawson was also recorded in 1616 as having lately dwelt in the alley.⁸⁶ There is no indication as to which of the houses in the alley these men resided in.

Property no.1, 1610-1620

This dwelling is described in the vestry minutes noting the first leases of the properties in December 1610 as ‘the first house in the alley on the west side’, and adjacent to the house of Stephen Everest a grocer. There is no evidence that Everest actually dwelt in the alley itself so either he live in the property in front on the alley that fronted the high street (he was noted as dwelling in the high street⁸⁷) or he lived in an adjacent property to the west. Everest leased the property for a term of 33¾ years at £5pa (no fine). The lease contained the fairly standard covenants, that the rent was to be paid within 28 days of when due, that repairs would be undertaken by the renter, that the parish would view the property twice a year, and that any repairs they ordered need to be undertaken within six months. There is also an interesting and rather unnecessary covenant that states that if the parish wished to sell the property that Everest would essentially have first right of refusal.

The property exhibited a rather unconventional layout. It appears not to have encompassed the ground floor of the building which was ‘now used for the kitchen of the new dwelling house of Everest’. Instead it comprised of three upper stories of increasing size, and presumably therefore increasing overhang into the alley itself. The first chamber was 16ft 5’ north to south, and 15ft 4’ east to west, the one above 17ft 4’ x 15ft 4’, and a garret above that which is noted as 18ft 5’ x 15ft 4’. Outside there was a small yard, 8ft x 14ft, located on the north side of the aforementioned kitchen, which contained a privy. The lease also included ‘two slippes or pieces of ground’, one of 15ft 4’ x 4ft may have lay to the east of the kitchen, the other 14ft x 2ft, may have been located to the north, although the lease is rather unclear in this regard.⁸⁸

From this point on the exact occupants and lessee of the property, and indeed its continued existence is something of a mystery. It is possible that the lease was assigned to a Richard (Robert?) Boyce a clothworker in the early 1610s and that he was subsequently granted an unusually long lease of 99 years for the property in October 1619, at the 'old rent' of £5. The property was described in this lease as 'the back part of the house belonging to the parish and adjoineth to house of John Levitt'.⁸⁹ Levett is recorded in the tithe lists of 1638 and a Robert Smith is listed between him and Daniel Sturton, a confirmed resident of the alley. Smith's assessment value of £10 suggests this is not no.1 Woolsack alley. It is also possible, given the covenant that was inserted into Everest's 1610 lease, and given his role on the vestry, that he at some point purchased the property from the parish in a period for which the documentation fails to survive. He began his parish career as a questman in 1612, and by 1621 was on the vestry. A Stephen Everist was also listed as one of the feoffees for parish lands, which included Woolsack alley, in 1637.⁹⁰ This would perhaps provide the most satisfactory explanation for why the property apparently disappears from parish records, and why by the 1640s the parish interest in Woolsack alley clearly consists of just five dwellings.

Property no.2, 1610-1675

According to the vestry minutes this dwelling, the 'second house on the west side' was leased to John Newman in December 1610 for 21 years at £6 rent, and interestingly this time a fine was paid of £10.⁹¹ However, it appears that the lease signed 10 days later was between the parish and a Peter Blower rather than Newman. The rent was noted as £6pa for the 21 year term, but this time with no fine. The covenants were the same as those contained in the lease of the same data for property no.1. The property was bounded by those of Josua Parson to the north and Steven Everest to the south and comprised of a cellar, a kitchen on the ground floor, two further floors with one chamber each, and finally a garret. Externally there was a yard of 8ft x 14ft to the south of the dwelling containing a privy.⁹² Blower was a vestryman in 1604 and 1613, and was recorded as living in the high street when his son Francis was christened in 1610 and again when his wife Francis was buried in 1613. Whether he was indeed living in Woolsack alley is unclear.⁹³

It is possible that the lease was assigned to a Phillip Benbrigg, and then to a James Atkinson who is noted as the probable rent payer in 1616.⁹⁴ The next tenant that appears in the records is a Robert Wanham, who in 1645-6 was paying £5pa rent.⁹⁵ He had been resident since at least 1638.⁹⁶ The dwelling was viewed by the church wardens and parish 'ancients' in June 1650, presumably so as to establish a rental value for the property in preparation for the new lease which was duly agreed with Wanham in June 1652. Yet the lease agreed at this meeting was for 21 years at £6 pa, with no fine. However, by the time the lease was sealed in May 1653 the terms had altered radically to a 41 year term, £5pa rent and an £8 fine.⁹⁷ Property's no.3 and 5 were also issued with a lease for the same terms a few days later and it is very possible that this change in terms on no.2 was prompted by a desire on the part of the parish to co-ordinate their rental policy. Wanham, who's occupation was noted as weaver, died in 1663 and in 1664 William Jordaine(Jordan) is assigned the lease.⁹⁸ He is resident for both the 1670 and 1674 hearth tax assessments, which record 4 hearths for the property, but the 18month tax assessment for the same year records the property as empty.⁹⁹

In the Church Warden accounts for 1675 John Merry, the tenant of no.4 in the alley, is recorded as the rental payer of this property, along with two others in the alley, numbers 3 and 4.¹⁰⁰ At no point is Merry recorded in any of the assessment list as residing in any of these properties, so he was clearly subleasing them. The occupant according to the 1678 Poll

taxes and 1680 6 month taxes was probably William Ansell and his wife, but beyond this date it is very difficult establish with any degree of accuracy the occupant.¹⁰¹

Merry continues to be noted as the lessee until 1692-3. The existing lease on the property ceased in 1694 and according to the Church Warden's account the property may have been in the hands of a Mr Alder in 1693-4 along with property number 4 (see entry for no.4 for further details)¹⁰²

Property no.3, 1610-1694

The lessee of this property in December 1610 is noted as Josua Parsons a goldsmith. He was buried on 10th September 1614 and was recorded as 'late dwelling in the High Street' although whether this was in Woolsack is unclear,¹⁰³ and it is possible that he was subleasing the property in Woolsack, although we have no evidence one way or another. It is likely that the tenant by 1616 was a widow Fleetwood.¹⁰⁴ In March 1629 the property was leased to Anothonie Wood a weaver for a 21 year term, £5pa rent, and no fine. The usual covenants applied.¹⁰⁵ Wood was apparently a scavenger in 1632 and constable in 1635 and is recorded as the resident in the 1638 tithes.¹⁰⁶ As with no.2, the property was viewed two years before an Anthony Wood was granted a lease again in May 1653 for 21 years at £5 pa, with an £8 fine.¹⁰⁷ The property was described as being situated 'on the backside of Daniel Sturton's house', and the lease included 'the use of pump in common with rest of inhabitants.'¹⁰⁸

The various assessments, which run from the 1638 tithes onwards, and the parish rent rolls continue to record an Anthony Wood in the property until 1672.¹⁰⁹ It appears that Woods paid a fine in 1661 to avoid the post of Churchwarden, claiming that he 'has suffered losses' from the post formally and was 'insufficient for the place.'¹¹⁰ The 1670 Hearth taxes record 4 hearths in the property, the same number as in 1672. However, by 1672 only the widow Wood was resident, her husband having died that year.¹¹¹ Whether we are discussing the same Anthony Wood across the whole period is of course debatable. The next resident is a John Longfoot who is recorded in 1673 and 1674 although according to the 1674 Hearth taxes Longfoot was no longer dwelling there and the 4 hearth house was empty.¹¹²

As with property no.2 and no.4 John Merry was probably granted the lessee in 1675, although no record of the indenture survives, and his is clearly subleasing the property.¹¹³ The sub-lessee in 1678 was James Wailes who lived in the property with his wife and two children, and was still resident in 1680.¹¹⁴ It is possible that this was the same James Wales whose wife Sarah gave birth to a daughter Mary when they lived in Houndsditch in 1673.¹¹⁵

Property no.4, 1610-1680

This dwelling is rather grandiosely described as the 'great house at the upper end of the alley' in the lease list of December 1610. The property was leased to Robert Hartley an innkeeper for 31 years, although with the proviso that if Hartley were to die within that term it would revert back to the parish. A further clause in the lease stipulated that if both Hartley and his wife Margaret perished within 15 years of the beginning of the lease their daughter Alice Barthollmew, wife of Robert Bartholmewe a goldsmith, should possess the house for seven years after. A fine of £20 (a small increase in fines paid for other properties in the alley) and rental of £6pa suggests that it was probably only marginally larger than the other properties in the alley.¹¹⁶ The lease itself describes the property as having a cellar, a 'fair room' on the ground floor 'which is appointed for a kitchen', with the second and third floors

each consisting of a large chamber, and a garret at the peak of the house. The yard on the south of the dwelling measured 8ft x 18ft and contained a house of office.¹¹⁷

There is no record of Hartley's burial but by 1616 it appears that Margaret had been widowed, and indeed had died herself.¹¹⁸ John Gales a silkweaver, and 'one of ye parish tenants' was then in 1619 granted a lease for 21 years at £6pa rental. No fine was involved.¹¹⁹ Gales was probably in the property since 1614. He was recorded as living in the High Street when his son Thomas was christened in 1614 and again in 1615 when his wife (in this instance noted as Agnes but thereafter Anne) gave birth to a daughter Rebecca.¹²⁰ Rebecca died in 1618.¹²¹ Another son, William died from consumption in May 1618 and was buried in the south church yard, using the black cloth, and to the accompaniment of a knell from the great bell. His wife is recorded as Anne in this instance.¹²² Interestingly the parish paid 15s in May 1617 for the paving of Gales' yard, despite repairs being firmly the responsibility of the lessee.¹²³

It is likely that Gales occupied the property for some time as the Church wardens accounts note that in 1621-2 3s 4d was spent on Gales house in the alley.¹²⁴ However he subsequently moved to a dwelling in the Minories where he died in 1624 and was buried in the south church yard. He was soon followed into the afterlife by his son Thomas and wife Anne in 1625. As with other members of his family, Thomas was buried in the south church yard using the black cloth.¹²⁵

The lease apparently reverted back to the parish prior to the end of end of Gales 21 term as in October 1634 Abraham Woofe, a fletcher, and the current occupier, was granted the lease to the property described as a messuage with small yard attached. It also appears that some adjoining land was incorporated into the plot. In return for £6pa rent, although no fine, Woole was granted a 21 year lease along with 'free access' to the communal pump in the alley 'in common with the rest of the inhabitants of the said alley to fetch, pump and take water there for his and their own use.' The covenants were as per property no.1 with the exception that four viewings per year were sanctioned, and the parish had the first right of refusal if Woole choose to 'sell' the lease. It was also stipulated that Woole would within the next year 'make and set the said demised tenement upright, firm and strong, and save from danger of decaying or falling anyways and will disburse sum of £10 at least on this.' Clearly the dwelling was in some disrepair.¹²⁶ Woofe was almost certainly resident in the property in 1627 when his son Abraham was christened. The Parish Registers record Abraham as a 'throster' lving in the High Street with his wife Dorathie. The couple had a daughter named Dorathie in 1629.¹²⁷ His second son Isaac was christened in 1630 although by this time his wife may have been Sarah Woofe.¹²⁸ Abraham was a collector of the parish in 1634 and 1635 for which he was paid £2 10s 8d.¹²⁹

By 1638 the property is occupied by Abraham Vanlooke (also recorded as Vanhackle and Vanhack) a parish collector for the poor in 1641.¹³⁰ From this point on it is difficult to establish occupant of the property. The churchwarden's accounts record that Vanhackle ceased to be the rental payer in 1647, replaced by a Thomas Errington between 1648 and 1651, who paid £6pa rental. The house being subject to a viewing by the church wardens and 'ancients' in 1651 with the property recorded as being in the tenure of Errington.¹³¹ Thomas Grey/Graye/Grayes a skinner is responsible for the rental payments by 1652,¹³² and it is Gray who enters into a 21 year lease for the property in October 1655, paying £6 rental pa, and a £10 fine. As per the previous leases Gray's stated the free access to the pump, and his obligation to see to the repair of the pales and fences of the 'now inclosed' yard, the pavement in front of the property, the pump, and the 'scouring and cleaning' of the privy, within 6 months of a warning from the vestry. The lease also stipulates that the parish 'who will pay as much for it as any other person' has first right of refusal, if Gray wished to 'sell the premises.'¹³³ Anthony Woods is the rental payer from 1658 to 1661. The churchwardens

accounts for 1661 note that Woods was paying the rental for 'Mr Vanhacks house that was Thomas Grays'. It is very possible therefore that Errington, Grey and Woods subleased the property to Vanhack till his death in 1661.¹³⁴ Vanhack, a weaver, was recorded as dwelling in the High Street at his death in 1661 as he was when his son Abraham was buried in 1649, another Abraham was baptised in 1651, and yet another Abraham was baptised in 1654. His wife was Elline in 1649 and 1651 and Jane by 1654.¹³⁵

For the following few decades the historical record is fragmentary. Woods is the rental payer until 1661 when his is supplanted by a Richard Harrison who was presumably assigned the lease.¹³⁶ The 1665 rent rolls of the poor lands records Harrison as the rental payer 'for house that was Thomas Grayes'¹³⁷, and he continues to tenant the property until 1674.¹³⁸ Harrison did apparently reside in the house which, perhaps surprisingly given its supposed large size, contained only 3 hearths.¹³⁹

The property then receives its fifth tenant within 20 years when in September 1674 John Merry a weaver, is granted a lease for the property 'together with use of the void place that lies open' for a term of 41 years, at £6pa with a 50s fine. The covenants of the lease were as per the previous lease in 1655.¹⁴⁰ By 1678 Merry is leasing the property along with properties no.2 and 3 in the alley, although the rent roll records that he was paying a rent of £4 pa, rather than the £6 pa noted in the lease.¹⁴¹

Merry continues to sub-let the property, firstly to Alice Cooke from 1674, and then to a James Carpenter who is recorded as the occupier in the 1678 Poll Tax along with his wife, an apprentice and a servant by the name of Jane Fowles.¹⁴² Merry is recorded as the head lessee until the Church wardens accounts tail off in the early 1690s and it is probable that Mr Alder was assigned the lease, along with that for property number 2 in the alley (see above)

The next lessee for both property numbers 2 and 4 was Richard Green a carpenter. Merry's 41 year lease for no.4 granted in 1674 expired in 1715 and it was in 1715 that Green was granted a lease for 49 years at £8 pa (no fine) for 'all those two small messuages (property's 2 and 4) . . . in Woolpack Alley . . . behind the coffee house now in possession of James Britton'. The messuages each contained a cellar, a 'larger room' (presumably on the ground floor), two chambers and a garrett. Interestingly the lease contained a covenant that it did not cover the use of the 'common pump within premises belonging to all tenants' and that if he did indeed decide to move the pump then he was to 'repair at his own charge.'¹⁴³

Property no.5 1610-1695

This property, located at the far east end of the alley, next to Hartley's Great House, was leased to John Liddon in December 1610 for 21 years, at £6 rent and, unlike no's 1,2,3, a £10 fine was charged. The plot included 'two little square yards', which Liddon was covenanted to enclose at his own cost.¹⁴⁴

There seem to be several individuals by the name of John Liddon (Lyddon) present in the parish at this time, but it is possible that this particular John Liddon was the Deputy Alderman of the ward. The accounts of the rebuilding of the alley, and reproduced on pages 7 and 8 above, note that £10 of the money for rebuilding came from a fine paid by Deputy Liddon. £10 was the fine Liddon paid for the above lease, although there is no confirmation that this is one and the same fine. Other than this, and despite his repeated appearances in the parish records, the only further evidence linking Deputy Liddon to the property is the fact that at the time of the death of his wife Anne in 1614 the couple are living in the High Street, although the record of his own death in 1616 offers no indicating of his dwelling location.¹⁴⁵

As with other properties in the alley it is possible that Liddon was subleasing the property and never actually dwelt there, choosing to reside somewhere else on the High

Street. Liddon was heavily involved in the rebuilding of Woolsack (see above) and the management of parish lands and may have seized upon the leasing of a property in the alley as a business opportunity. It seems strange that his title was not used when he was issued the lease, and the house, and “alley living” hardly seems appropriate for an individual of relatively significant social standing.

The dwelling may have been in the occupation of Robert Wroth by 1616. Wroth was one of the Kings Trupetters and was buried in August 1619 with the honour of having the ‘black cloth’ used and the great bell of the church rung.¹⁴⁶

A Blacksmith Daniell Sturton was resident by March 1629, when he was the recipient of a lease for 21 years at £5pa and no fine. Covenants as per no.1 applied.¹⁴⁷ It is probable that he, along his wife Margaret (married in 1624 after the death of his previous wife Marie in 1623) had been resident from at least 1626, as when his daughter Ann was born that year his is recorded as dwelling in the High Street.¹⁴⁸ The entry in the Parish registers records his occupation as a silk thrower rather than blacksmith. Sturton was resident for the 1638 tithes, and when his daughter Ann was buried in 1642 he is recorded as dwelling in the Woolsack. Again his occupation is given as ‘throster’ or silk thrower.¹⁴⁹

As with the other properties in the alley, no.5 was viewed by the parish in June 1650, and he was duly granted a new lease in June 1652 in which he is still recorded as a blacksmith. The lease was for the standard 21 year term, with an increase in rental to £6 pa since the previous demise, however it no longer included the yard at the back of the property, which was instead to be turned into some form of communal resource and be ‘laid open for the use of said tenants in said alley’.¹⁵⁰ The lease also describes the property as his ‘new house’ suggesting some rebuilding may have taken place.

According to the various parliamentary assessments and the parish registers Daniel Sturton died in 1656, with the church wardens accounts recording that his widow Margaret remaining in situ until her death in 1662-3.¹⁵¹

Although the lease stipulated it was the lessee’s responsibility to fund the maintenance of the property the parish was moved to spend 14s on a glazier, and 12s 6d for a carpenter to undertake repairs in 1662-3. This, alongside the information that widow Sturton was in 18 months rental arrears (£9), suggests she was experiencing financial problems.¹⁵² Gaps in the churchwardens accounts between 1663 and 1664 suggest that the property may well have lain empty, and the fact that the next lessee, Edward Free (Frees?) was given the generous terms of a 31 year lease with a lower rent of £4 10s pa in 1664 seems to indicate that the property was in some disrepair, and that he would be required to fund further works.¹⁵³ Free was not resident and sublet the property to several people through the 1670s. The 1670 Hearth Taxes record a James Hurst living in the 3 hearth property, replaced by a William Clarkson in 1671.¹⁵⁴ Clarkson is apparently superseded by George Scott in 1672 who is last noted in the 1674 Hearth taxes although he is no longer resident by the time of the 1678 Poll taxes.¹⁵⁵ Free continues to be recorded as the head lessee until 1690.¹⁵⁶

It is likely that the next lease issued for this property was in 1690 to a pewterer by the name of Thomas Smith (who also leased property no.6), and that the occupant of the property was a Richard Carpenter. The property had clearly not altered much in term of its composition still comprising of a cellar a ground floor room, two chambers and one garret ‘one over another’ and one ‘little paved yard behind the same’.(For Smith and this lease see property 6 below)

A lease indenture granted in 1721 notes that a blacksmith by the name of Thomas Grove was granted the lease for this property that had ‘formerly been occupied by Edward Free’. Grove was granted a 21 year lease at £4pa rent and an £18 fine. The property was described as comprising a cellar, a ground floor room, two chambers, and a garret, with a

paved yard to the front and a small yard to the north measuring 11ft 6' north to south by 9ft east to west.¹⁵⁷

Property no.6

Originally demised in 1610 to William Carpenter a beer brewer this property on 'the east side' of the alley was claimed to abut the tenements leased to Stephen Everet on the west, the yard of Thomas Coxe on the south east, and Richard Driver to the north. Presumably this refers to Everet's house across the yard (see entry for property no.1), and Cox's house was that adjoining to the plot of Woolsack alley. The property directly to the north (no.5 Woolsack) was leased by Liddon so presumably Driver's property was that adjoining the Woolsack plot on the north east.

Carpenter's dwelling was described as having a cellar, a room on the ground floor, two chambers and a garret, and outdoors a small yard of 8ft (N to S) x 14ft that contained a privy. Unlike the leases associated with the other Woolsack properties, this lease, for 21 years at £6pa (no fine), also specifically noted that Carpenter (and his executors, servants and assigns) was to have unrestricted access to the communal pump in the alley.¹⁵⁸ Unsurprisingly the parish documentation for the period is littered with references to men named William Carpenter, although it had not been possible to link any of them with this particular property. Perhaps this most likely candidate is the William Carpenter who served as the Church Warden and parish renter.¹⁵⁹

In the following years the resident was Edmund Lightfoot a barber.¹⁶⁰ The Lightfoot family was almost entirely wiped out in August 1625, presumably as a consequence of plague. Edward Lightfoot born in 1621 was buried on the 3rd August 1625 the same day as his father. They were soon followed by another of Edmunds sons Thomas and George. The sole survivor of the Lightfoot family appears to have been the wife and mother Rebeca who may well have remarried just a year later to a William Fowke.¹⁶¹ It is not clear who occupied the property after the death of Edmund but Thomas Birkett (Burkett/Burkitts) a carpenter is granted the lease in August 1629 for 41 years at £5pa (no fine). This was probably the same Thomas Birkett who was the church warden in 1636 and who had held various parish offices in the late 1620s onwards. It is unlikely that Birkett actually lived in the property. According to the 1638 tithes he lived along the High Street but was not grouped with the rest of the Woolsack inhabitants in the tithe listings, and he was paying £10 pa moderated rents, well above the £5 pa for this Woolsack dwelling. It is instead likely that he lived in an adjoining property to the east that lay between the alley and Petticoat Lane.¹⁶² It is possible that the house may have been empty for the 1638 tithe assessments, as clearly Birkett was subletting the house. Thomas is recorded in the church warden accounts as the rental payer until 1668 when his wife continuing for a few years after that. It is possible that Thomas may have died c.1656-7, as it is from that year onwards that Mrs Birkett is recorded as the rental payer in the assessment for the army.¹⁶³ Surprisingly Thomas Birkett's burial does not seem to be recorded in the parish registers so it has been difficult to confirm when he did indeed die.

The next lessee was a grocer by the name of Andrew Kildermore, who was granted the lease in November 1670 for 31 years at £5 pa but - unusually for properties in the alley - with a £20 fine.¹⁶⁴ Kildermore had been resident since at least 1666 and probably much earlier, and interestingly the property appears to have had significantly more heaths than the others in the alley, 7 compared to 3 or 4 for the others. Kildermore was also recorded as a resident of an adjoining property when Birkett's widow Elizabeth sold the freehold in 1669.¹⁶⁵ It is possible therefore that at some point Birkett had combined the two properties - the one in Woolsack Alley and the one on his freehold land - to create a single larger

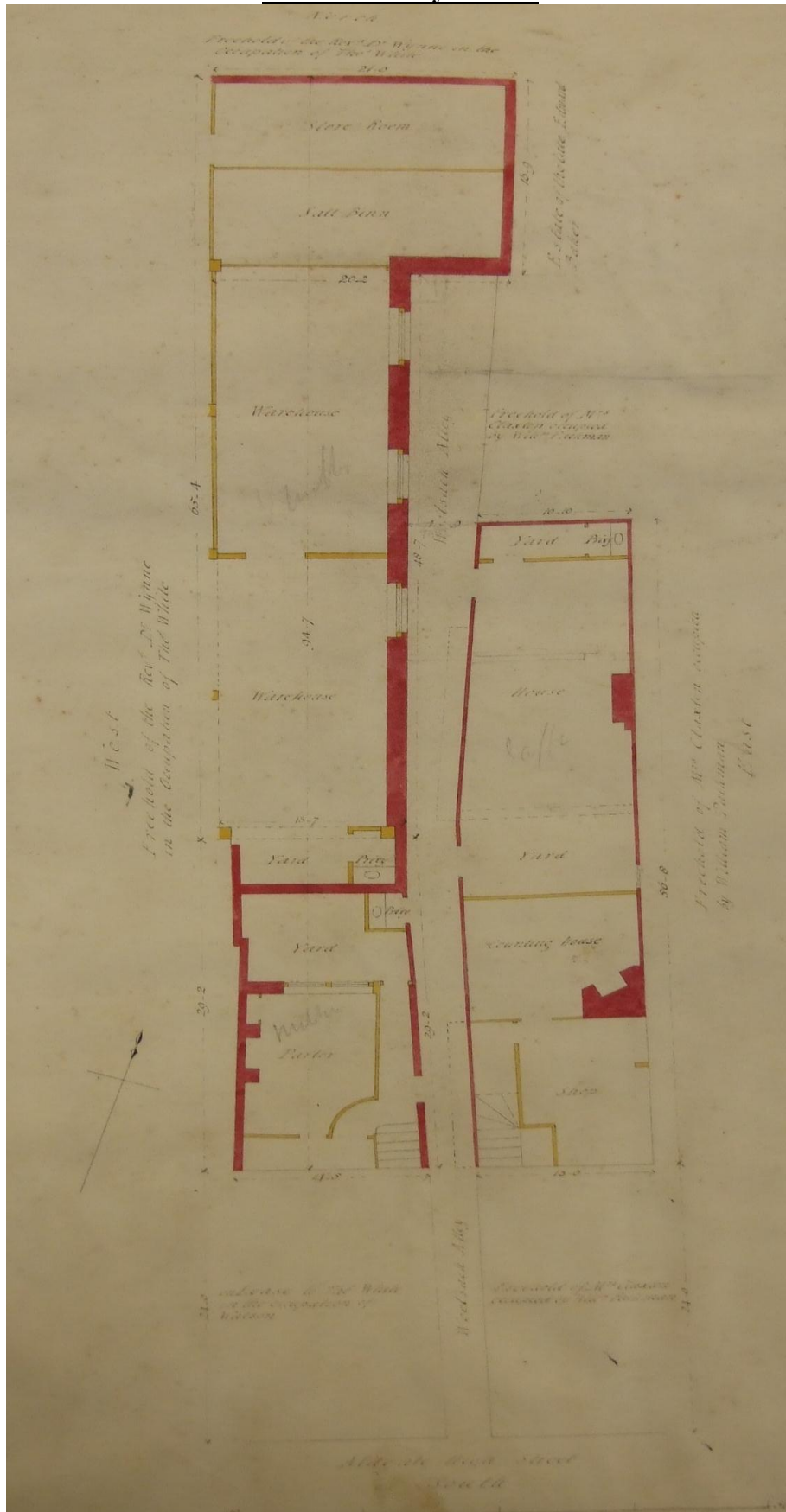
dwelling. This would not only account for the large number of hearths but also for the higher assessed value associated with this property in assessments in the mid 1670s.¹⁶⁶

The distinctive surname of Kildermore allows us to identify several members of the family. Andrew was married to Elizabeth who died in 1667.¹⁶⁷ A son Andrew was baptised in January 1648 and was buried in 1665.¹⁶⁸ Another son Thomas suffered the same fate, being born in 1656 and dying in 1659,¹⁶⁹ as did a daughter Elizabeth (Baptised 1650, Buried 1652).¹⁷⁰ Kildermore's other children were daughters Ann (baptised 1651) and Elizabeth (baptised 1660), and sons John (baptised 1655) and William (buried 1659).¹⁷¹

Kildermore continues to be listed in the church warden's accounts as the rental payer until 1684 although he no longer appears in the tax assessment lists after the 1674 Hearth taxes.¹⁷² Whether he died or was simply subleasing is not clear, although there is no record of his burial in the parish registers.

The resident of the property in 1678 was Thomas Smith (Smyth) and his wife, and it was Smith, a pewterer, who was granted the next lease in March 1690. The lease included both properties no 5 and 6 in the alley and was for 31 years at £8pa with no fine mentioned. As with no.5 no.6 was described as a dwelling with a cellar a ground floor room, two chambers and one garret 'one over another' and one 'little paved yard behind the same'.

Woolsack Alley c.1810s



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- ¹ BL Cotton App xix, fol's 31-32. 1278-9
 - ² CLRO escheat roll EEmm. 59d-60 (calendar pp.93-4). Calendar Inquisition Misc vol.5 p.91 28th July 1397.
 - ³ BL Cotton app. Xix fols.6-10 & fols 52-53
 - ⁴ E318/27/1527 STB. Cal Pat R Edward VI vol.3 pp.143-7 14th July 1549. PRO, E315/67 ff.16-18. PRO Sc6/Edw 6? 294-7.
 - ⁵ CLRO STB viewers reports misc MSS box 91 no.70 8th May 1550
 - ⁶ All CW accs: the first mention of Grene = GLMS 9235_3651 f.2 1547-8. His death is record in GLMS 9235_3717 f.39 1554-5.
 - ⁷ GLMS 9235_3937 f.153.
 - ⁸ HR 260 (55) STB Woolsack alley.
 - ⁹ GL Ms 3606/1 no.3 STB par deeds.
 - ¹⁰ PCM 1594 f.254.
 - ¹¹ PCM GLMs 9234/1 f.14 1583; PCM 1586 f.13.
 - ¹² PCM 1584 f.56 & f.65. PCM 1588 f.106.
 - ¹³ PCM 1589 f.48.
 - ¹⁴ PCM 1590 f.92.
 - ¹⁵ PCM 1591 f.98. 1592 f.122.
 - ¹⁶ PCM 1590 f.99
 - ¹⁷ PCM 1593 f.19. Mary was 60 years old and died of the plague
 - ¹⁸ PCM 1593 f.80.
 - ¹⁹ PCM 1595 f.82 & f.109.
 - ²⁰ PCM 1595 f.111.
 - ²¹ PCM GLMs 9234/6 f.42 & f.21.
 - ²² PCM 1599 f.115 & f.119
 - ²³ PCM 1599 f.232 & f.242.
 - ²⁴ PCM GLMs 9234/2 1588 f.33.
 - ²⁵ PCM GLMs 9234/2 1588 f.19 & 1592 f.160.
 - ²⁶ PCM GLMs 9234/2 1589 f.81; 1591 f.130. 1592 f.147 1593 f.80. 1592 f.147 & 1595 f.111.
 - ²⁷ PCM 1595 f.95.
 - ²⁸ PCM 1597 f.278-279
 - ²⁹ PCM 1599 f.132.
 - ³⁰ PCM 1590 f.101& 104; 1591 f.105 &f.111. 1599 f.102.
 - ³¹ PCM 1593 f.78.
 - ³² PCM 1594 f.169
 - ³³ PCM 1595 f.81
 - ³⁴ PCM 1599 f.243.
 - ³⁵ PCM 1589 f.87
 - ³⁶ PCM GLMs 9234/2 1588 f.25.
 - ³⁷ PCM 1595 f.128.
 - ³⁸ PCM GLMs 9234/1 1583 f.24.
 - ³⁹ PCM GLMs 9234/2 1588 f.31.
 - ⁴⁰ PCM 1589 f.49.
 - ⁴¹ PCM GLMs 9234/2 1588 f.33; 1589 f.106;
 - ⁴² PCM 1592 f.56
 - ⁴³ PCM 1593 f.87.
 - ⁴⁴ PCM 1592 f.94. PCM 1594 f.194; PCM GLMs9234/7 1598 f.130.
 - ⁴⁵ PCM 1592 f.161.
 - ⁴⁶ PCM 1597 f.293 & f.295
 - ⁴⁷ PCM 1594 f.161.
 - ⁴⁸ PCM 1594 f.212. 1596 f.101.
 - ⁴⁹ PCM GLMs 9234/7 1598 f.52. 1599 f.146.
 - ⁵⁰ PCM GLMs 9234/6 f.1
 - ⁵¹ PCMs 1594 f.16 & f.29.
 - ⁵² PCM 1595 f.62.
 - ⁵³ PCM 1595 f.96
 - ⁵⁴ PCM 1595 f.144.
 - ⁵⁵ PCM 1596 f.101.
 - ⁵⁶ PCM GLMs 9234/6 f.114.
 - ⁵⁷ PCM 1597 f.229.

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- 58 PCM 1597 f.230. PCM GLMs 9234/7 1597 f.64.
- 59 PCM GLMs 9234/7 1597 f.13
- 60 PCM 1598 f.98 & f.102.
- 61 PCM GLMs 9234/7 1598 f.133.
- 62 PCM GLMs 9234/7 1598 f.142. & f.160
- 63 PCM 1592 f.132; GLMs 9234/7 1596 f.224 & 1598 f.154. 1600 f.249.
- 64 PCM 1598 f.156.
- 65 PCM 1600 f.263.
- 66 Bodl MS Rawl D796B (GL microfilm 427) PC book 19 Nov 1594.
- 67 PCM 9234/4 28 Nov 1594
- 68 GL Ms 3606/1 no.2 STB par deeds 23 Nov 1594
- 69 The RW accs suggest that nearly £20 was spent in fees in relation to this episode GL Ms 9235/1 pt.2 RW accs STB payments
- 70 GL Ms 2630 19th C 'Trust money' bk f.166; GL Ms 9234/5 PCM f.79, f.108-9, f.137, f.191.
- 71 GL MS 3606/1 no.10 17th June 1599. GL Ms 3606/1 8th May 1599, 15th June 1599
- 72 GL MS 3606/1 no.10 17th June 1599
- 73 GL Ms 9234/5 PCM f.107 3rd July 1599
- 74 GL Ms 9236 Vest mins 3rd May 1604 f.117
- 75 Bodl MS Rawl D796B (GL mic 427) PC 20th Mar 1607-8, bk f.15
- 76 Bodl MS Rawl D796B (GL mic 427) PC 20th Mar 1607-8, bk f.15
- 77 GL Ms 9236 vest mins STB 1583-1640 f.20 11 July 1609; f.21 14th Dec 1609
- 78 GL Ms 9235/2 CW accs ST B payments 1609-10
- 79 GL Ms 2630 19th C 'Trust money' bk f.183-4. GL Ms 9236 vest mins STB building accs f.12-13
- 80 GL Ms 9223 f.191, 19th June 1614.
- 81 GL Ms 3606/1 no.11 STB par deeds 26th feb 1614
- 82 GL Ms 9223 BMB 1594-1607 and PCM 19th June 1614
- 83 For examples of money spent on repairs see: GL Ms 9237 CW poor accs 1622-73 f.38; GL Ms 9235/2 CW accs payments 1625-6, 1629-30 & 1633-4 1651-2, 1652-3, 1655-6, 1659-60, 1666-7.
- 84 GL Ms 3606/1 20th March 1644. GL Ms 9967 STB parish deeds 2nd Oct 1663
- 85 Hearth Taxes: COL.CHD.LA.03.25.9.37 014 (1672), TNA E 179.252.23 035 (1674-5).
- 86 PCM 1616 f.1 12th Jan 1616 f.8 12th March 1616. Vest Mins 18th July 1616.
- 87 PCM 1614 f.194 27th July, 1616 f.256 21st July. CW accs GLMs 9235_5447 f.259
- 88 GL Ms 9966/1 20th Dec 1610
- 89 GL Ms 9223 reg of BMB 1614-16. GL Ms 9236 vest mins STB 1583-1640 28th Oct 1619 f.65
- 90 Bodl MS Rawl D796B f.48, f.101, f.107, f.19
- 91 GL Ms 9236 vest mins 1583-1640 f.24
- 92 GL Ms 3486/4 (no.3) 20th Dec 1610
- 93 VM 1604-5. Bodl MS Rawl D796B 1613 f.36. GLMs 9235 CW accs vol.2 f.199, f.230
- 94 GL Ms 9223 reg of BMB 1614-16
- 95 GL Ms 9237 CW poor accs 1622-73.A number of 'assessments for the army' noted as follows: 10s in 1648-9, 12s 6d in 1649-50, 17s 1652-3, GL Ms 9235/2 CW accs parliamentary assessments 1648-50
- 96 Dale 1638 and 1645 subsidies TNA E 179.147.557 61v-62r
- 97 GL Ms 9234/8 PCMs 25th June 1650. GL Ms 9234/8 PCM 3rd June 1652 f.275, 3rd May 1653 f.278-9
- 98 PRs 27/4/1663 EvID 411713. GL Ms 9235/2 CW accs 1620-1690
- 99 HT 1670 COL.CHD.LA.03.25-9.7 009 f.17. HT 1674 TNA E 179.252.23 035 f.50. 18m taxes 1673 COL.CHD.LA.03.14.11 045 f.1. 18m taxes 1674 COL.CHD.LA.03.24.7 020 f.19.
- 100 PRO SC11/32 rent roll poor law lands STB GLMS 9235 vol.2 no.2 1620-1691.
- 101 COL.CHD.LA.03.68.1 003 f.1. COL.CHD.LA.03.36.6 005 f.1
- 102 GLMS 9235 vol.2 no.2 1620-1691. GLMs2626 CW acc's 1683-1715 f.63.
- 103 PCM 1614 f.197 10 Sept 1614.
- 104 GL Ms 9236 vest mins STB f.24 10th Dec 1610. GL Ms 9223 reg of BMB 1616
- 105 GL Ms 3486/4 no.5 31st March 1629
- 106 Bodl MS Rawl D796B f.105 1632 & f.104 1635. Dale 1638 tithes
- 107 GL Ms 9234/8 PCM 25th June 1650.
- 108 GL Ms 3486/4 no.7 26th May 1653
- 109 See footnote 28.
- 110 GLMs 9237-1, CW accs 1622-78 f.162. 1661
- 111 COL.CHD.LA.03.25-9.7 009 f.17. COL.CHD.LA.03.25.9.37 014 f.14. PRs Ev Id 231760 15/5/1672
- 112 COL.CHD.LA.03.14.11 045 f.1; TNA E 179.252.23 035 f.50; COL.CHD.LA.03.24.7 020 f.19.

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- ¹¹³ PRO SC11/32 rent roll poor law lands STB
¹¹⁴ COL.CHD.LA.03.68.1 003 f.1; COL.CHD.LA.03.36.6 002 f.1.
¹¹⁵ PRs Ev Id 505031 15th March 1673.
¹¹⁶ GL Ms 9236 vest mins 10th Dec 1610 f.24
¹¹⁷ GL Ms 3606/1 20th Dec 1610
¹¹⁸ GL Ms 9223 reg of BMB 1616. GL Ms 9237 CW poor accs 1622-3 f.38. contains an entry for £2 paid to revert this lease.
¹¹⁹ GL Ms 9236 vest mins 28th Oct 1619 f.65
¹²⁰ PCM May 1614 f.186; March 1615 f.246.
¹²¹ PCM 11th Jan 1618 f.67
¹²² PCM 10th May 1618 f.48.
¹²³ PCM 17th May 1617, f.103
¹²⁴ GL Ms 9235/2 cw accs payments.
¹²⁵ PCM 5th Oct 1624 f.233; 20th June 1625 f.260
¹²⁶ GL Ms 3426/4 (no.8) 23rd Oct 1634
¹²⁷ PR 24/6/1629 Ev Id 110897
¹²⁸ PR 1/4/1627 Ev Id 110119. 8/9/1630 Ev Id 111355.
¹²⁹ GLMs 9237-1 CW accs 1634 f.64; 1635 f.67
¹³⁰ GLMs 9237-1 CW accs 1641 f.90
¹³¹ GL Ms 9235/2 CW accs parl assess 1648-9 & 1652-3. GL Ms 9237 CW poor acc's 1650. GL Ms 9234/8 PCM 25th June 1650 f.274
¹³² PRO SC11/32 rent roll of poor lands 1653
¹³³ GL Ms 3486/4 (no.14) 16th Oct 1655
¹³⁴ PR 4/11/1661 Ev Id 410667
¹³⁵ PR 26/8/1649 Ev Id 223307; 18/5/1651 Ev Id 119144; 4/10/1645 Ev Id 120259.
¹³⁶ GL Ms 9235/2 CW accs parl assessments 1657-8, 1660-1 & 1662-3
¹³⁷ PRO SC11/32 rent roll poor lands
¹³⁸ GL Ms 9235/2 Cw accs 1671-2 parl assessments
¹³⁹ COL.CHD.LA.03.66.22 017 f.3; COL.CHD.LA.03.25-9.7 009 f.17; COL.CHD.LA.03.25.9.37 014 f.14; COL.CHD.LA.03.14.11 045 f.1
¹⁴⁰ GL Ms 3486/4 (no.32) STB par deeds 15th Sept 1674
¹⁴¹ PRO SC11/32 rent roll of poor lands 1678-80.
¹⁴² COL.CHD.LA.03.68.1 003 f.1; COL.CHD.LA.03.36.6 002 f.1.
¹⁴³ GL Ms 3606/2 1st Nov 1715
¹⁴⁴ GL Ms 9236 vest mins f.24 10th December 1610
¹⁴⁵ PRs 6/2/1614 Ev Id 203953; 15/11/1616 Ev Id 204537.
¹⁴⁶ PCM 12 Aug 1619 f.84. GLMs 9235 CW accs 1619-20 f.287. See his entry in A. Ashbee et al, A Biographical Dictionary of English Court Musicians, 1485-1714, 2 vols. (1998), 2.1178.
¹⁴⁷ GL Ms 9223 reg of BMB 1614-16. GL Ms 3486/4 no.6 formerly 12) 31st March 1629
¹⁴⁸ PRs 19/07/1624 Ev Id 324514; 14/11/1623 Ev Id 207111; 12/11/1626 Ev Id 110013.
¹⁴⁹ PRs 20/07/1642 Ev Id 219184
¹⁵⁰ GL Ms 9234/8 PCM 3rd June 1652. GL Ms 3486/4 (no.10, formerly 26) 28th Oct 1652.
¹⁵¹ See footnote 28 for assessments. PRs 5/6/1656 Ev Id 227301; 15/4/1663 Ev Id 411687.
¹⁵² GL Ms 9235/2 CW accs payments 1662-3.
¹⁵³ GL Ms 9236 vest mins box.E
¹⁵⁴ COL.CHD.LA.03.25-9.7 009 f.17. COL.CHD.LA.03.24.17 015 f.13.
¹⁵⁵ COL.CHD.LA.03.25.9.37 014 f.14. COL.CHD.LA.03.14.11 045 f.1. TNA E 179.252.23 036 f.50.
¹⁵⁶ PRO Sc11/32 rent roll of poor lands 1679-80. GLMS 9235 vol.2 no.2 1620-1691
¹⁵⁷ P69/BOT2/D/020/MS03486/003
¹⁵⁸ GL Ms 3486/4 (no.4) 20th Dec 1610
¹⁵⁹ PCM 12th April 1615 f.216.
¹⁶⁰ GL Ms 9223 reg of BMB 1614-16. Bodl MS Rawl D796B (GL mic 427)
¹⁶¹ PRs 18/11/1621 Ev Id 108594. 3/8/1625 Ev Id 208800. 3/8/1625 Ev Id 208731. 9/8/1625 Ev Id 209028. 18/8/1625 Ev Id 209392. 30/11/1626 Ev Id 317339.
¹⁶² HR 310 PL 3rd June 1633.
¹⁶³ GL Ms 9236 vest mins box.E f.20. See GL Ms 9235/2 CW accs Parliamentary assessment 1657-8 for first mention of Mrs Birketts. Assessments span period as per footnote 28.
¹⁶⁴ GL Ms 3486/4 (no.17) 9th Nov 1670
¹⁶⁵ HR 340 (134) 6th Dec 1669.

¹⁶⁶ COL.CHD.LA.03.14.11 045v f.1. COL.CHD.LA.03.24.7 020 f.19.

¹⁶⁷ PRs 9/3/1667 Ev Id 515332

¹⁶⁸ PRs 21/1/1648 Ev Id 407047, 1/8/1665 Ev Id 413541

¹⁶⁹ PRs 21/1/1656 Ev Id 121170. 28/4/1659 Ev Id 229367.

¹⁷⁰ PRs 28/3/1650 Ev Id 118870. 8/6/1652 Ev Id 224776

¹⁷¹ PRs 28/12/1651 Ev Id 119341. 15/11/1660 Ev Id 122385. 6/6/1655 Ev Id 120532. 20/11/1659 Ev Id 229911.

¹⁷² GLMS 9235 vol.2 no.2 1620-1691. TNA E 179.252.23 036 f.50