It is noticeable that brewers form not only the largest group of identified traders, but also a predominant group among the senior members of the fraternity. Of forty-nine masters or wardens of the fraternity between 1377 and 1463, thirteen were brewers, four of these being masters or wardens of the Brewers’ Company. Three of the fraternity’s benefactors were brewers, namely John Triggelowe, John Mason and Benedict Gerard. Triggelowe was a benefactor of SS. Fabian and Sebastian and Mason of Trinity, while Richard Gaynesburgh, brewer, was master of both. Philip atte Vyne was a capper but owned a brewhouse called the Cock on the Hoop and the Saracen’s Head, belonging to the fraternity, was used as a brewery in 1463.


In the previous article on named brewhouses (Brewery History 144), there was an underlying religious theme and this one also includes some aspects of the fraternities and gilds, but focuses on the evidence from the legal system. This includes some of the impact of the Brewers’ Company up to the destruction of their hall, in the Great Fire of 1666.

This era poses problems for the brewery historian, in that it falls between the evidence from the main ecclesiastical records and the more general sources, such as newspapers. Hence there is a reliance on the documentation of legal cases, which in turn means one is only looking at certain aspects of the business, and it is often difficult to get a sense of continuity. Some of the online data such as probate of wills is also still limited, at present, to a name and date.

The planned book will focus on the period after the Civil War, to try and document the commercial/common brewers, of which there were around 200 in London just afterwards.

The material was derived mainly from online sources, based on excerpts from works such Stow’s Survey of 1603, the City Letter Books from 1288 and other similar official documents. In addition, some texts are referenced at the end.

I have tried to give examples of the variety of texts, which can be accessed online, using the search boxes on the sites. Alternatively, some may be available through inter-library loans.

1. Fraternities, Gilds and Company

In terms of the early years Cornell (p.56) mentions 1342, as when John Enfield founded the Brewers’ Guild, though Ball dates the merging of Fraternity and Gild as somewhat later. Ball suggests that the Letter Book of 1292 is the earliest written evidence for ‘a body of brewers who had joined together to protect themselves and their trade’ (Ball p.11), but citing also the 1361 reference to a ‘Fraternity of Brewers’ connected with the church of All Hallows (p.18). Whilst much of the early organisation had its roots in the church, Ball suggests that in 1319 the granting of a new charter to the City marked the growing importance of trade over religion, although the Brewers did not rank amongst the leading gilds.

The 1380 Poll Tax survey is said to record over 1,000 brew-houses in the City, making one to every twelve inhabitants (Ball p.15). However, definitions can vary, King states the figure of 1334 breweries ‘where ale and beer were sold as well as produced’ (p.25).
Letter Book H folio cxxxii gives the number of inhabitants in the City wards, but presumably one would have to go to the original to determine the exact definition of brewery. Cornell comments that in 1419-20 some 290 households brewed commercially, of whom 185 were connected with the Guild (p.57).

Incidentally, Ball (p.65) suggests that ale-sellers came to adopt the sign of the hoop to distinguish their houses, which may account for the question regarding the names in the previous article. King (p.40) and Watney (p.90) support this idea, the latter commenting that it is the origin of the phrase ‘cock-a-hoop’.

16 Ric. II. Florence North, a brewer, was presented for not putting up a sign, as was customary. 
_Chelsea: (part 1 of 3), The Environs of London: volume 2: County of Middlesex (1795), pp.70-115._

This somewhat contrasts with the more usual mention of ‘ale-stakes’ or ‘ale-poles’ in histories of pubs and drinking. It seems that within the hoop would be placed a figure to represent the name of the house, much in the way of later establishment’s signboards.

**Membership**

In 1437 the Brewers’ Gild obtained a charter from Henry VI. Lists of membership are too numerous for such an article, eg 300 in 1420 twenty of whom were women, though the appendix provides some examples. However, searching online sites, gives a flavour of the material:

A letter to the mayor and aldermen of London to admit Giles Harryson, brewer, into the freedom and fellowship of that city. 
_Henry VIII: January 1546, 26-31, Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII, Vol 21 Pt 1: Jan-Aug 1546 (1908), pp.52-78._

John Goddard, in order that he might carry on the business of a Brewer within the City. 
_10 November, 1581._

The admission of Arnold James into the Freedom of the Brewers’ Company. The Court of Aldermen had no power to grant his request, but if he would write a letter to the Common Council he would lay the same before them. 
_24 February, 1592 Freedom, Analytical index to the series of records known as the Remembrancia: 1579-1664 (1878), pp.145-164._

However, it should be noted that membership was often for other reasons:

The Brewers’ Company was by no means flourishing in 1626, when it was found that the gild contained only six beer-brewers and a small number of ale-brewers, the remaining members being men who belonged to other companies and therefore followed other trades (King p.80).

**Hierarchy**

Nicholas Stratton, Thomas Bristowe, Peter Hayford, and Richard Rowdone, Masters of the art of Brewers; John More, John Davy, John Wyghtmore, and William atte Wode, Wardens of the same. 

Ball covers the various roles and lists the Masters, and there is quite a reasonable mention of individuals joining the hierarchy, or in some cases not. Provision of funds for dinners, charities and later endowment of schools, such as Aldenham, are another good source of data. From 1418 the Brewers had their own records, such as William Porland’s Minute Book. As ever, it is often the non-compliance with practice which is recorded, eg failing to purchase appropriate clothing (Ball p.54). In 1437 the grant of a royal charter on 22 February established their rights more clearly.

**Controls on entry**

Adam le Brewere, servant of John de Oxonia, skinner, was attached to answer the King and Thomas Spray on a charge of reviling the said Thomas and others, who had served on a jury of inquiry, and of saying that the Mayor and Aldermen ought not to regulate the brewers, and that he himself would gather together the brewers, and they would agree not to take service except by the day only and at a wage of 12d a day. 
Abraham Musgreve [Musgrave] of St. John Street, innholder, for brewing in his own house ale or beer of extraordinary strength above the rate of 8s the barrel, and for exercising the mystery of a brewer, never having been apprenticed according to the law; and of William Shelton of Islington, innholder, and John Sutton of Allhallowes, Barking, shipwright, for the said William for the like.

Sessions, 1614: 28 and 30 March, County of Middlesex.
Calendar to the sessions records.

Apprenticeships were a vital source of control of entry and are of course fairly well documented (see Appendix):

Recognizances, taken before Francis Michell esq. J.P., of William Shelton of Islington, inholder, in the sum of twenty pounds, and Robert Pierson of Islington aforesaid inholder, in the sum of forty pounds; For the said Robert Pierson’s appearance at the next Session of the Peace, to answer ‘or brewing beere or ale in his owne house of extraordinary strength above the rate of viiis the barrell, and for exercising the misterie of a Brewer having never been an apprentice according to the law.’ Also on the same file ten other sets of Recognizances, for the appearance at the next Session of Peace for the county, of ten other persons charged with brewing in their own houses malt-liquor of extraordinary strength, and with exercising the brewer’s mystery and trade without having been educated thereto. 1605 11 James I.


Roger Peremayne [Pearman] of High Holborn, victualler, James Wheeler, shoemaker, and Oliver Plunckett, cutler; and of Andrew Wood, Richard Mascall and Robert Hands of Holloway, victuallers, all mutual sureties; and of Thomas Gall of the same, gentleman, and Stephen Fisher of the same, yeoman, for Ezekiel Catesbye of the same, victualler; and of John Lighterfoote of the same, victualler, and Walter Hastings of Kentish Town, victualler, each for the other; and of William Shelton of Islington, inholder, for Robert Pierson of the same, victualler; and of Thomas Ashe of the Barbican, gentleman, and John Pitt of Charterhouse Lane, yeoman, for Robert Jones of Chick Lane, victualler; and of Thomas Andrewes of Kentish Town, victualler, Christopher Hunter of St. Giles’-without-Cripplegate, weaver, and John Pallmer of the same, chandler, for the said Thomas Andrewes: all for exercising the mystery of a brewer, not having been apprenticed to the same, and for brewing drink of extraordinary strength above the rate of 8s the barrel.

Sessions, 1614: 28 and 30 March, County of Middlesex.
Calendar to the sessions records: new series, volume 1: 1612-14 (1935), pp.370-400.

Census information is more normally associated with the C19; however, ‘foreigners or aliens’ were of interest to the authorities. Their impact on brewing developments eg hop usage, also means they are of interest to us, since they include the founders of Courage and others. They are of particular importance in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, especially in Southwark, with its freedom from the City guilds.

Tyse Lewis, brewer, dwelling with Mr. Michaell within Pete Wales for 3 years, Dutchman, not denizen, aged 35, at Harmonde Brewer’s for ‘that night only.’ Win. Bowman, Dutchman, 30, no master, has been 8 days in England, at Harmonde Brewer’s house since his coming. Henry Varioke and Godfrey Vancombe, Dutchmen, 26, mean men, with Mr. Miter, tailor, in Blanchappleton for one quarter of a year, lodged at Harmonde Brewer’s for that night only.


Adrian Mase, brewer, a native of Holland - denization.


Ball details how in 1484 the City Letter Book shows the Company sought ordinances both against foreign brewers and their beer (p.57). However, this was the height of the power and influence of the Livery Companies. The antipathy towards the wicked weed aka hops has been well-covered in many texts. Noting that at this time the Company was for ale brewers, the Letter books suggest that the beer-brewers had established a gild of their own, though it did not last for long (p.58). Ball regards the C16 as the heyday of the Livery Companies.

This was the period in which John Tate, brewer and mercer, demolished his brewery for the enlargement of St. Anthony’s Hospital. Similarly, two main educational concerns, the school at Aldenham and that based on Dame Alice Owen’s will (1613), were founded.

Ralph Finch, by will proved 1552, devised in trust the four almshouses which he had built in the parish, to be paid out of
a rent of £6 6s 8d a year charged on a brewhouse and land Balкерne Hill.


Two charters, in 1560 and 1579, extended the jurisdiction of the Company to a two-mile radius outside the City. This being of importance in terms of the right to control the brewers, particularly of beer, in Southwark.

The first half of the seventeenth century had seen some falling-off in the power of the Livery Companies as the controllers of the City's trade, but it was the Great Fire of 1666 that really brought to an end all effective exercise of the extensive rights which they had won. (Ball, p.81)

A related effect of the Fire was the expansion of industry in the suburbs, as many former City dwellers settled elsewhere.

In 1685 the Brewers received their eighth, and last, charter from James II, which extended their powers over all brewers within an eight-mile radius of the City, all of whom were required to become members of the Company, but in practice many still refused to join. (Ball, p.85)

### 2. Assizes etc

John le Brewere ‘atte None’, Walter de Wyrchestre and other brewers pleaded guilty of having sold beer against the proclamations, and were committed to prison. Elias le Glovere was committed to prison for a similar offence. 


William de Assheford, brewer, who had been charged with selling beer against the proclamation, was committed to prison for a year and a day for saying in the Mayor’s presence that the late Mayor, Stephen Cavendyssh, had committed extortions on the brewers of the City whilst seeing that the Assize of Beer was duly kept.


Assizes of bread and ale in 1267 set standards of price and measure, with some dating back to Magna Carta of 1215; hence cases of non-compliance are another valuable source of information.

Roger de Hevere was attached to answer Walter Meriot and Alice his wife in a plea of trespass, wherein they complained that when Alice was in the brewhouse of William atte Ramme in the parish of St Mary of Wolchercheawe, 15 July 1305. 


Extant views of frankpledge between 1369 and 1399 show that many tenants of the manor were brewing and selling ale, in their houses and outside: between 10 and 25 men and women were presented at each view for breaking the assize of ale and other infringements, such as regrating, selling before the aletasters had been summoned, not using cups with the stamped measure, and not posting the customary sign.

William Nicoll and William Halle of Chelsea were described as brewers c. 1425, and premises which included brewhouses are recorded from the late 15th century, such as that owned by John Drayton prior to 1476 and John Young prior to 1524. 


At the same Sessions Bartholomew Benson gave information against James Desmaisters of East Smithfield, beer-brewer, for selling 1,000 barrels of strong beer contrary to the Act of 21 Henry VIII and the order of the Sessions of 5 May last, and therefore he should forfeit £300; and against Peter Leonard of East Smithfield, George Freeman of Whitechapel, Geoffrey Dupper of St. Katherine’s, Henry Goade and Edmund Mynye alias Manye of the same, and Roger Harway alias Vanharway [Vanherewe] of [blank], all beer-brewers, for the like.


### Pricing:

William Dalman was convicted and committed to prison for selling beer at 2d the gallon, instead of 1½d, contrary to the proclamations.

Walter de Wyrcestre, William Sevenestere, John de Stratton, John atte Noke and William West, brewers, were committed to prison for similar offences.

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Simon Macchyng, hostiler, who was committed to prison for telling the Mayor that neither he nor other brewers would or could observe the recent proclamation, was released on his taking an oath to obey and be respectful to the City officers. 4 Nov 1375.

Thomas Goudsyre, brewer, was committed to prison for saying that he would not sell the gallon of ale at the price laid down in the proclamation. 17 Nov 1375.

William Ronyn, brewer, was committed to prison for declaring publicly in the market at Gracechurch that he would brew no more ale and for procuring other brewers to do the same, thus preventing the commonalty from being supplied with ale. He was further charged with having prevailed upon other leading brewers to refuse to sell better ale at 1½d the gallon, in accordance with the recent ordinance of the Mayor and Aldermen. He put himself on the mercy of the Court and was allowed to find mainprise for his appearance. 23 Nov 1375.

Control of distribution was vital in terms of both price and strength:

Thomas Wyr, Adam atte Belle, John de Chykesond and other brewers were bound over not to sell beer to regrators.

Roger Wenlok and Adam de Thame, brewer, were committed to prison for selling beer at 2d a gallon.

William Catesby, brewer, was charged with having sold four barrels of ale to a certain huckster, contrary to the ordinance and proclamation thereon. He was committed to prison: on the Tuesday following he was released on paying 20s, the value of the ale, according to the ordinance. 7 Dec. 1370.

William Bengeho, Stephen Mardolf and Thomas Wircestre, brewers, were bound over to the same effect. 16 Dec 1379.

At the Sessions Roger Risbye gave information against Isaac Kilborne and Simon Greene of the Savoy, brewers, for selling to Andrew Briggs of St. Martin’s-in-the-Fields, tippler, fifty-two barrels of beer for other than his own use, which beer the said Andrew sold and uttered as a common tippler, not having a licence in force for the same, therefore the said Isaac and Simon should forfeit £17 6s 8d, at the rate of 6s 8d a barrel.


22 April, 12 James I [A.D. 1614]. William Johnson of Westminster, tippler, and John Lacklye of the same, tailor, for the said William for brewing strong ale above the assize; and of Ann Sheppeard, widow, and William Dobson, waterman, both of the same, for the said Ann for the like; and of Richard Brewer, cook, and Richard Peck, silk-dyer, both of the same, for the said Richard Brewer for the like.


There are occasional references to the ale conners, though I still haven’t managed to track the origins of the infamous ‘leather trousers in a puddle of beer’. One of the earliest mentions was in 1305 when the ale conner visited William Saleman’s brewery on Cornhill (King, p.20).

Richard Estbrok, brewer, of Langbourn Ward was fined 20s for saying that, were he as young as he formerly was, he would allow no aleconner to perform his duty in his own or any other ward, as they were now doing. He was further mainprised in £100 not to form any covin or congregation whereby harm might befall the aleconners.

Richard Bengeho, Stephen Mardolf and Thomas Wircestre, brewers, were bound over to the same effect. 16 Dec 1379.
Clearly there were other types of con artists operating even then:

Saturday before the Feast of our Lord's Nativity [25 Dec.], 10 Richard II. [A.D. 1386], Thomas Stokes condemned to the pillory for pretending to be the King's officer and taker of his ale (captor cervisie), and marking with a mark called 'arewehede' several barrels of ale in the houses of John 'al Cok on the hope' near the Crutched Friars, William Roke at Graschirche, John atte Blakeloft in the Vintry, and other brewers.


Controls also included some on inputs, such as conditions of service and wages:

William de Clare, brewer, was committed to prison on his confession that he served brewers at 4d a day and his keep, and refused to be paid quarterly. Thomas Loxham, Simon Underman and William Wake, brewers, were likewise committed for receiving 10s quarterly and refusing to take less, and William Manekyn for receiving 32s yearly and refusing to take less, contrary to the ordinance concerning servants. Hugh atte Noke, John Barkere, underman, William Hicchen, Nicholas Stonlee, underman, and Edmund Brewer, brewers, were committed for similar offences. 14 Oct 1372.

Roll A 17: 1371-72, Calendar of the plea and memoranda rolls of the city of London: volume 2: 1364-1381 (1929), pp.132-149.

The same day John Gale, brewer, was committed to prison for refusing, in the presence of the Mayor and Aldermen, to serve John Shirwode, armourer, with whom he was living, till Easter and thenceforward by the quarter or half-year, according to the custom of the City. Afterwards on 26 April he was released on his taking an oath that he would serve his master for a year from Easter. 6 April 1375.


Emma atte Grene brought a bill complaining that she was servant to Robert Bryan from Michaelmas to Easter last, her duty being to sell ale at 5s the barrel, each barrel containing 30 gallons, and that he was distrainting her to pay 6d the barrel extra and had detained 8s due to her for wages and was intending to sue her for the remainder.

Both parties having been summoned, the defendant pleaded that after striking an account between them in the presence of Reginald Hostiller and John Basse, brewer, the said Emma was allowed 8s wages and remained indebted to him in 16s. 23 June 1372.

Roll A 17: 1371-72, Calendar of the plea and memoranda rolls of the city of London: volume 2: 1364-1381 (1929), pp.132-149.

Plus raw materials:

John Bayly, brewer, was attached to answer William Frere of Wycombe in a plea of debt on demand of 105s, according to the Statute of Smithfield, for malt bought at Queenhithe. He acknowledged the debt and was committed to prison till he paid. 5 Dec. 1364.


Pleas held before the Mayor and Aldermen. Thomas le Brewere of Tower Street was attached to answer a charge, brought by Nicholas Clompe, of having purchased a quantity of malt and of failing to pay for it at once. 1339.


In 1579 the Queen had John Platt imprisoned for disobeying the orders against burning ‘seacole’ in his brewery. Later the nature of production itself can also provide sources of information through the registering of patents, for example King, p.90.

Some punishments might still appeal to modern head brewers:

Thomas, son of Robyn Massoun, brewer, who had been sworn to serve his master William Louyn, brewer, till Michaelmas at the rate of wages set up by City ordinances, and who had run away next day and hidden himself, was captured by the supervisors of the journeymen brewers and brought before the Mayor and Aldermen. He confessed his offence. Thereupon William Wodehous, one of the Sheriffs, was ordered to set him on the pillory for an hour and to proclaim the reason for his punishment.

3. Buildings / Planning Permission

Various aspects of building controls can be found which mention brewhouses. As early as 1189 the Common Council of City issued an edict that ale-houses, most of which had their own brewery attached, should be licensed and have fire-precaution measures, unless they were built of stone (Hornsey, p.290).

William Saleman and Alice his wife came before the Mayor and Aldermen and made fine of 2s to the Commonalty for a trespass in having a brewery on Cornhill and carrying on trade without paying custom to the bailiffs, &c. (Cancelled because paid.) 1305.

Folios 60 - 69b, Calendar of letter-books of the city of London: B: 1275-1312 (1900), pp.132-164.

In 1280 or 1281 Thomas le Marescal, taverner (tabernator), and his wife Avice leased their capital messuage with their brewhouse, with 2 lead vessels and one lead trough in the brewhouse, with cellar and solar and all easements of the brewery, towards the street, belonging to the house, formerly of Reginald le Haberger in the parish of St. Mary Colechurch beside the Conduit, to William le Paternoster and his wife Beatrice. The grantees were to hold for 6 years from 1280.

St. Mary Colechurch 105/26’, Historical gazetteer of London before the Great Fire: Cheapside; parishes of All Hallows Honey Lane, St Martin Pomary, St Mary le Bow, St Mary Colechurch and St Pancras Soper Lane (1987), pp.568-583.

Thomas Farndon was summoned to answer John Seman in a plea that he repay him 20s expended on the making of a pavement within the gate of a brewhouse in the parish of St Peter Wood Street. This house, the plaintiff declared, had been leased by the defendant for 20 years to John Doxenford, who left the lease by will to his widow Matilda, who married the plaintiff. April 1380.


In an action for debt of £80 due on a bond of Robert de Caunbrugge and William Palmere, executors of Henry Bever, against John Lerveryntong, in which the defendant made four defaults, his tenement in the parish of St Stephen Colmanstret was delivered to the plaintiffs as a foreign attachment to hold till the debt was satisfied. A jury said that the tenement was a brewhouse with three shops annexed of a net annual value of £5 6s 8d, but that the premises were ruinous and that the repairs would cost the first year’s annual value. 10 Dec. 1386. Roll A 28: 1386-88’, Calendar of the plea and memoranda rolls of the city of London: volume 3: 1381-1412 (1932), pp.126-147.


Surveyor’s affidavit confirming that a dwelling house erected and built opposite the Kings Brewhouse in the precinct of Saint Catherine, by John Weston, meets the requirements of the Building Act. 1783

The nature of ownership was crucial; hence, disputes are a useful means of tracking both owners and occupants e.g.

John Russel, girdler, complains that on Mon. 19 Feb. 1347 Hugh de Stafford, skinner, and Joan his wife, John de Stafford, skinner, Nicholas de Stafford and William atte Halle, brewer, disseised him of a messuage in London. John, Nicholas and William, defe., by Alan de Horewode, deny the disseisin. Hugh makes default but Joan his wife is admitted to plead in his stead. She says that Roger Buntyng, brewer, her late husband, and she, under the name of Joan late the wife of John Botoner, by an indenture produced in court, leased the messuage in view to the pl., under the description of the brewhouse formerly held by John Russel of the demise of John Botoner, to hold for a term of seven years to run from Christmas 1344, before the expiration of which term Roger Buntyng, her second husband, died, and she remained in sole possession of the premises.


John Pecche was attached to answer William Randulf, armourer, in a plea of trespass. The bill alleged that a certain John Costantyn, father of John Costantyn, in 1355 made a lease of a brewery and shops in Cordwainer Street in the Parish of St Aldermary for life to William Sallowe with a condition that, if he died within 40 years, his executors and assigns should have the remainder of the term of 40 years. By his will in 1361 the said William Sallowe left the unexpired portion of the lease to his wife Alice for her life or until her
remarriage, with remainder to the Master of the House of St Thomas of Acon together with the wardship of his children. Roll A 23: 1379-80, Calendar of the plea and memoranda rolls of the city of London: volume 2: 1364-1381 (1929), pp.257-274.

18 Dec. 1381, when Thomas Gisors made his fourth default, having fled to sanctuary at Westminster, and on 4 Nov. 1382 when the said Thomas appeared in court and prayed that John Colshull be summoned to show cause why the lands and tenements of the said Thomas should not be restored to him, as set forth in the court. The property, of an annual value of £44 12s 8d, consisted of cellars, apartments (mawiones), wharves, shops, chambers, a brewhouse and a stuhous in Grantham Lane, an inn in the Ryole and a quitrent in Grenewichlane. Calendar - Roll A 25: 1381-83, Calendar of the plea and memoranda rolls of the city of London: volume 3: 1381-1412 (1932), pp.1-35.

Although this period is too early for the papers of the insurance companies, some of which can now be found online, some aspects do crop up in the literature.

Same to the Excise Commissioners of the petition of John Newman shewing that his brewing vessels and other utensils consumed in a late fire amounted to £1400, therefore praying stay of process against him on his Excise debt of £131 17s 7d. Warrant Book: January 1704, 16-31, Calendar of Treasury Books, Volume 19: 1704-1705 (1938), pp.108-121.

Water was important in terms of both its supply and potential contamination to the detriment of neighbours. The first City Letter Book mentions the brewers and others obtaining water from the Chepe Conduit in 1312 (Ball, p.25). Other forms of contamination can also be revealing:

Richard Bakere brewer was fined 2s for casting dung into the street. Roll A 17: 1371-72, Calendar of the plea and memoranda rolls of the city of London: volume 2: 1364-1381 (1929), pp.132-149.

4. Royal brewhouses and excise

Bottling October 1945 p30 mentions a brewery called La Glene, near London Bridge in St. Magnus parish, owned by Henry Yevele, Master Mason to various monarchs. In 1356 some brewers were especially appointed by the Mayor to provide and serve ale to the King on his visit to the City. Similarly, there is the oft-quoted reference to Henry VIII in 1530 banning the use of hops at the Eltham palace.

Various texts make mention of the brewers for royalty e.g. Edward Skelle, in 1546 brewer for the King. However, online searches can also provide information from less obvious texts:

The same day was bered Gylles the kynges bere [-brewer] dwellyng at Sant Katheryns, and bered at Algate, with ys armes, and the craft of the Bruars; he ded with a chrache of ys lege, and bled to deth. 1551 The Diary of Henry Machyn: Citizen and Merchant-Taylor of London (1550-1563) (1848), pp.3-13.

Wills also provide names eg Hughe Orame/Oram, Master Brewer of the King’s Brewhouse probate 9 July 1550. Cornell (p.80) mentions John Vanhulst “her beer brewer” in 1600.

Royal Control of exports - in 1582 Mr. Carr and his wife for brewing beer; ale to be excepted in the grant. 1590 licence granted to William Carr and Bridget his wife for the brewing of ale and beer for exportation. 1596 Carr , the Queen’s servant, on surrender of a former grant, for nine years, of the brewing of all beer for export by licence in London and Westminster.

Hornsey (p.347) writes that in 1580 a court brewhouse was set up at Sion, west of the City. However, output was unacceptable because of water on the site. It was closed and a brewery rented at Puddle Dock and operated by Roderick Powell until 1582. The Earl of Leicester re-opened it 1585 and it operated to 1588. He then signed contracts with ale brewers Richard Yardley and Roger Charlton and two beer brewers: Wassell Weblen and Abraham Campion. In 1592 new contracts were under the responsibility of Geoffrey Duppa.

Mr Lowndes presented to the House, several examinations taken and other papers relating to the abuses in the Victualling. Amongst these papers were (a) observations concerning beer at the Victualling Office and frauds there per Mr. William Chainey and Mr. John Draper, two of the General Surveyors for the Excise of the London Brewery. (b) a report of beer and bread shipped from the Queen’s Brewhouse.
The imposition of beer duty in 1643, was not only aimed at raising money but also to control the production of stronger ales. The excise, or at least non-compliance, was often noted:

Treasury reference to the Excise Commissioners of the petition of Thomas Morin a common brewer who through the difficulty of these times is run £350 in arrear to the King and his brewing utensils and goods have been seized and sold for £229 which was not above a third of their value by reason whereof petitioner still owes about £150.

Walter Wright, brewer to Queen Anne, 1721.


One of the main sites was St. Katherines e.g. 1787 Joseph Munday, of the King’s Brewhouse, Precint of Saint Catherine, and whose story will be followed later in the book.

Royal and state involvement in the industry also went further than just control, into investment:

That Peter Pagan, Brewer, imprisoned for his Neglect in paying Excise, by Order of this House of 11 August last.

Warrants etc.: April 1697, 1-10, Calendar of Treasury Books, Volume 12: 1697 (1933), pp.85-96.

That Sir John Friend part-owned the Phoenix Brewhouse, value £11,700, when indicted for treason and his fame or infamy, depending on perspective, means that information is more readily forthcoming:

Sir John Friend or Freind (died 1696) was an English conspirator. Friend was the eldest son of John Friend, a brewer, who resided in the precinct of St. Katharine’s, near the Tower of London. He followed his father’s business. He built the ‘stately brewhouse’ called the Phoenix in the Minories, and amassed considerable wealth. For a while he maintained a fine country residence at Hackney. In 1683 he was appointed a commissioner of excise. Though avowedly a Protestant he remained a faithful adherent of James II, by whom he was knighted 3 August 1685. After the Glorious Revolution he was expelled from the artillery company at a meeting held in February 1689-90, and lost his seat at the board of excise. However, by a treasury order dated 18 December 1690, he was relieved from the payment of excise duties. James sent him a colonel’s commission to raise a regiment of horse against the day when the French should appear in Kent; but, observes Burnet, ‘his purse was more considered than his head, and was open on all occasions as the party applied to him’. On the discovery of the conspiracy he was arraigned for high treason 23 March 1696, and was
denied the assistance of counsel by Chief-justice Holt. Friend was convicted and sentenced to death. Together with Sir William Parkyns he was executed at Tyburn 3 April 1696.

**Farming the excise.**

However, it was the potential monopoly power, which is well-documented:

Indenture, 20 April, 1600, 42 Elizabeth, between Gerson Willford, of London, mercer, ‘deputie and assignee’ of Richard Drake and Michael Stanhope, esquires, and William Catcher, of East Smithfeilde,’bruer,’ witnessing that whereas by letters patent, the queen licensed the said Richard Drake and his deputies for twenty-one years then next to ‘enjoye the whole and sole trade of making brewing and providing of all and singuler beere ale or anie other good and wholsom liquor whatsoever to be at anie time or times during the said terme converted and used to and for the making of Aquacomposita Aquavitie beere venigar beeregar or allegar onlie and for no other intent or purpose,’ throughout England,’ by anie person or persons whatsoever to be sould or put to sale’; by virtue of which letters patent the said Richard Drake and Michael Stanhope, ‘by their writing or deputation,’ 16 March last, constituted him, the said Gerson Willford, as their ‘deputie and assignee’ for the execution of the same; he gives licence to the said William Catcher ‘and his assignes in the brewhouse’ where he ‘now dwelleth commonlie called the Redd Lyon, in East Smithfeld afforesaid onelie,’ while the said letters patent endure, to brew, &c. such ‘beere, ale’ or ‘wholsom liquor,’ except ‘wyne and wyne lees,’ ‘to be converted and used to and for the making of Aquavitie Aquacomposita beerevenigar beeregar or allegar,’ and to sell the same in London, Westminster and Southwark, paying for every barrel of beer, ale or other liquor sold 6d. and for every barrel of ’grounds or washe’ 2d. quarterly, and so from quarter to quarter for every barrel the like sum, as by his tally or book it shall appear, &c.; covenant by Catcher not to deliver out any such beer, &c. for any of the above purposes ‘before the same be lawfullie tried tasted and allowed to be good and wholsome’ by Willford or his assigns, &c. English. Signed per me Gerson Wilfforde.


The Parsons family were not the only ones who made their fortune from operating the excise on behalf of the sovereign. One interesting name, which is followed up in the book:

Oliver Vaughan, brewer. For grant of the remainder of a lease of tenements in Old Street 1660.

Same from same of the 19th Dec. last, read and entered, concerning the arrear of Excise of £475 2s 6d standing out on Oliver Vaughan, brewer, and proposing to accept £237 for same in view of said Vaughan’s compounding with his creditors at 5s in the £.

Same from same of the 12th inst., read and entered, concerning the petition from Francis Wethered, Farmer of Excise in co. York.

Report of the Comrs of Excise to the Lords of the Treasury, on the petition of John Wilcocks, Jun., Esq., who was appointed one of the Comrs of Excise in April 1691, touching debts which had accrued to the Excise office, for duties on beer and ale, brewed in a brewhouse in Turnmill Street, let by him to Mr. Tho. Eyer, and afterwards to Mr. Rice Fellowes; recommending the brewing utensils to be sold to pay Mr. Fellowes’s debt. Dated 19 July 1695.

In the Minute Book, vol. 6, p.90 is the following entry:- “The Comrs of Excise to have a copy of Wilcoxe’s answer, and not to levy upon the utensils in his brewhouse till the matters in dispute between them be determined by my Lds.”

And again at p.277:- “My Lords take off the last order which they gave concerning Mr Wilcoxes brewing vessels, and leave the Comrs to proceed according to law.”

Dorothy Penny, widow, praying the discharge of a bond given for Excise and a debt owing from a brewhouse of which she has possession.


**Victualling the R.N. etc.**

Mathias gives some very useful outlines to such and various names are mentioned in the state paper eg 1657 Venman, brewer to the navy, at Chatham. King also

Brewery History Number 151
mentions the brewers of Whitechapel supplying the Navy in 1627 (p.72). Some papers also mention other aspects of victualling:

Same to same approving their proposed list of officers for the Victualling to be employed at salaries detailed, viz. Edward Wivell as assistant; Anthony Sturt, junr., as cashier; Tho. Coleby as accomptant general; Jacob Woodward as clerk of the issues; William Collins as clerk of the entries; Edw. Crawly as clerk of the cutting house; Joseph Keeling as clerk of the bakehouse; Richd. Babington as clerk of the brewhouse. Entry Book: December 1683, 1-10', Calendar of Treasury Books, Vol 7: 1681-1685 (1916), pp.967-982.

5. Wills

As mentioned, wills can be searched for online, but detail is limited. However, when the provisions are contested, the resulting cases can shed light:

1275 Long John le, ‘Frueter.’ To William his son his house next to the church of All Hallows, with brewhouse and utensils; and to Peter his son his mansion house. Wills: 3 Edward I (1274-5)', Calendar of wills proved and enrolled in the Court of Husting, London: Part 1: 1258-1358 (1889), pp.19-26.

The Common Serjeant, William de Iford, acting on behalf of John le Botoner, an orphan, delivered a bill claiming an estate tail in a brewery devised to the orphan by his father in Bassishaw. The boy’s mother, Joan, had married a second husband, Roger Buntynge, and now claimed that the estate was in fee simple and that her first husband had devised to her the brewery for life, with remainder to the orphan. She pleaded that originally the brewery belonged with other tenements to a certain William le Callere, and descended to his three daughters as co-heiresses, and that by a subsequent arrangement the estate had been divided, the brewhouse coming to his daughter Lucy, who had married the orphan’s grandfather, Laurence le Botoner; After the latter’s death his son John, who was her first husband and the orphan’s father, had the brewhouse in fee simple and was entitled to devise it to her for life. This the Common Serjeant denied, on the ground that the brewhouse was an estate in tail. Judgment was deferred. 17 Edw. III. 1343 Roll A 4: 1337-43', Calendar of the plea and memoranda rolls of the city of London: volume 1: 1323-1364 (1926), pp.143-164.

6. Thefts etc.

The Old Bailey Online site is an ideal source for court cases, but doesn’t start until 1674. Nevertheless, other court cases can include names of brewers:

Henry Deane of Whitechapel, brewer, Thomas Browne of Shoe Lane, St. Bride’s, chandler, and George Boulton tailor, for the said Henry, accused to have taken goods out of the house of Thomas Greene. Sessions, 1615: 28 and 29 March’, County of Middlesex. Calendar to the sessions records: new series, volume 2: 1614-15 (1936), pp.220-256.

Elizabeth Willett of Limehouse, spinster, for stealing five barrels of tar worth 80s. belonging to William Palmer, at the same. Not guilty. Acquitted.

Prosecutors:-Richard Whitlocke of London, merchant, William Pulman of Limehouse, ropemaker, and Mary his wife, David Parrey.

The said Pulman to bring forth Edward Burde [Birde], servant to a brewer, who sold to the said Pulman the five barrels of tar belonging to the said Palmer, for which the said Elizabeth is indicted. Sessions, 1616: 11 and 12 April, County of Middlesex. Calendar to the sessions records: new series, volume 3: 1615-16 (1937), pp.194-259.

Nicholas Ward [Wardde] of Whitechapel, drayman [brewer], for hurting Libia Carter, the child of Rowland Carter, on the head with his cart at the same, being warned to stay it, so that she is in danger of her life. Prosecutors: Martha, wife of the said Rowland, John Cope, Tryamor Enyon of Whitechapel, brewer. Sessions, 1614: 16 and 18 July’, County of Middlesex. Calendar to the sessions records: new series, volume 2: 1614-15 (1936), pp.1-34.
The latter case highlights how some terms can become confusing as we previously saw with “brewhouse” eg the drayman in question is not a brewer, but possibly an employee of Enyon.

**Conclusion**

The Old Bailey Online, *London Gazette* and various newspaper sites mean that it is possible to gain information on some of the less well-known brewers. Additionally, it is becoming possible to confirm, and in some cases reconsider, the roots of the more famous ones. Hopefully, another article will provide that as a precursor to the book and space can be found in the newsletter to document the marginal information, such as wills.

**References**


**Appendix**

*An outline of the records from the website.*

The records of the Brewers’ Society contain detailed apprenticeship records from 1531. Though the actual register of apprenticeships of this company does not begin until 1685 (it is preserved as Guildhall Library Ms 5450) records of apprenticeship prior this date appear in the Court Minutes of the Society - though from the 1660s and 1670s these do not generally give details such as the name and parish of the father. There are also other volumes of Brewers’ apprenticeships beginning in 1694, but these only record the bare names of the apprentices and their payment of the tax on apprenticeship imposed in that year.

The early series of Court Minutes from which most of the earlier entries in the database were taken consist of a series of annual reports, mainly August to August. These have been bound up into a series of volumes. This has led to some years being omitted, and some being in other ways mis-bound.

The Brewers’ Wardens’ Accounts books begin as early as 1501. However, they do not provide a detailed record, containing the names of the parties and in some years the exact date. They have been used here to add entries after the start of the detailed apprenticeship records of the company in 1531. The first account book (GL Ms 5442/1) contains the accounts for 1501/2-1507/8 and 1541/2-1545/6. The second volume (GL Ms 5442/2) contains the accounts from the years missing above. However, this book has clearly been made up from loose sheets, and many years are misplaced and jumbled. The third book of accounts (GL Ms 5442/3 contains accounts 1546/7-1561/2, the fourth (GL Ms 5442/4) accounts for 1563-81 and the fifth (GL Ms 5442/5) covers 1582-1616. There are two sets of accounts for 1546-7; there are minor differences between the two set which have not been fully collated. All these volumes have been used silently to fill in gaps in the Court Minutes.

The first Brewers’ Company Court Minute Book (GL Ms 5445/1) is labelled 1531 to 1584, however this is clearly due to a misreading as it begins on 5 Oct 1531 and ends in 1554. From 1531 the minutes run for a year. There is then a gap from 5 Sep 1532 to 22 Oct 1538. There are further gaps after 4 Sep 1539 until 7 Oct 1544 and from after 9 Aug 1552 until 4 Sep 1553.

The second volume of Court Minutes (GL Ms 5445/2) begins 23 Sep 1557 and ends in 1563. The third volume runs from 1563 to Aug 1568, but the minutes are missing from Aug 1566 to Aug 1567. The fourth volume begins in Sep 1568 and ends in Aug 1573. The fifth volume begins in Sep 1573 and ends in Aug 1578. The apprenticeships in the sixth volume start in Sep 1578 and end in Aug 1582. The seventh volume began in Aug 1582 and ends Aug 1586. The eighth volume begins in Aug 1586 and ends in Aug 1589. The ninth...
begins in Sep 1590 (i.e. there is a year missing) and ends in Aug 1596. Ms 5445/10 begins in Sep 1597, so again there is a gap. There is also a most peculiar problem in the Wardens’ Accounts: there is a section headed 1596, but it contains the apprenticeships of 1591! The volume is very badly misbound, but a section for the missing period was found, eventually, though not headed. GL Ms 5445/10 ends in Aug 1600. Again, there is a gap until GL Ms 5445/11 starts in Sep 1601.

GL Ms 5445/11 ends in Jul 1603, and GL Ms 5445/12 does not begin until Sep 1604, again a gap which has been made partially good by the warden’s accounts. GL Ms 5445/12 is itself misbound in places, with the minutes from the beginning of Dec 1604 to 11 Apr 1605 following those for Sep 1605, an error made even more confusing by a minute on the first page of the misbound section being dated (in error) Dec 1603. One result of this is that Reynold Scoles was apparently discharged from his apprenticeship before he was apprenticed! This register ends in Aug 1612, and GL Ms 5445/13 begins in the same month. It ends in Aug 1620, when GL Ms 5445/14 begins. This volume is misbound Oct-Dec 1621 being placed after May 1622. It ends in Aug 1628 when GL Ms 5445/15 begins. This in turn ends in Aug 1634 and GL Ms 5445/16 starts. This register ends in Aug 1642.

GL Ms 5445/17 starts in Sep 1642. In this volume most of year 1646/7 has been bound in upside down and there are two copies of 1651-2 and the record ends in Aug 1652. In GL Ms 5445/18 starting in Sep 1652 there are two copies of 1652-3, 1653-4, 1654-5 and 1655-6. It ends in Aug 1659. GL Ms 5445/19 starts in Sep 1659 and ends in Aug 1665. The next volume (GL Ms 5445/20) does not start until Sep 1666.

In GL Ms 5450 the apprentices’ fathers’ parishes and occupation are usually (but not invariably) given. In a few cases after about 1760 more precise places (such as streets) are sometimes given; they have been omitted from these abstracts. In a few records the person paying the fee has been noted by name; where this is not the father it has been noted. Where the father is noted as dead this has been denoted in the text by “deceased” against their occupation or status (or parish in the few cases where the occupation is not given).

Later in the eighteenth century fewer and fewer masters actually practised the trade of brewing; in cases where a master’s actual trade is given, this will be found in brackets after his name. Sometimes also in the later records a place is given for the master. This has been omitted except where it is not (as it almost invariably is) within the old London County Council area. Also omitted has been ‘considerations’, the fees paid by apprentices (or rather their parents, etc.) to the master for the apprenticeship.

The records of 5,858 Brewers’ apprenticeships have been abstracted.

The Worshipful Company of Brewers, London: apprenticeship bindings, 1685-1806
Worshipful Company of Brewers; Osborn, Helen, 1961
Book. English. 1996
Available at Guildhall Library

London livery company apprenticeship registers, Vol. 36, Brewers’ company, 1531-1685
Webb, Cliff; Society of Genealogists

The Names of Brewers within the Liberties of the City of London. Folio cxxiii b. Folio cxxiv.


Recognisances of persons to be made free by redemption in the Company of Brewers in 100 marks and bonds of their sureties in £20. 7 Nov 1436.
