Trades and handy labour: occupations in London’s growing eastern suburb, 1590 to 1710

Gill Newton

Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure
New industries in London’s East End, 1500-1700

- Gunmaking (first half of 16th century)
  - blacksmiths
  - gunmakers

- Brewing (second half of 16th century)
  - brewers
  - coopers
  - draymen

- Silk manufacture (first half of 17th century)
  - throsters
  - weavers

- Outfitting ships (second half of 17th century)
  - victuallers, butchers, bakers, brewers
  - carpenters
  - gunners
Population growth: London suburbs and City

- Eastern suburb (Aldgate)
- Northern suburb (Clerkenwell)
- City Centre (Cheapside)
Persistence in the parish

- Among childbearing couples, relatively invariant over time

Baptising children in the parish 1560-1710 (n=27096)

- < 1 year: 65%
- 1-2 years: 6%
- 2-5 years: 14%
- 5-10 years: 10%
- >10 years: 5%

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1-2 years: 6%
2-5 years: 14%
5-10 years: 10%
>10 years: 5%
In the 16th to 18th centuries many Dutch and Flemish moved to London, impelled by religious persecution and conflict.

Their skills are strongly associated with the formation of silk manufacture and brewing industries.

1 in 20 surnames in our Eastern dockside parish of Aldgate appear crudely ‘Dutch’ (ie begin with van).

From the registers of the Dutch church in London, we know that 1 in 7 Dutch persons have a surname beginning van.

Using that to inflate the numbers of persons with Dutch surnames, a minimum of 2.3% of Aldgate’s population were of Dutch origin.

But away from the river Thames in the Northern suburb of Clerkenwell only 0.3% people are of Dutch origin.
Recording of father’s occupations in Aldgate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>all baptisms</td>
<td>1669</td>
<td>1955</td>
<td>2410</td>
<td>2866</td>
<td>3074</td>
<td>4393</td>
<td>4368</td>
<td>3307</td>
<td>4419</td>
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<tr>
<td>with father occupation</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>1701</td>
<td>1254</td>
<td>1332</td>
<td>2919</td>
<td>3996</td>
<td>4085</td>
<td>591</td>
<td>561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% baptisms with father occupation</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Almost no mothers are ascribed an occupation
  - Women almost certainly were involved in some industries
- The burials register also records occupation, but primarily for fathers
Are all fathers equal?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>1590-9 baptised</th>
<th>distinct fathers</th>
<th>ratio</th>
<th>1620-49 baptised</th>
<th>distinct fathers</th>
<th>ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>brewing</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>silk industry</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>439</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>0.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>carpentry</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>0.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The effect of occupation on bachelors' age at marriage

St Katherine by the Tower:
Age at first marriage 1690-1708
Male occupations by category and decade

- Unknown
- Administration
- Comfort
- Transport and military
- Construction, manufacture and selling on
- Food, drink, housekeeping and hospitality
- Raw materials
The proportion of males in PST sectors by decade

[Graph showing the proportion of males in PST sectors by decade from 1590-1660, with lines for Secondary, Tertiary, and Primary sectors.]
Residence of occupied grooms in St Katherine by the Tower, 1687 to 1712

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>London Suburbs East</td>
<td>1034</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London City</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London South of the Thames</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kent</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Suburbs West</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Suburbs North</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Westminster</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essex</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surrey</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlesex</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other English counties</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2035</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 8% (168) from Aldgate
- 4 times as many sailors as before 1650
- Naval expansion or sailors overstated because of proximity to docks?
The proportion of males in PST sectors by decade continued to 1712, **excluding sailors**
Major occupational groups: importance and change over time
Major occupational groups: growth rates by period

- Weaver
- Beer brewer
- Tailor
- Shoemaker
- Porter
- Labourer
- Silk thread maker
- Butcher
- Carpenter/joiner
- Gunmaker
- Blacksmith
- Mariner/seaman
- Carman/drayman
- Cooper

Growth rates by period:
- 1590-9 and 1620-9
- 1620-9 and 1630-9
- 1630-9 and 1640-9
A contemporary (1618) view of occupational change

“the best Inhabitants & most antients being dead & decaied & manie verie pore come in there places, most of them having neither trades nor meanes to live on, but by their handy labour, as porters carrmen waterbearers, chymney sweepers, servants in silk mylls bruers servants lyving for ye most part in allies having wyves, & most of them many children, the rest carpenters bricklaiers, plaisterers coopers, smiths butchers, Chandlers keep[er]s of sylk mylls, Priests schoolmrs, victulers brokers & Divers officers to ye Kinges Matie, & ye Cittie wch either cannot or els challendg & will not paie such dutie as are imposed vpon them towards ye maintenance of ye pore”

Source: Francis Parke’s Parish Clerk’s memoranda book for St Botolph without Aldgate (BOD MS RAWL D796B lib: B fol. 12.a.), citing earlier clerk Wm Carpenter