

THE BOROUGH OF MALDON, ESSEX,

1500-1688

A study in sixteenth and seventeenth century
urban history

by

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M.A. (Cambridge)

Submitted in the Faculty of Arts, Department of English Local
History, University of Leicester,
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy,

1972

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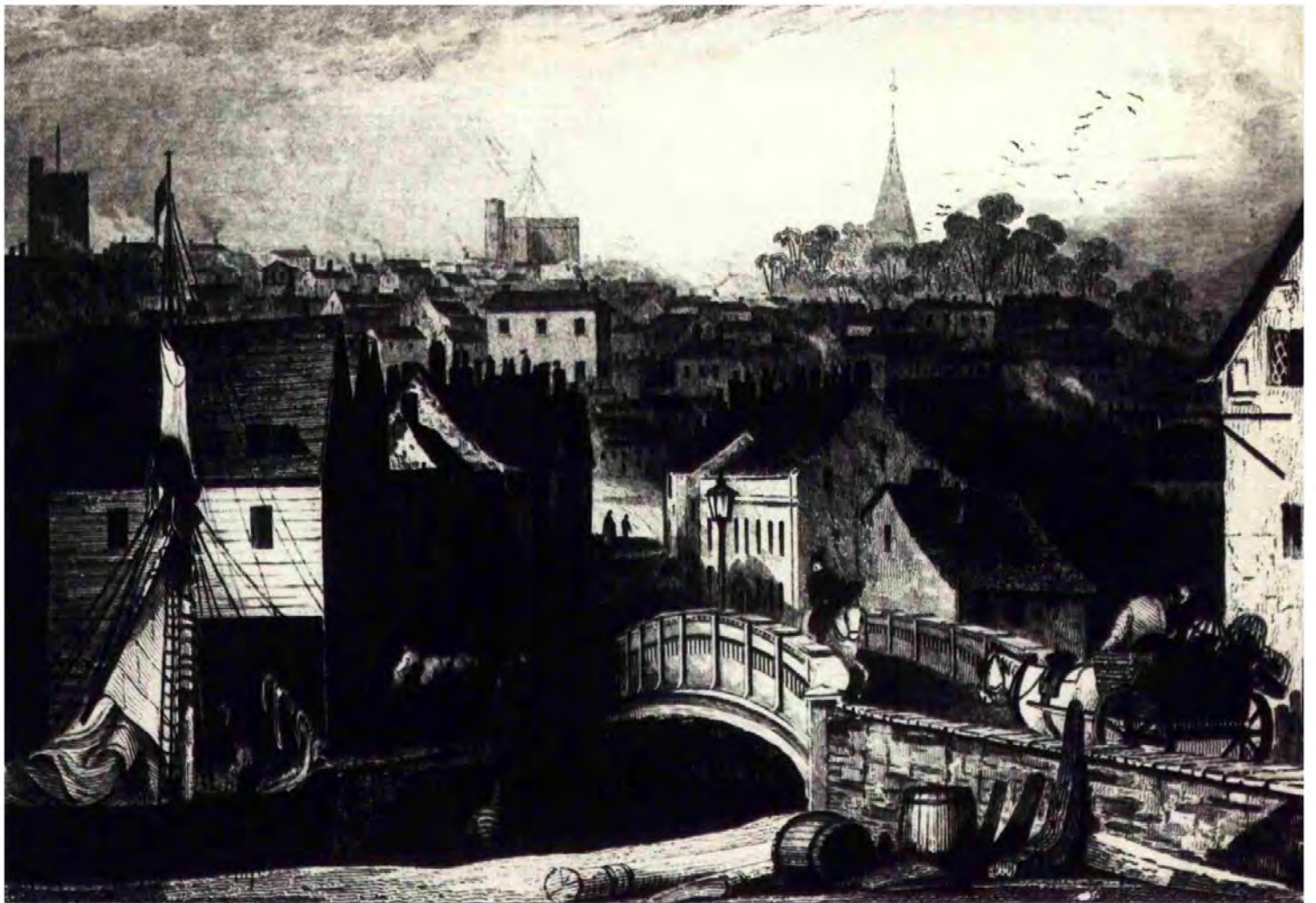
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1. Maldon from Fullbridge, 1831
(Engraving for Thomas Wright, History of Essex.)

THE BOROUGH OF MALDON, ESSEX, 1500-1688

(Ph.D. thesis submitted for examination by

W.J. Petchey, June 1972.)

This thesis is the result of work done during the period of my registration as an external student of the Department of English Local History in the University of Leicester, January 1966 to June 1972. None of the material within it has been submitted by me for any other degree.

W.J. Petchey

W.J. Petchey.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AgHEW	Joan Thirsk (ed.) <u>Agrarian History of England and Wales</u> . Vol. IV, 1500-1640. Cambridge University Press, 1967.
<u>Anglin</u>	Jay Pascal Anglin. 'Court of the Archdeacon of Essex, 1571-1609.' Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, 1965. University of California-Los Angeles.
CPR	Calendar of the Patent Rolls.
CSPD	Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series.
DNB	L. Stephen and S. Lee (ed.). <u>Dictionary of National Biography</u> . Reprint of 1908-1909.
E.R.O.	Essex Record Office.
MCA	Maldon Borough Chamberlains' Accounts.
PCC	Prerogative Court of Canterbury.
P.R.O.	Public Record Office.
<u>Statutes of the Realm</u>	Alexander Luders (ed.). <u>The Statutes of the Realm</u> . 1810-1828.
Trans. E.A.S.	Transactions of the Essex Archaeological Society.
VCH <u>Essex</u>	Victoria County History of Essex. Vol. I, 1903. Vol. II, 1907. Vol. IV, 1956.
WAM	Westminster Abbey Muniments.

TRANSCRIPTION

In quoting from contemporary documents I have retained the original spelling but I have extended abbreviations and added modern capitals, punctuation and direct speech paragraphing except where the text leaves some doubt as to the writer's intention.

DATING

All dates have been rendered as New Style.

PREFACE

Four hundred years ago William Camden set a false trail for the history of Maldon, Essex, when he vigorously asserted that it was the site of the Roman city of Camulodunum. Right through the seventeenth century that was accepted; all the writer on Essex had to do when he came to his section on Maldon was to insert a digest of Roman accounts of the Claudian conquest and Boudicca's rebellion. So closely guarded too were the "secrets of the corporation" (its charters and records) that there was no possibility of recording more than a general account of the existing borough. About 1900 there were at last signs that the full-scale history of Maldon was about to be written. Dr Andrew Clark, formerly history tutor of Lincoln College, Oxford, and an assistant at the Bodleian Library, retired to Essex and began a systematic exploration of the borough muniments. He also stimulated two Maldon residents to use their skills on the writing of the town's history. The Reverend Leonard Hughes, Vicar of All Saints' produced an extremely useful booklet, of which the greater part is occupied with transcripts of manuscript and printed materials relative to that church. Alderman E.A. Fitch wrote a guide, Maldon and the River Blackwater, which remains the most comprehensive survey of the borough's history as yet in print. It records impartially municipal, Anglican and nonconformist topics and it is based on the borough records and Dr Clark's researches. It is, however, essentially a guide book, a Baedeker for Edwardian holiday visitors, which surveys the surrounding area as well and is firmly attached to a gazetteer plan. It is antiquarian, industriously informative but historically superficial. These activities occurred before 1914. Then Alderman Fitch died, the Reverend L. Hughes was preferred to Saffron Walden and Dr Clark's activities were diverted, in a race against illness and age, to other aspects of Essex history. His researches remain in

manuscript, apart from some valuable short articles in the Essex Review. Since then volumes of the revived Victoria County History have concerned the south-western divisions of Essex. Maldon has remained untouched.

This thesis is the only other attempt at a full-length historical study of the borough, albeit covering only the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It stems from a curiosity about the development of the town which the books of Hughes and Fitch first provoked when I was a school-boy in Maldon but, apart from some explorations of the borough chamberlains' accounts and attempts at topographical reconstruction, my serious research had to wait until Professor W.G. Hoskins agreed that I should become an external student of the Department of Local History of Leicester University in 1966. Since then the work on this thesis has been done on a part-time basis during a career as a schoolmaster in Yorkshire.

The conditions under which I have written have made me very much obliged to a great many friends, historians and archivists, to whom I owe a great debt of gratitude. My first thanks must go to Professor Hoskins, who supervised the work from 1966 to June 1968, to his successor Professor A. Everitt and to my long-suffering supervisor from 1968, Mr Charles Phythian-Adams, whose skilful administrations of stringent criticism, encouragement and academic expertise have helped me to bring the work this far. At the Essex Record Office the successive County Archivists, Mr F.G. Emmison and Mr K.C. Newton, and their assistants have given me every possible help and much advice on the resources of their collections.

Because I have been a part-time student, I must also record my special debt to the Master and Fellows of Balliol College, Oxford, who elected me to a schoolmaster studentship for Trinity Term 1968 and to the Governors of Ripon Grammar School and the Education Committee of the West Riding Council, my employers, who gave leave of absence to take up

the studentship. That gave about five months for exhaustive work on the records and for reading, during which the central theme of this study, on population mobility, first became apparent.

There are many others whose conversations and enquiries have contributed much to my understanding of the history of Maldon in its general context, particularly Dr Paul Slack, Dr Alan MacFarlane and my old friend Mr A.C. Edwards, who have listened patiently and offered sensible advice. Nevertheless, it will be understood that despite the help and guidance so freely given by so many people, I alone am responsible for the shortcomings which readers may find in this latest attempt to probe the nature of Maldon in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

W.J. Petchey

Ripon, Yorkshire.

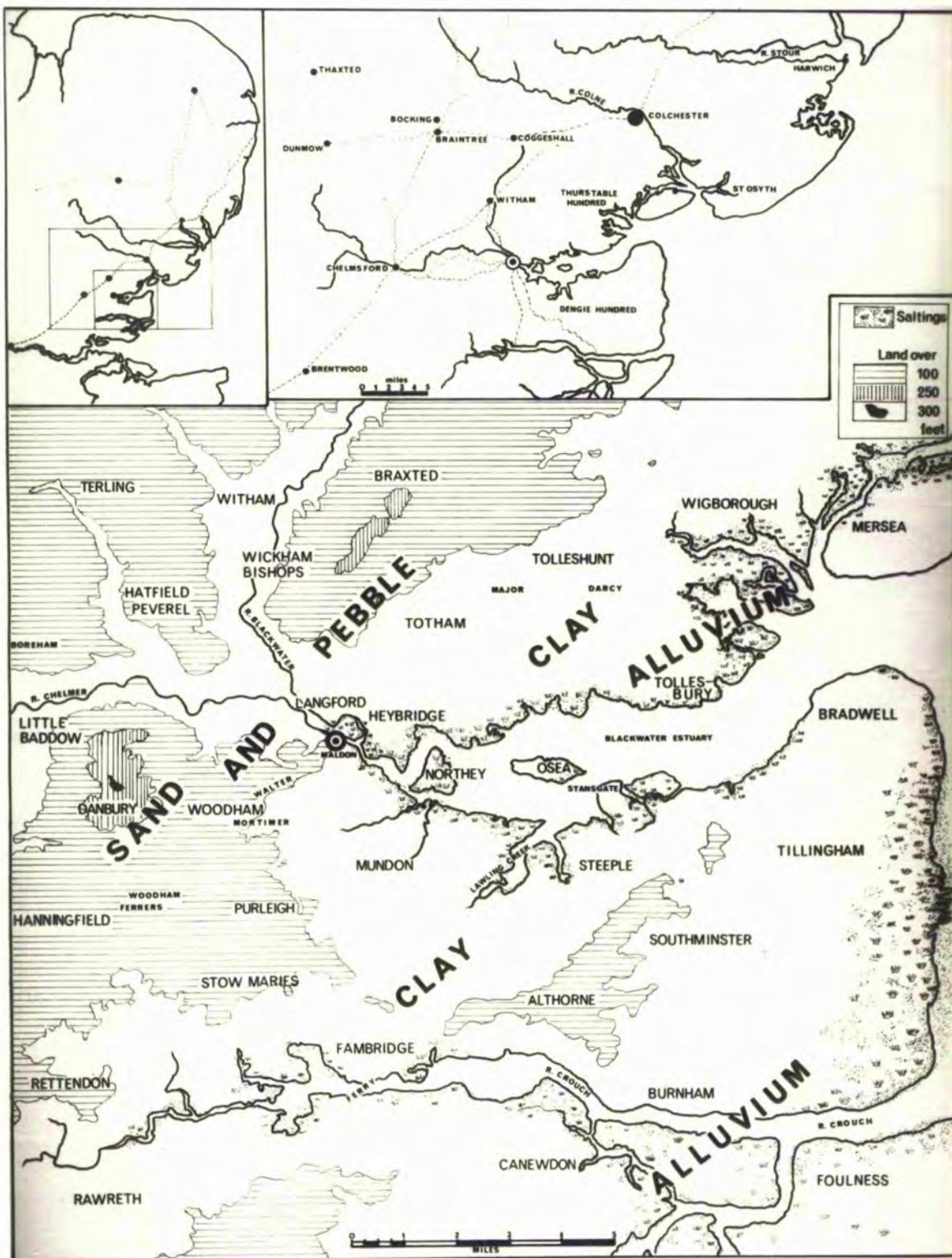
June 1972.

Chapter 1

A PROSPECT OF MALDON, 1500-1688

Until the late nineteenth century nearly all the town of Maldon in the county of Essex was built along the spine of the hill from which a Saxon settlement had taken its name Mael - dun, "the hill marked by a cross."¹ It lies on the eastern side of Essex, mid-way between the Thames and the Stour, at the head of the Blackwater Estuary; half rural, half coastal in its situation, where two distinct landscapes meet to provide the scenery characteristic of the central Essex coastline. Eastward of the town the Blackwater stretches away some fifteen miles, the central and the widest of the sea inlets into which the Essex coast has crumbled during its long, steady subsidence into the shallow basin of the North Sea. The estuary is blocked near Maldon with islands and mud banks and it is flanked all the way to the sea by salt marshes through which numerous creeks trickle out to the main river channel. That part of the landscape east of the town is wide and empty, composed of salt water, mud flats and sear grassland. Westwards, however, higher, heathy land running north-east to south separates Maldon from the central plain of Essex, a ridge of boulder clay topped with gravel and rising at Danbury (five miles west of Maldon) to 346 feet and to 200 and 270 feet above sea level at Braxted and Tiptree. (See figure 2, The Maldon Area). Two rivers, the Chelmer and the Blackwater, have carved valleys through these hills. They merge streams directly below the northern side of Maldon hill and flow out thence into the estuary. At their conjunction the two landscapes, of upland heath and coastal marsh, also merge where a broad stretch of marshland has been created from the river silt dragged out of Essex by the two rivers, discharged into the estuary and then swept back

1. P.H. Reaney, Place-names of Essex, (Cambridge, 1935) pp. 218-219.



2 The Maldon Area

then swept back into their mouths by the daily tides.

The southern side of the hill on which Maldon has been established slopes away very gradually. The north side, however, is abrupt, sweeping up from the river and marshland in a steep gradient. Among the gently rolling slopes of the eastern Essex countryside that is a surprise and the position of Maldon is visually most striking. A traveller coming across the marshland of the two rivers must look up to the roofs and towers which stand against the sky one hundred feet above him. A view of Maldon from that side today is broadly unchanged from the picture drawn for a county history of 1831: sixteenth century houses lead from the bridge and frame the scene; the steep, tree-clad hillside provides the backdrop, crowned by the tower of St Peter's church, the turreted Moot Hall and the pagoda-like wooden spire of All Saints' church. (See figure 1.)

Medieval inheritance

In 1500 the borough had long possessed the usual outward marks of an urban community. There was a market place, with the wood and plaster Moot Hall of its burgesses at the centre. There was another trading area at the Hythe, the quayside of Maldon. And there were the usual ecclesiastical accoutrements of a sizeable town: three parish churches, each with its own religious fraternity and with chantries; a Carmelite Friary beside the market place; a chapel to St Helen on the hillside below the market (and a hermitage adjacent to that chapel); an abbey of White Canons outside the town but with parochial rights in two of the parishes; and, in the fields west of the town, a hospital dedicated to St Giles. There was no castle, to be sure, but there were the remains of the Anglo-Saxon earthworks built in 916 by King Edward the Elder during his reconquest of Essex from the Danes. And these were

all ancient foundations by 1500. Even before the Norman Conquest it seems that Maldon was well established: rich enough to attract a Viking raid of considerable size in 991, important enough to be worth defending then in pitched battle¹.

All the major elements existed by 1200 and these remained the nodal points of Maldon throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth century.

St Mary's church by the Hythe was there in 1135, when it was inappropriate to the canons of St Martin-le-Grand in London,² and they claimed that the church had been given to them nearly a century before by a Saxon landowner called Ingelric.³

The other two parish churches, All Saints' and St Peter's, were there by 1189, when they were inappropriate to the canons of Beeleigh Abbey.⁴

-
1. For the date see E.V. Gordon, *The Battle of Maldon* (1937) pp. 1 and 10 to 15.
 2. (a) Westminster Abbey Muniments 8111: writ of King Stephen to Geoffrey de Mandeville to re-seise the canons of St Martin in the lands which they had held in Maldon in 1135; (b) WAM 8114: charter of Robert fitzRichard to the church of St Mary in Maldon, 1135-54, granting them all that the church had held in the time of King Henry I (printed in Thomas Madox, *Firma Burgi* (1726) p.16 note m).
 3. Certainly Count Eustace of Boulogne in 1086 was lord of thirty acres at Maldon "held in King Edward's time by one free man whom Engelric annexed: now St Martin's holds it of the Count." (VCH *Essex*, I, p.465: Domesday Survey.)
 4. Charter of confirmation to Beeleigh Abbey by Richard I, 1189 Printed in translation by R.C. Fowler, *Beeleigh Abbey* (1924) p.37.

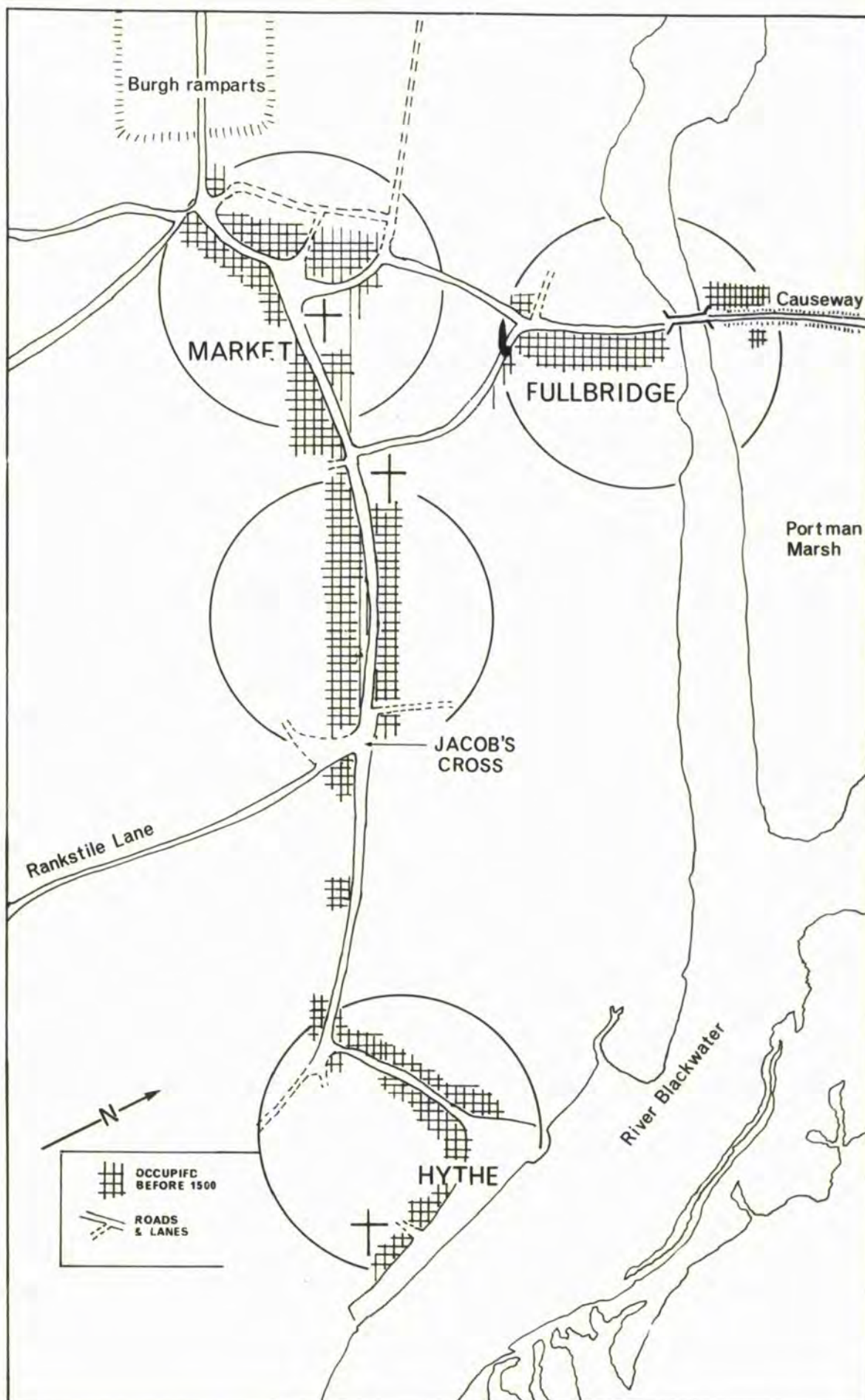
By then, too, the great bridge which formed the essential link in the communication of Maldon with northern Essex had been constructed and had received its name - the Fullbridge, the "foul" or "muddy" bridge - because one of the Maldon tenants of the Knights Templar was named Stephen of Fulebrigge in 1185.¹ By then the Causeway which crosses the marshland between Fullbridge and Heybridge must have come into being.

The three parish churches, the houses of each parish and the market place, the Hythe and the bridge constituted the growth points of the medieval town but they were not compactly sited. The town was divided into four quite distinct settlements which were still quite separate in 1500 (see figure 3) and which continued through the next three hundred years at least to characterise the plan and disposition of the place. There was the waterside Hythe area at the eastern base of the hill; the market place on the highest part of the hill, immediately to the east of the site of the Saxon burgh; a string of houses east of St Peter's church, on either side of the main road which ran down the spine of the hill; and a fourth area beside the Fullbridge.

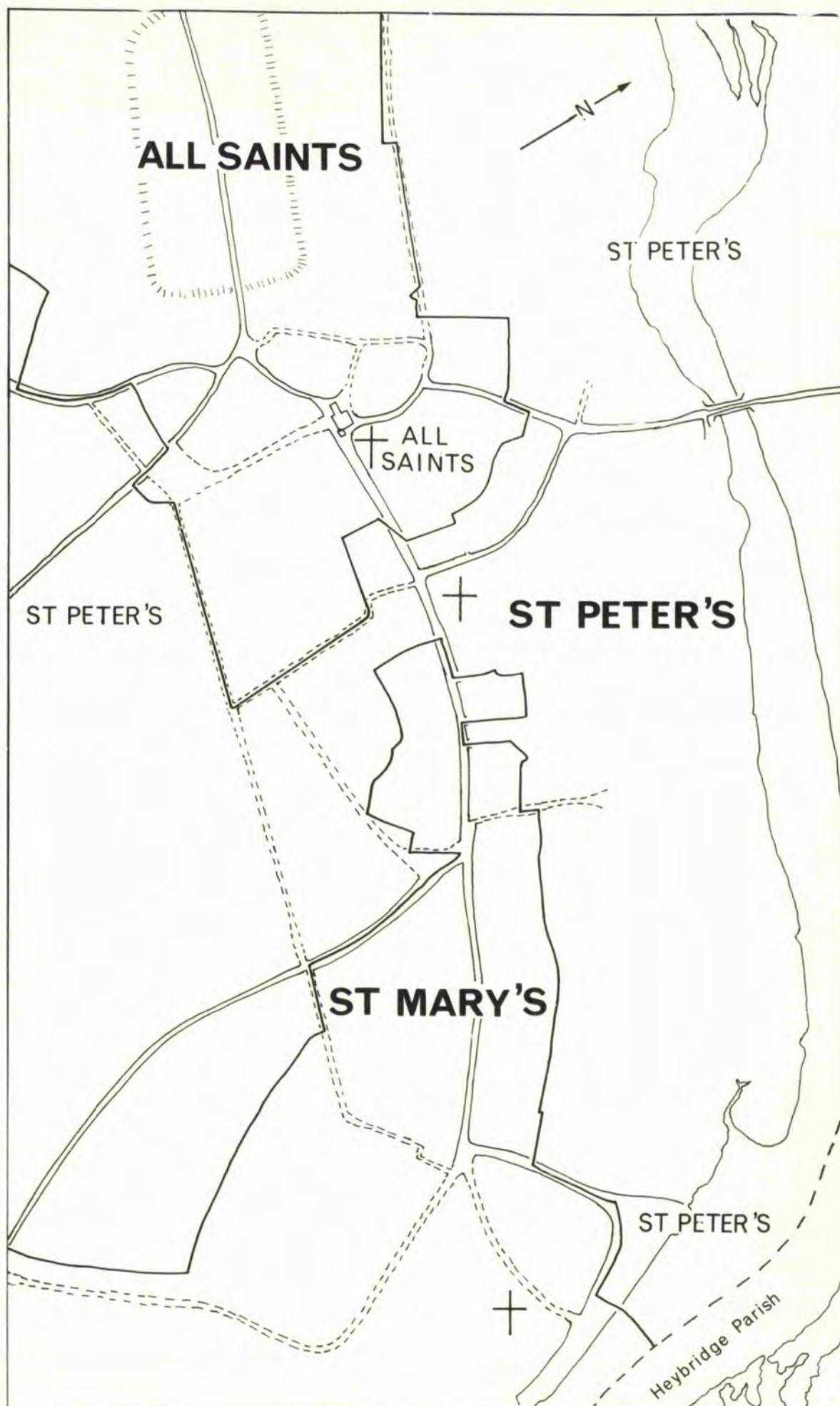
In tracing these early elements of the town plan the parish boundaries are of considerable importance, for they are directly related to the housing areas of the 12th and 13th centuries. The jigsaw shapes of English urban parishes are the results of measures taken to secure titheable property to particular churches and at Maldon the pattern of parish boundaries must be earlier than 1244 since that was the year when two of the parishes - All Saints' and St Peter's - were amalgamated as a single benefice.² This involves St Mary's parish too,

1. B.A. Lees, Records of the Templars in England (1935), p.10.

2. Deed of amalgamation printed in L. Hughes, Guide to All Saints', Maldon (1909), Appendix II.



3 Early Elements
in the Development of Maldon



whose boundary is extraordinarily interlocked along the High Street with St Peter's parish. Thus the distribution of buildings at the Hythe must have been established by 1244, since St Peter's parish embraces the quays in the very shadow of St Mary's church tower. Similarly the housing plots some half mile from St Mary's but within a stone's throw of St Peter's were there by 1244 as the parish boundaries interlock along that stretch of roadway and at one point St Mary's parish extends to a point within fifty yards of St Peter's churchyard. (See figure 4.)

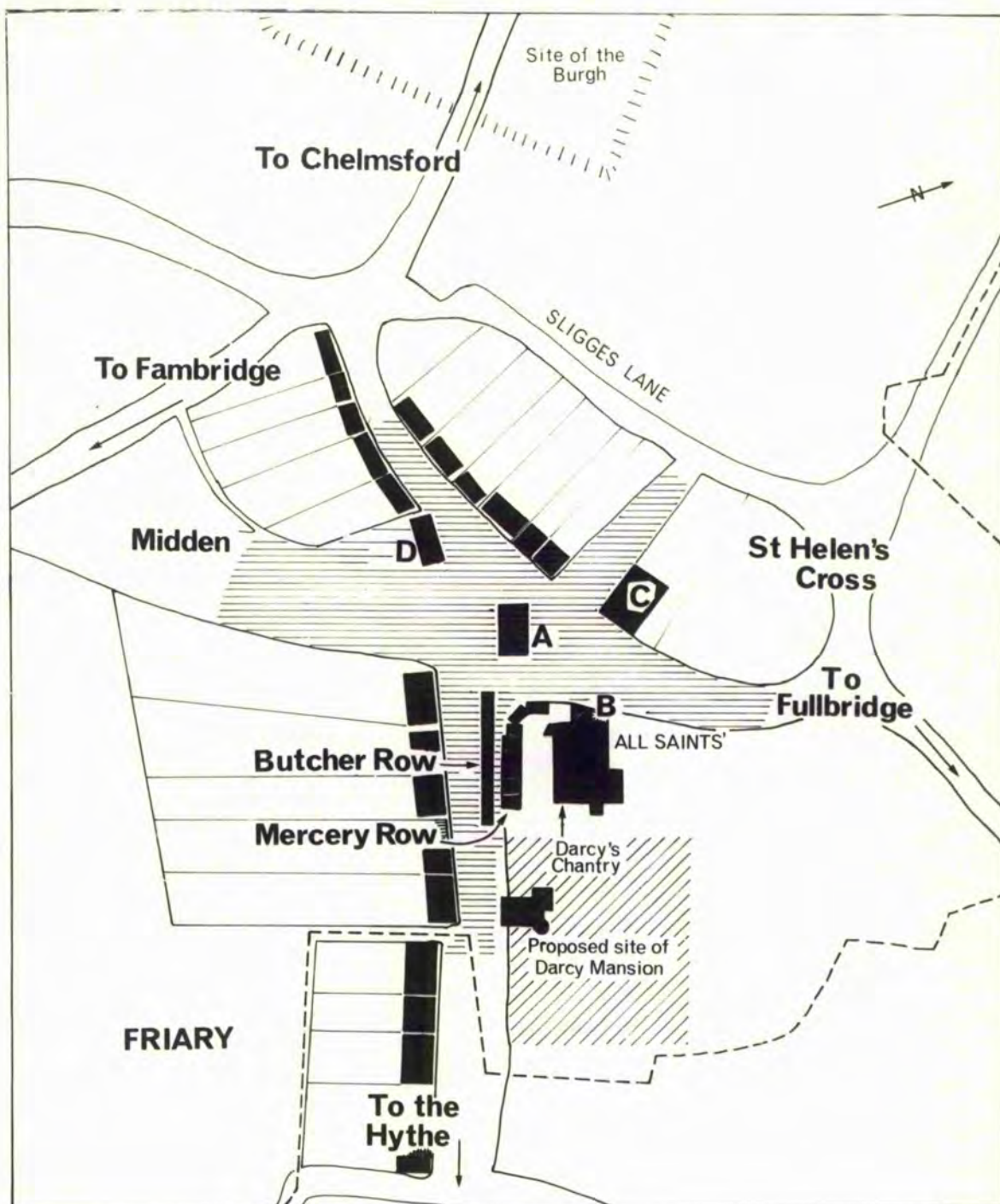
All Saints' parish has an even more interesting shape. It is entirely enclosed by St Peter's; it is a tiny enclave of fifty seven acres at the highest point of the town. That was where the borough was first "planted" ^{1.} for the parish has clearly been carved out of St Peter's and its boundaries are closely related to the surviving traces of the burgh ramparts, except for a notable eastward extension which encloses both the market place and the parish church.

Five roads meet within that eastward extension of All Saints' parish, below the side of the burgh, and at their junction were accumulated all the usual features of a market place. (See figure 5.) A roadway, entirely surrounded with housing, ran like a curved bow from one corner of the earthworks to the other, with a back-lane along the rampart edge called Sligges Lane (the "miry lane") forming the string to the bow. Into the centre of that bow-shaped roadway was thrust the open space where all the roads met and there the market developed. (See figure 6.) As in other towns, the trestles on which the butchers and


1. Dr James Tait believed that the report of Domesday Book that 165 of the 180 burgesses of 1086 held no more than their houses in the borough indicated a "planted" borough created on an Anglo-Saxon estate. (See M. Beresford, who also takes this view, New Towns of the Middle Ages (1967) p.321.)



5. The Market Place



Feet
0 50 100 150 200
Scale (approximate)

A Moot Hall	B 12 th century tower
C Crosse's Great Tenement	D Saracen's Head
 Market	

6 Market Place c.1500

other traders placed their goods gave place to more substantial sheds. By 1400 a market house had been erected which was also the Moot Hall of the burgesses. From the references to it in the borough records it was, in the early sixteenth century at any rate, like the guildhalls of many other market towns, with an open ground floor - leased out to butchers in the case of Maldon - and with the common hall of the burgesses on the upper floor. This one had a prison called the Lobhole built into the butchers' shops on the ground floor. (See figure 7.) A track (which could have been a roadway in earlier times) led directly from the Moot Hall to the midden and the pound in one corner of the parish.

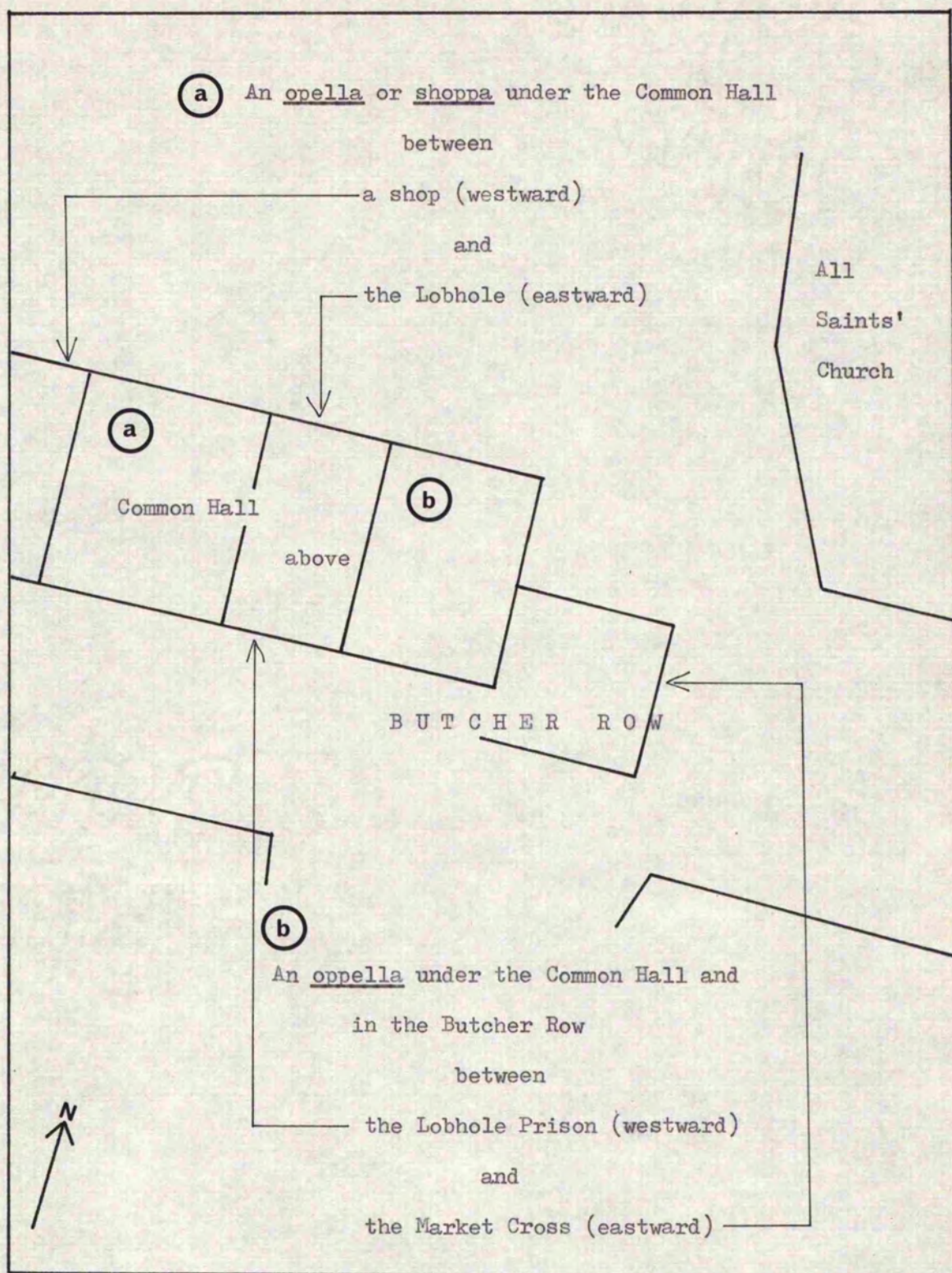
One more feature of this extraordinarily revealing arrangement must be mentioned. At the easternmost point of the parish there was a plot of land containing a brick tower known as Darcy's Tower. It appears to have been but one angle of a projected town house of the Darcy family who were lords of one half of the manor of the borough.¹ Consequently it may be thought significant that the parish boundary was extended that far, to enclose the manor house as well as the market and the Moot Hall. Later, in 1576, the corporation of Maldon acquired the tower and converted it into the new Moot Hall of the borough (as it still is),² so it will be convenient in this study always to call the original building in the market place the Old Moot Hall, the name given to it after 1576.

The Shape of Tudor and Stuart Maldon

Space has been given to the medieval growth of Maldon because that gave the town the shape it retained throughout the sixteenth and

1. See below, Appendix II.

2. See below, pp.11 and 12.



7 The Butcher Row

(From abuttals in leases of shops:

(a) 1535 and (b) 1540. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/2.)

seventeenth centuries. In 1700 as in 1500 the place consisted primarily of one long street running down the spine of the hill from the market to the Hythe, with two more roadways - called St Peter's Lane and Cromwell or St Helen's Lane ^{1.} - descending the steep north side of the hill to link the market area with Fullbridge Street and the bridge-and-causeway system over the rivers and marshland. The four areas of medieval building (shown on figure 3) also remained quite distinct groups of buildings throughout the two hundred years. There are no plans of the town contemporary with the period under study, apart from a copy, made c.1810 of a sketch plan of the Hythe in 1598, ^{2.} and no maps covering the urban parts of Maldon earlier than the Ordnance Surveys of the mid-nineteenth century and the Tithe Award plans. ^{3.} It is, however, possible to piece together the topography of the town before 1800 from references in the borough records and especially from the abutments of property described in deeds enrolled in one of the books of the borough Court of Record. ^{4.}

Among these scattered references to places and buildings there are fifty eight instances of domestic building operations between 1496 and 1682 which give an indication of the trends in housing. ^{5.} Some are

-
1. St Helen's Lane was the earlier name (from the chapel on the hill). Cromwell Hill and Lane were substituted from c.1600. The name Cromwell Lane survives today but refers to a side lane leading towards the Cromwell itself.
 2. Essex Record Office, D/B 3/3/548/2a.
 3. Tithe Awards, E.R.O., D/CT 27B, 22B, 23B (dated 1834, 1838 and 1848) of the three Maldon parishes.
 4. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/34.
 5. These are listed in Appendix III below.

examples of entirely new building; others refer to enlargements and reconstructions of housing; seventeen refer to subdivisions of existing dwellings into smaller self-contained houses.^{1.}

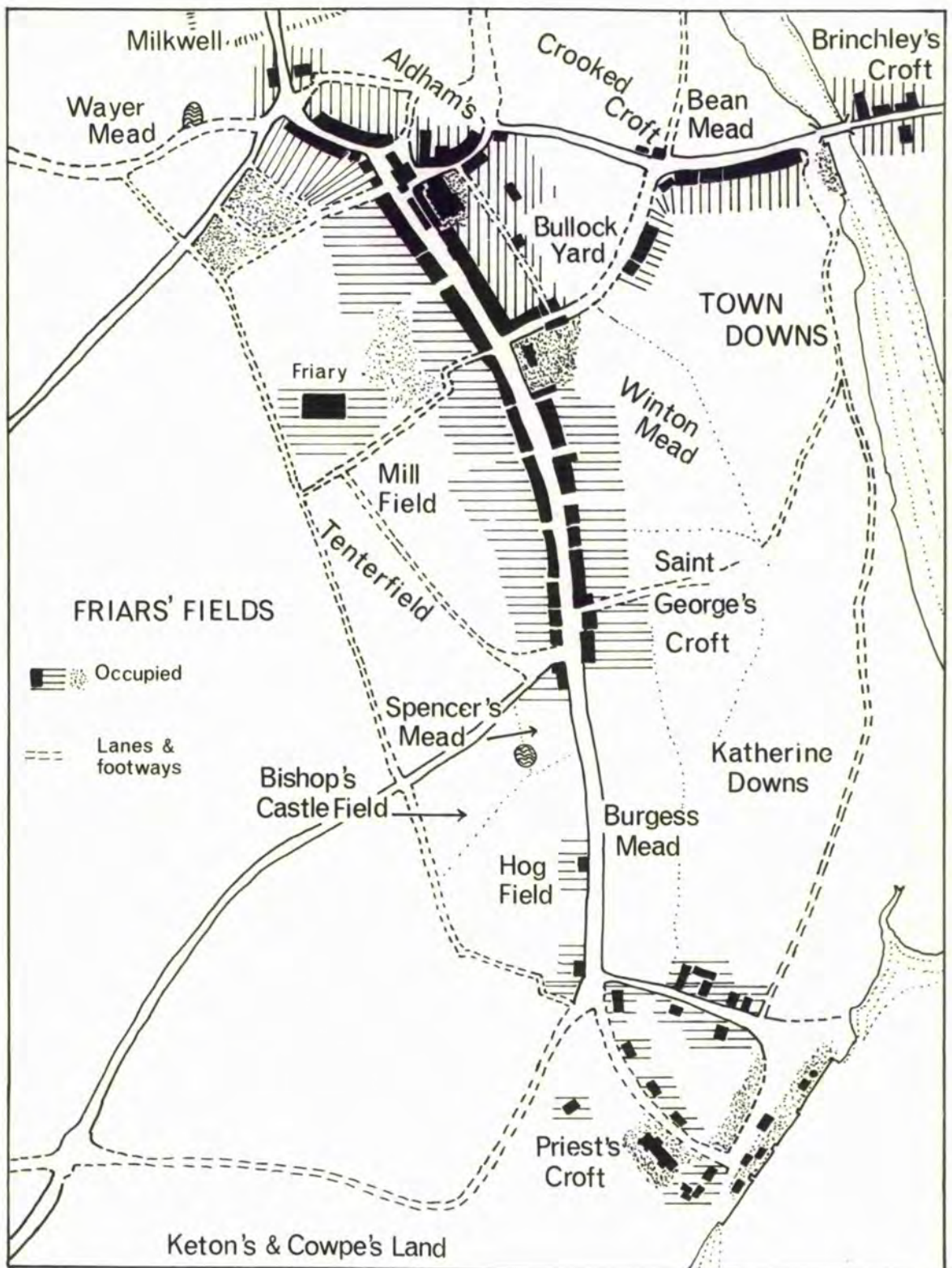
The first feature of the surviving information is that there was so little new building and certainly no suburban expansion of any importance. One clear reason for that is that land in Maldon was needed for grazing cattle which were brought in for the market. Where common rights prevented the expansion of some nineteenth century Midland towns, the same effect was produced in the sixteenth and seventeenth century at Maldon by the ownership in severalty of the crofts surrounding the town and used by yeomen farmers and butchers as enclosed pastures where cattle could be fattened or corralled. Some of the ground was also used for market gardening. (See figure 8, Field Areas of Maldon.) Thus the Friars' Fields came right up to the southern edge of the market place. In 1613 they were leased to a butcher and member of the corporation, Henry Hart.^{2.} A little further down the High Street two enclosures called Mill Field and Tenterfield occupied space between the houses and the Friars' Fields and these were owned in 1630 by a yeoman butcher of Messing (some twelve miles away).^{3.} So on all that side of Maldon, a length of about half a mile, the only space available for building new dwellings was the ancient enclosure of the Friary, whose ruins were converted into a mansion house by William and Vincent Harris between 1563 and 1574.^{4.} One side of Fullbridge Street was taken up by fields

1. These are listed in Appendix III below.

2. E.R.O., D/ABW 20/213 (1613): will of Henry Hart.

3. D/B 3/1/34 (no folio number): conveyance by Christopher Welles of Messing, 1630.

4. Item 7, Appendix III, below.



in which were glovers' sheds and tanneries, sited there for use of the spring water coming out of the hillside.¹ Between the area called Jacob's Cross and St Mary's church (a distance of a quarter of a mile) pastures occupied all the space on either side of the road, entirely separating the Hythe area from the main bulk of the town. Behind the north side of the High Street from St Peter's Lane down to Jacob's Cross another field (Winton) prevented expansion in that area: its tenant in 1590 was a butcher and member of the corporation, Peter Jervis, who also held a lease of two shops converted into one "under the olde motehall within the Bocherrowe."² Immediately behind the market place, on its western side, there was another pasture (called Aldham's) which was convenient for the marshalling and grazing of herds destined for sale or slaughter in the market place and it extended over the roadway called Sligges Lane (later Skykes Lane) which the pasture's owner in 1569 tried to enclose.³ New housing around the west end of the town was thus inhibited by Aldham's Croft and its neighbouring pastures - Milkwell, Bean Mead and Wayer Mead - so that very little building took place there and, until the early nineteenth century, the built-up area of the borough ceased abruptly on the very edge of its market place.

-
1. E.R.O., D/ABW 41/59 (1605): bequest of a four acre meadow by Fullbridge Street "if John Welles may have accesse ...(to) the shed, cesterne and river ... for and concerninge the trade of a glover." D/B 3/1/20 f.20v. (1633), licence for a tanner to take waste water from the Cromwell and St Helen's Well "by pipes into his Tanyard thereunto adjoining."
 2. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/34 f.40v and D/B 3/1/33 f.64v.
 3. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/6 f.69 (1569 Quarter Sessions order.)

Apart from pasture and tanning some land was taken over for market gardening which, from about 1600, became a distinct occupation of the town. The two earliest references at Maldon to gardeners as such are in a will of 1605 and a conveyance of 1614¹. (near the time, that is, of the incorporation of the London Company of Gardeners in 1605) but from c.1590 references also occur to gardens as distinct tenements and to orchards which had been "taken out" of crofts. Thus an orchard was "taken out" of Aldham's c.1600 and next to it were two gardens enclosed from land of the Blue Boar inn; and an orchard and garden were "taken out of the land called Vereings alias Hogg feild" by 1636.² These pieces of land were also not readily available for dwellings, although three houses "known by the name of Francesces Garden neere the Heethe" (Hythe) were constructed at some time prior to 1620.³

Thus the area of building was broadly the same in 1700 as in 1500. Maldon had to impact itself and that is what the majority of references to building show its inhabitants doing. They remodelled, extended and subdivided their dwellings to make the most use of the ground available for housing. Improvement was the theme for the builder and the earliest known example of that was in process by 1500 when a Maldon merchant, William Harding, leased at a low rent (6s 8d per annum for ninety nine years) a great house opposite the Darcy Tower from the earl of Oxford, on condition he would as tenant rebuild

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1. E.R.O., D/ABW 41/59 (1605) and D/B 3/1/34 f.106 (1614).
 2. D/B 3/1/34 f.72v. (1600); D/ABW 32/23 (1591) and D/B 3/1/34 no folio number (1636).
 3. Will of John Barrington (1620), E.R.O., D/ABW 43/105.

"the halle, the parlour, with chambirs above them, the kechyn and other howsys."¹.

Sometimes the improvement involved a scheme for subdivision, as in a five-roomed extension called The Three Mariners to "the ancient halle-house" called Ridler's in the High Street,² or a new entry passage and parlour which preceded the division of Daniel Winterbourne's house in 1568.³ In other cases the living and working space of dwellings was increased, as when the town clerk of 1598 and 1613, John Nashe, incorporated an adjacent smithy called The Fig into his house, added thirty square feet to the ground floor living space by filling in below the frontal jetty of his house and then built out a porch onto the roadway.⁴

These improvements also reflected contemporary trends towards more comfortable domestic arrangements. It was reported of John Mannyng, who had about 1567 purchased the Bull in the Mercery Row, backing on the churchyard of All Saints', that he

"from a ruinus estate hathe repayred and newe buylded the same messuage or tenement in such wise as the same hathe cost the said John Mannyng in redye mony very nigh one hundred poundes."

His will shows that he had wainscotted the interior and glazed the windows.⁵ Similarly a butcher, Christopher Living, requested in

1. E.R.O., D/DWd 1 (1496).

2. Appendix 3, item 15.

3. Ibid., item 39.

4. Ibid., item 27.

5. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/33 f.17 (1567) and D/ABW 25/290 (1582); and D/DGe M135.

1614 that "the glasse, wainscott and seelinge, now being fastned, annexed or nailefast" in his house were to be "continued therwith from time to time for the use or benefitt" of the various persons to whom the property was devised.^{1.} One fairly complete example of an improvement still stands on the north-west side of Fullbridge. It was called Wrenches and it is a long, narrow hall-house with two clusters of brick chimneys and a jettied upper floor. About 1586 the former house and "thould kytehn" (which was a detached building in medieval fashion), a warehouse and a "shad" were remodelled as a single building under one roof-tree.^{2.}

The Market Place

Changes in the buildings and facilities offered at the Maldon market provide evidence in detail about the impacted nature of the built-up area. It is useful to apply the technique of plan-analysis which urban geographers have recently begun to use in England, by which the successive changes in a town plan can be related to the functions of the area as if they were part of an organic process. The process of urban growth and change is seen as a cyclic development beginning with the establishment of the earliest buildings and going on through the phases in which the facilities and available space are fully exploited until it comes to the final decay and then replacement of the area.^{3.}

1. E.R.O., D/ABW 24/161 (proved 1616).

2. See Appendix 3, item 26.

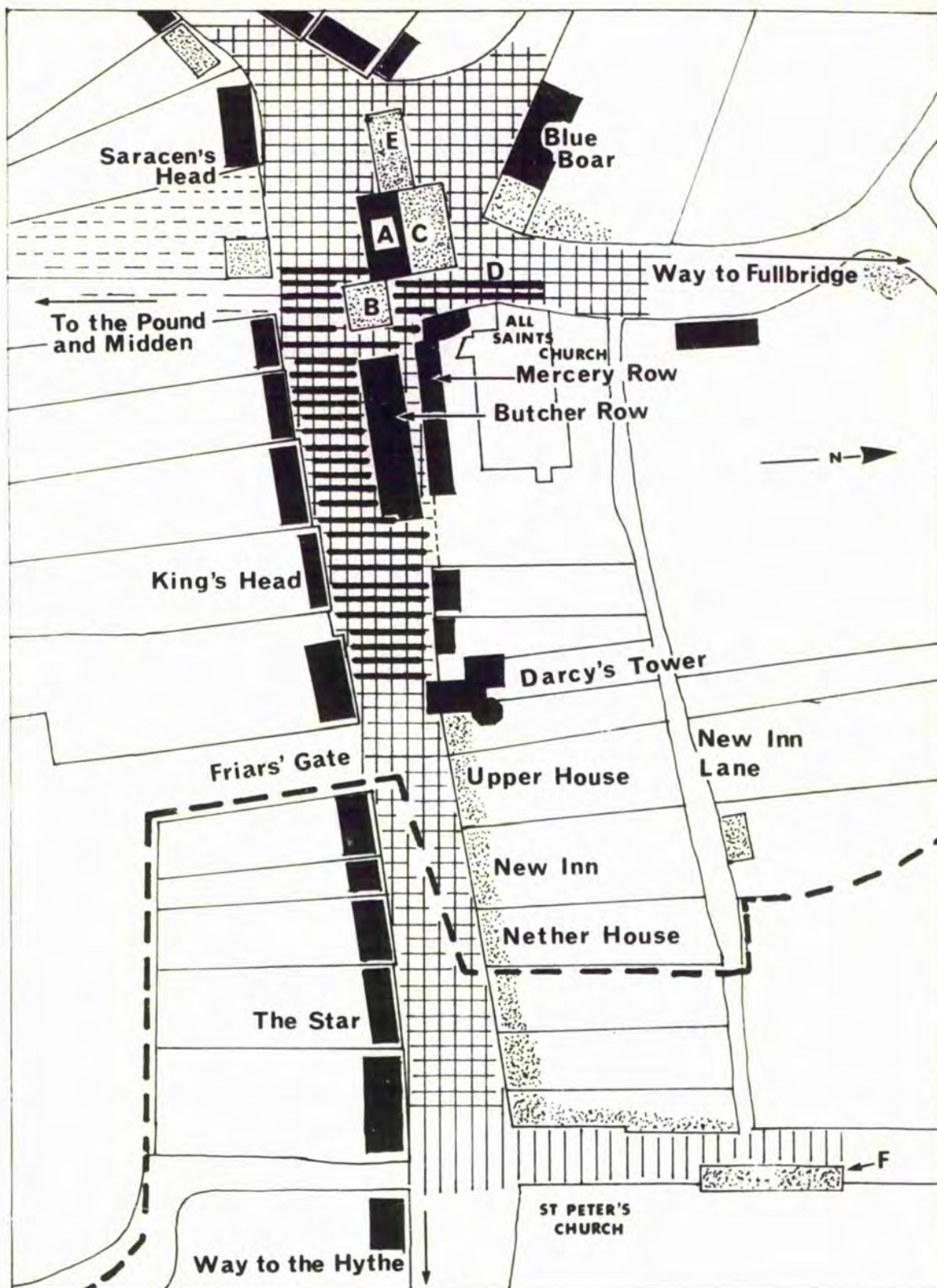
3. M.R.G. Conzen, 'Plan Analysis of an English City Centre,' Lund Studies in Geography, Series B, XXIV (Lund), 1962, pp.383-414; and "The Use of Town Plans in the Study of Urban History" by Professor Conzen in The Study of Urban History, ed. H.J. Dyos, 1968, pp.113-130.

By 1500 the market place of Maldon had long since passed through its Institutive Phase and the first stages of the next, Repletive Phase, had been completed with the building of its Moot Hall and its ground floor latticed butchers' shops (officinae) and the construction of two rows of shops or permanent stalls which ran parallel to the great south aisle of All Saints' church eastwards from the market towards Darcy's Tower. One of those rows (called Mercery Row in 1545) was partly the property of the Darcy family who were lords of half the borough until 1550¹ and it backed onto the churchyard. The other row contained more butchers' shops or shambles, and ran down the main street, a little off-centre, and was taken along with the ground floor of the Moot Hall to constitute the Butcher Row. (See figure 9.)

That stage of repletion in the market area cannot be ascribed to the restriction of building space by the surrounding pastures. The construction of shops and the erection of new buildings around the market place were profit-making enterprises of the medieval lords of the borough - the Darcy family and the bishops of London - and of the burgesses. Thus the 1403 charter of the bishop, demising his manorial dues in Maldon and the Moot Hall itself to the freemen in return for a fee farm rent, implies that before the demise he was receiving a rent from the freeburgesses for their Hall in the centre of the market.² During the fifteenth century the chamberlains of the borough also began to receive annual Assize Rents which were levied on buildings erected on the common soil. One such rent was payable for the Saracen's Head, which had been constructed on part of the open ground beside the market leading from the butchers' stalls to the pound and the midden.

1. See Appendix 2 and E.R.O., D/DGe M135.

2. See Appendix 2 below.



However, the second stage of the Repletive Phase, dating from about 1540 to 1562, continued to work inwards and to eschew any colonisation of the open ground to the west and north of the market place. And this despite the resultant clutter and congestion which the developments clearly created. A Market Cross was constructed against the south-east corner of the Old Moot Hall in 1540.¹ A New Market Place went up next (1550-1551) but not outside the old market area: it was an open-sided structure with a tiled roof, designed as a lean-to against the north side of the Old Moot Hall.² Stalls for the Fishmarket, near the site of the New Market Place, had been in existence since at least 1547.³ Stables, the sixteenth century equivalent of garages and car parks in the organisation of a successful market place, were erected on the open ground west of the Old Moot Hall.⁴ (See figure 9.)

Housing development on the edge of the market place also occurred at this time. About fifty yards from the centre of the market, at St Helen's Cross, an entirely new house was constructed on waste land and, right beside the trading area, the mid-fourteenth century Crosse's Great Tenement was extended forwards into the main street with a large new building by John Church, farmer of the earl of Oxford, who renamed it the Blue Boar after his noble landlord's principal badge.⁵ Just east of Darcy's Tower and on the same, north side of the road, housing had ceased until this stage of market repletion occurred. There had been houses on the other side of the road, backing onto the Friary, but

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/2 (1540).

2. Accounts for the construction work in MCA 1551. 3. MCA 1547.

4. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/34 f.39r.

5. Appendix 3, items 2 and 23.

between the Darcy Tower and the corner of St Peter's Lane there had been open ground which, between 1545 and 1562, was filled with buildings. Two houses were constructed by the corner of the High Street and St Peter's Lane and between them and the tower a row called the Upper, Middle and Nether Houses were constructed, of which the central one was soon renamed the New Inn.^{1.}

All these were built within the limit of the pasture land surrounding the market place. Two encroached on the common soil of the borough (as did the market buildings) and the new row beyond Darcy's Tower exploited a patch of open ground which was released for building purposes at that time because after 1550 the Darcy family withdrew themselves from the borough, exchanged their lordship and uncompleted house (the Tower) with the Crown and consequently ceased to need the land for the construction of their town mansion.^{2.}

Along with this building activity went a policy of control for the market and at first the corporation was inclined to impose narrow limits on the area within which trade might be done, this applied particularly to butchers (in that they were the only ones on whom a restriction was imposed in the custumal) whose trading area on market days ran from the Moot Hall to the corner of St Peter's Lane.^{3.} In 1562, however, a fresh ordinance redefined the Butcher Row as from the

1. E.R.O., D/DA T640: 2 conveyances of (a) a garden in 1545 and (b) of a house in 1562 "late builded in and upon one garden ..." Further corroborative evidence is in deeds belonging to Mr. H. Springett of Maldon.

2. See Appendix 2.

3. Custumal of 1555, para. 41. (E.R.O., D/B 3/1/3.)

east end of the Old Moot Hall eastwards only as far as Darcy's Tower.¹ That halved the market area for them and about the same time other traders were also subjected to more stringent regulation: an addition of 1555 to the custumal ordered all vendors of "small victuals" - poultry, dairy produce, vegetables and oatmeal - to use the New Market Place "provided for the sale of the same."² Vendors of hides and leather goods were statutorily obliged from 1563 to sell in markets only³ and for all traders the Butcher Row was the effective market area since that was patrolled by the Market Searchers of the borough, where customers knew that the price and quality of goods were controlled.

This was the Repletive Phase of the market completed. It must have caused considerable congestion and there were complaints and there was disobedience to the orders of the corporation. In 1564 Thomas Colleyne was fined 3s 4d

"for that he dyd sell fleshe owt of the markett place
appoynted in that behalf and contrarie to an ordynance"⁴.

and in 1569 the corporation agreed to revoke its restrictive ordinance of 1562 because of

"the many discomforts and inconveniences borne by the populace
(res publica) of this borough, as is sufficiently shown in the
serious complaints made by all the inhabitants from time to
time."⁵

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/5 f.78v.

2. 1555 custumal, para. 55.

3. Statutes of the Realm 5 Eliz. I c8.

4. MCA 1564.

5. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/6 f.70v (9 May, 1569).

The Butcher Row was again extended (as an area, not as buildings) to the corner of St Peter's Lane and that marks the commencement of the Climax Phase in the development of the market.

The most impressive event of this new phase was the purchase of Darcy's Tower in 1576 by the corporation. They moved from their Old Moot Hall into the aristocratic, though inconvenient Tower and so resited themselves once more at the centre of the market area which was now twice the size of the old Butcher Row. By 1614 a further building, the Long Market House or Buttermarket (both names were used for it) had been constructed against St Peter's churchyard. By then, too, the whole area had been marked off into discrete plots for different activities. Beside the Fishmarket and the Butcher Row there was the Oatmeal Bin and the Applemarket. The Market Cross was sometimes styled the Corn Cross and the Cornmarket was the street east of the Old Moot Hall.^{1.}

Once again the construction work was contained within the existing limits of the medieval market area, by building onto the roadway, by cramming new stalls into the open spaces around the Market Cross and by the conversion of a derelict tower. An infilling of the area also occurred, utilising all the remaining spaces without going

1. For Darcy's Tower, see below, Chapter 5 and Appendix 2. For the Buttermarket, E.R.O., D/DA T640, deed of 1614 of a house abutting on St Peter's Lane "nere unto the long market house" and ibid., deed of 1660 describing the same house as by "the end of the Butter market." The Market Cross was alternatively styled the Corn Cross, the Brick Cross and the Brick Building: E.R.O., D/B 3/1/33 f.19v., MCA 1566, 1603 and 1611.

into the pastures beyond. In the mouth of the trackway leading from the Old Moot Hall to the midden (already partly closed by the fifteenth century encroachment of the Saracen's Head) a square timber framed house was erected¹. and another was built not long before 1574 "abutting upon an inne called the Sarazan's Head."² In about 1618 another house was built by converting a stable or hayloft at the rear of the New Inn, which is a significant development, showing how Maldon housing had to impact itself within the existing built-up area.³

By 1600 the market had taken on its completed form. Like many Tudor and Stuart markets it was a compact area and so closely girt by fields and orchards that a traveller coming to it by any road was at one moment among crofts and pastures but at the next he was entirely enclosed with a townscape. Houses formed a continuous screen against the countryside and the curve of the roadways from the Old Moot Hall towards the burgh and St Helen's Lane effectively closed the view into the fields. It had, too, the makings of a stately scene. On one side of the market rose the great church of All Saints, its bulk enhanced by the range of low shops ranged in front of its churchyard. Its tall flint tower and its shingled spire, ornamented with angle spirelets, bell-cote and gilt vane, loomed over the very centre of the market, over the Corn Cross and the medieval Common Hall. The rich masonry of its south aisle appeared over the fish stalls, could be glimpsed from the end of the butchers' stalls and was framed within the archway to

1. Appendix 3, item 14.

2. Appendix 3, item 6.

3. Appendix 3, item 12.

the church in the shops of the Mercery Row. Half closing off the view, beyond and four times the height of the butchers' stalls, there rose the great red brick wall, loop-holed and turreted of Darcy's Tower to add a further note of consequence to the scene.

In the occupational history of this market place the Climax Phase, achieved by about 1600, ought to be followed by the next stage of the Burgage Cycle, a recessive phase marked by an abandonment of stalls and shops and by the growing use of new places for marketing outside this ancient area. There are some apparent signs of that Recessive Phase in the demolition of the Butcher Row, "being noisesome and ruinous" in 1620¹ and of the Old Moot Hall in 1621.² These turn out, however, to be evidence of reorganisation and improvement. When the Butcher Row was demolished the corporation agreed to improve the adjacent Corn Cross, which was to be

"taken down within convenient time and one arch erected and builded over the said Corn Cross"

at a cost of no more than £50 (which was the profit on the sale of the building materials from the demolished Butcher Row) and

"one arch builded and erected for the enlargement of the said Corn Cross and for standing of maltsters toward the east thereof: and one loft for four several chambers, erected and builded over the said Corn Cross and new arch"

which were to be leased at rents of £4 per annum minimum.³ Some

1. Memorandum, 31 May 1621: E.R.O., D/B 3/1/19 f.136v.

2. MCA 1621: 2s 6d "for carrying the gin (pile driver) and other loose timber out of the Old Moot Hall at the taking down thereof."

3. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/19 f.136v.

portions of the Butcher Row remained, to be repaired in 1621; so did the Lob Hole Prison, which was re-roofed in 1640, although the Old Moot Hall of which it was a part, had been taken down.¹ As late as the mid-nineteenth century some people could remember a Lady Day Fair being held "where the old buttermarket was, near St Peter's church, adjoining the churchyard" and a September Fair "in the midst of the town where the butchers' shambles stood (and where the market is now held)."²

It was impossible that trading could recede at Maldon from this market area. Short of the complete cessation of trade in the town there was no possibility of the Burgage Cycle's Recessive Phase or its final stage, the Burgage Fallow. All that could happen was the improvement and the remodelling of the facilities which existed in the market area.

The Hythe

There is much less documentary evidence about the topography of the waterside of Maldon than there is for the market place but the same containment applied. The space used for the Hythe was (and still is) only some 250 yards long by about thirty wide, including the surface of the wharves in that estimate: it was no more than a riverside strip lying below the last steep dip to sea level of the town hill. It was bounded on the west by a great pasture called Katherine Downs. On its southern edge lay the churchyard of St Mary's, the parsonage house and its associated Priest's Croft, and beyond that lay the pastures of Keton's and Cowpe's prebendal lands, belonging to the estates of the Dean and Chapter of Westminster Abbey.

1. MCA 1640.

2. E.R.O., D/DCf B6 (1847).

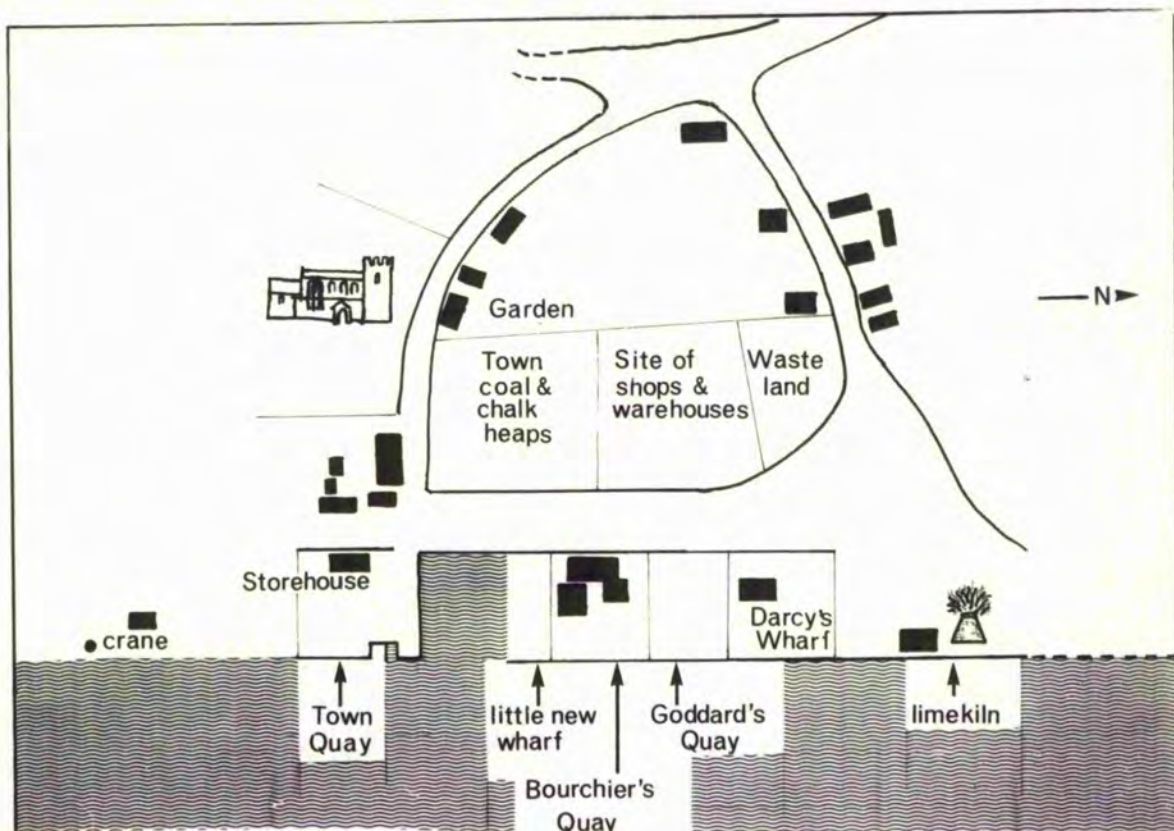
Yet the first impression to be obtained from a reconstruction of the Hythe plan is that it was a decaying area. (See figure 10.) Whilst buildings steadily encroached the market place, the waterside of Maldon had few domestic buildings: a sketch plan of c.1598¹ shows a maximum of fourteen dwelling places (possibly less, for some of the elevations may only indicate subordinate parts of tenements), which were scattered along the two roadways leading down to the quays and were well spaced out. Furthermore, the plan indicates some destruction of buildings during the sixteenth century, for one plot is annotated

"sometymes shoppes and storehouses of the Earl of Essex"

which were listed among the rents received in early sixteenth century Maldon chamberlains' accounts.² There is also another portion - of about one tenth of the whole Hythe area - which is marked as a "wast and void place." The church lay stranded among plots of open ground, its parishioners mostly dwelling some quarter of a mile away, nearer the market place than the Hythe, and in 1598 its tower collapsed, leaving the church partly ruined until at least 1628 and so adding to the decayed, tumbledown appearance of the place. It was workaday, a place of chalk heaps, coal heaps, garden plots, a limekiln and (though these are not marked on the plan) of saltcotes and boat-building yards. It was also a lonely place, fit for the conspirators who met in St Mary's churchyard to plot the escape from Woodham Walter Hall of Princess Mary

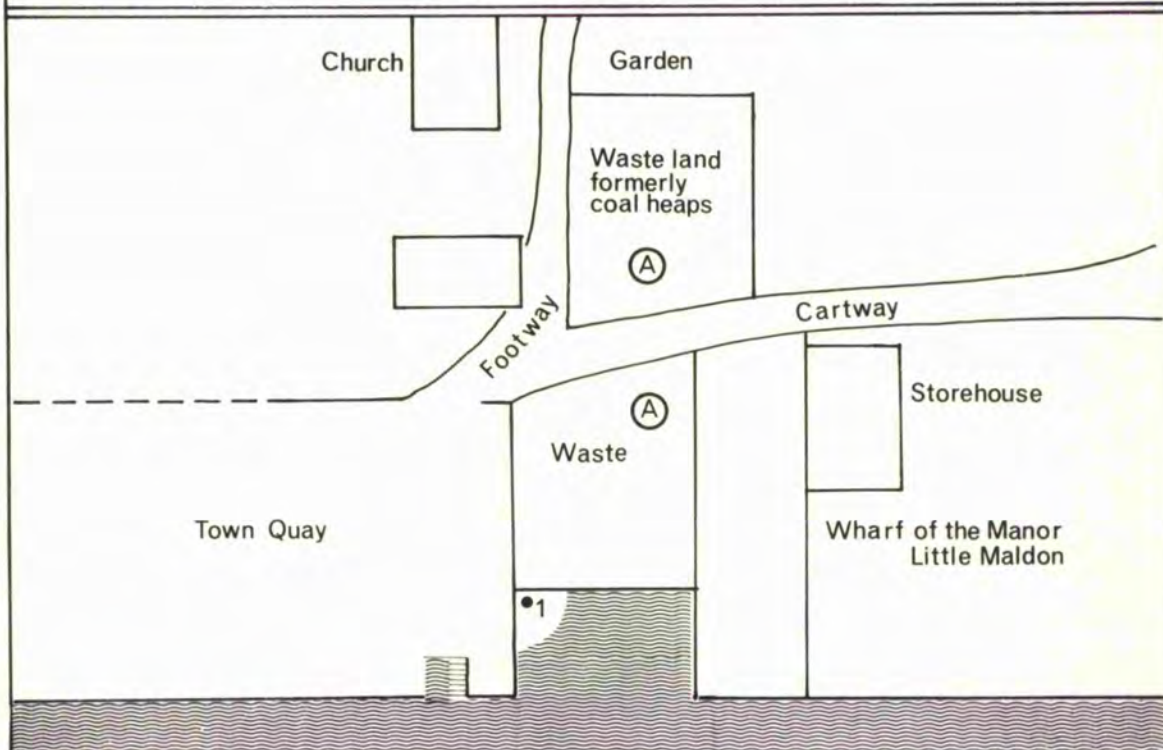
1. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/548/2a.

2. The Earl of Essex was Henry Bouchier, who died in 1540. The accounts for 1532/33 list 16d "for a yeres rent of ij^o shoppis of therles of Essex lyinge at Maldon Hithe" and those for 1539/40 include that sum for "the keye and too shoppes att the hithe," paid by "Lord Willyams." Thereafter they are not included in the rental.



Information from plan of c.1598

(E.R.O. D/B 3/3/548/2A)



1 Main post of the Cuckingstool

(A) Leased from the Corporation

Information from leases of 1614

E.R.O. D/B 3/1/3, 1181^v 82^r

Tudor in 1550;^{1.} where runaway boys could spend a summer night baking apples beside a saltcote and playing a cittern undisturbed by night-watchmen or awakened householders.^{2.}

Nevertheless it may be argued that Maldon Hythe was not really decaying but that it was subject to reorganisation and that its functions were being rationalised in the mid-sixteenth century between the death of the last Earl of Essex of the Bouchier family (to whom three of the quays and a storehouse belonged, and the shops which were later said to be demolished) in 1540 and the incorporation of the borough government in 1555. For new regulations concerning the Hythe were introduced when the custumal was revised in 1555, whose general tenor was the imposition of stricter regulations on waterside trade. "Stall boats" were only permitted in summer months; townsmen were not to retail any fish there, or salt or coal, but were to deal from their homes; and where the 1444 custumal had given pre-emptive rights to freemen only during the first three day-tides of a ship's anchorage, the 1555 custumal extended their time to make deals to three or four days.^{3.} All trade was routed into the newly improved market place, it seems, and the corporation was deliberately "running down" this subsidiary area of the Hythe. Possibly that was done to lessen the burden of supervision which the corporation exercised over all marketing and before incorporation there had been a special place allotted in the market place for fishstalls, as has been noted above, whilst the new custumal of 1555 ordained that fish should only be sold in the market before noonday.^{4.}

1. The story is in H.F.M. Prescott, Mary Tudor (1939), pp. 130-143.

2. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/208 (1629).

3. 1555 custumal, paragraphs 32, 33 and 13; 1444 custumal, addendum of 1447. (These are in D/B 3/1/1 and the White Book, D/B 3/1/3.)

4. 1555 custumal, para. 15.

Some trading did remain at the Hythe, for the new custumal ordered that freemen should use the borough Water Measure for their waterside sales of salt and oysters but it should be noted that the oyster banks in the Blackwater were normally let out to farm¹, and this regulation only applied to freemen.

Furthermore, there were regulations which ensured that every ship's master made his business known at the Moot Hall in the market place. When any ship came into port its lead and line had to be brought to the bailiffs and the ship's cargo was to be declared to them. Before he could unload ("break his balk") the trader had to receive a "billet" from the bailiffs, who normally fixed a maximum price. In particular, coal might not be offered for sale at the Hythe "until the fellow make price with the bailiffs."² To ensure that every visiting trader and every townsman conducted business through the agencies provided in the market place, not freelance at the quayside, it was further decreed in 1555 that each bargain for goods "coming to the town by water" had to be recorded by the Town Clerk if it were to have any validity in law.³

That left to the Hythe a distinct and clear function as a lading and storage place. After incorporation the borough employed a full-time Water Bailiff but he was entirely subordinate to the corporation and had no powers to supervise bargaining or to inspect the quality of goods offered for sale. He was simply a toll-gatherer. Commerce was the preserve of the bailiffs, the market searchers and the clerk of the market; loading and unloading and storage were the business of the Hythe.

1. Ibid., para. 39. Leases of oyster beds are scattered throughout the borough court books and rentals.

2. 1555 custumal, paras. 70 and 24.

3. Ibid., para. 12.

The Water Bailiffs' receipts (unfortunately rendered in such a form that they cannot be used to examine the trends in waterside trade at Maldon) indicate the bulky nature of the goods handled at the waterside. Coal was a staple commodity, stored in heaps on plots of ground leased from the corporation. Fulling earth and chalk were also stored but textiles are never mentioned. Loads of timber were collected on the wharves and bundles of "ostrey wood", much of which may be suspected to have been destined for London.¹ It was to the proper storage of these that the corporation gave attention, not to the construction of marketing buildings or to any encouragement of domestic infilling of the area. The plan of c.1598 marks the "Town's New Wharffe" and shows beside it a patch of "wast soil of the towne, now a little new wharffe," between Bouchier's and Darcy's Quays (which were medieval in origin); and the plan shows another quay "of the towne's lease of their wast, now (c.1590) Mr. Gardener's," which was named after Robert Goddard, mariner, a freeman from 1567.² These three additions were constructed,

1. The Water Bailiffs' receipts are incorporated in the annual account rolls of the borough chamberlains. Often no more than quarterly totals are given but sometimes there are slightly fuller entries, such as of the 1573 "tolle of his woode carryed by water from Heibridge this yeare," or the 83 "cartes loaden with coles and other goods of the first quarter of 1626 and 5s duty "due to this Burrough for layeing of tymber at the Heith and the wast grownd ... nere thereabouts, being brought theither to be carryed from thence by water to London" in 1653. A revision of the tolls in 1611 (E.R.O., D/B 3/1/19) concerned duties on "Seacoales", "every tonne of wyne, ... wheate and ryen ... mault barlie, pease, oates" and cattle-feed called "bullimong."

2. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/548/2a. (See figure 9a.)

it may be noted, between 1555 and 1590 (when Mr Gardiner acquired the Manor of Little Maldon^{1.}); the Farm Rental of the borough similarly shows corporate activity during the period between incorporation and 1598, with the acquisition of two rents for quays, four rents for coal heaps and two for "chalk platts".^{2.} Besides these rents, the borough also charged for rights of way to coal heaps, for the enclosure of storage plots and for the entry of carts to the Hythe area and its receipts rose from a mere eighteen pence in 1537 on three items^{3.} to £2 - 4s - 7d in 1677 on nine rents.^{4.} In return the borough saw to the maintenance of the Town Wharf and to the good repair of the adjacent Town Storehouse,^{5.} which was moved to a better site in 1639,^{6.} though it

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1. P. Morant, History of Essex, (Chelmsford, 1816) I, p.329. Gardiner was at once involved with the corporation in a lawsuit over his rights as Lord of the Manor, with which this sketch map may well be associated.
 2. Farm Rental of 1598 in E.R.O., D/B 3/1/3. Few complete rentals of the borough exist. Most accounts give only a gross receipt.
 3. MCA 1537: one parcel of ground "now enpaled" (1d); the quay and two houses and shops of the Earl of Essex (16d); a paling before a coal heap (1d).
 4. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/70 (1677): the Town House (1d); right of way to a quay and coal yard (2d); limekiln (2s); two quays (1s 4d and 1s); a chalk house (3s 4d); two pieces of waste ground associated with the chalk house (total of 16s 8d); and rent of ground "between Sir Robert Sprignell's vineyard and the salt coate" (£1).
 5. Chamberlains accounts of the seventeenth century, passim.
 6. MCA 1639: £54 - 0s - 3d "in removing the Towne's Storehowse at Maldon hiethe from the place where yt then stood to a more convenient place; and for settinge, underpinninge, tyleinge, boardinge and reseatinge the same storehowse."

also tried to enforce the use of the building in preference to any other storage place. The latest customary regulations for the Hythe were intended to enforce the use of the Store house: no goods were to be laid in any other place so long as it had the capacity to receive them (with a penalty of sixpence per cartload on "foreigners" using any other store); if it was full "foreigners" might freely lay their goods on the Town Quay for up to ten days but thereafter they were to pay at the rate for storage; freemen might only lay goods on the quay for six days; chalk was never to be deposited there.^{1.}

At Fullbridge, higher up the river, there was another lading place though it was not apparently so important. Some petitioners of the Essex countryside, protesting in 1641 against the monopoly claimed by the corporation over coal sales, remarked that there was seldom coal at Fullbridge although it was a much more convenient place for many of them in view of the steepness of the hill for their carts.^{2.} Ships did, however tie up there and on the marsh side of the river a brewing industry was established from about 1600: a lease of the great Potman Marsh (or Portman) in 1620 by the corporation describes how the land was traversed by "certain pipes or other conveyances to bring the water from the fresh ryver by or through the marshe lyeng and being on the north west of the said Calcwaye ... (the raised road from Fullbridge to Heybridge).. unto the Brewhouse late of Edward Pyke, deceased, and now of Thomas Harrys." Before 1673 there was established a house and a large brick malting house in the corner of the Causeway and the river, which had by

1. Additions of 1672 to the 1555 custumal.

2. House of Lords Record Office, petition of 1641. (See below, chapter 7 under "Maldon and the Local Community.")

then been successively occupied by three groups of Maldon men for beer brewing.^{1.}

During the last quarter of the sixteenth century, when these extensions and improvements to the waterside facilities were under way, references also occur to the "decay of the haven." The phrase first occurs in a petition of 1585 to the corporation by a group of town shoemakers, in which they pleaded that unless they were guaranteed a monopoly of trade in the market they would be

"lesse able to contribute unto the charges of the decayed haven and bridges in the tyme of skott and lott."^{2.}

Alderman Ralph Breeder in 1609 bequeathed £120 to the corporation

"towardses the repayringe, making and amending of the haven and Channell and the Bridges called Fullbridge and Heybridge"^{3.}

and the brief for the rebuilding of St Mary's tower in 1628 also pleaded the decayed state of the harbour.^{4.} In the 1670's a Grand Jury at Essex Quarter Sessions reported that the Blackwater channel was fouled.^{5.} Yet these references may well be a snare and a delusion for, by the very nature of the sinking land around the basin of the North Sea, the Blackwater Estuary was always liable to changes in depth and course: it

1. MCA 1639: repairs to the Fullbridge "to amend the hurt done ... by a ship of (blank) Iles, mariner, runninge against the same ..."
E.R.O., D/B 3/1/3 ff.98-100 (1620). E.R.O., D/B 3/1/35 (1672).

2. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/34 f.22r.

3. PCC 27 Dorset (1609).

4. E.R.O., D/Dqs 134. Copy of printed brief authorising collections through the eastern counties.

5. K.H. Burley, 'Economic Development of Essex in the Later Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries,' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of London 1957) p.445.

cannot reasonably be supposed that only in the later sixteenth century did the river channels begin to alter course or the movement of silt begin to increase. The shipping which used this and other East Anglian and Netherlands' waterways was purpose-built, of shallow draught and, although the river has never been extensively dredged, sea-going vessels still pass up to Fullbridge. Moreover, references to the action taken to remedy the "decay" show that the complaints really referred to changes in the condition of the river banks and wear and tear to the fabric of the harbour installations and the bridges. Usually the repairs to all three types occur together, as in the chamberlains' accounts for 1575 when work was done on the Fullbridge and the Channel. The repair work often consisted only of building new protecting walls of piles interlaced with osiers and thatched with brushwood to prevent the erosion of the banks (or bridge cutwaters) by tidal scour. Damage to the walls and to the bridges was often the work of high tides, especially when they were backed up by strong easterly winds,¹ but it was not a phenomenon of the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries only. Repair work on the bridges and the wharves of the Hythe was costly, so it was usual for the corporation to levy a special rate (a Scot and Lot assessment) to raise money for the emergency work. That, however, was an unpopular action and there was frequent resistance to payment by the townsmen, both free and "foreign." Therefore the levy of a Scot and Lot was preceded by a proclamation in strong terms and the references to the "decay of the haven" are therefore often examples of special pleading and deliberately alarmist in tone. In 1616 the rate was for

"the new making and repairing of Fullbridge, the Calswaye....
and other decayed and ruyn (sic) nere to them, late wasted

1. Tidal problems in Essex are discussed in H. Grieve, The Great Tide (Chelmsford, 1959), chapter 1.

and impaired by inundac'ons of water"¹.

and in 1618 the corporation claimed that "unwonted fluddes" had caused damage costing £360 to repair.²

Consequently the alarms about "the decay of the haven" are more likely to be examples of special pleading than statements of measured fact. One of the peculiarities of the borough finance was the unpredictability of their gross annual receipt (that was due to the nature of many of the sources of income)³, and so there were times when the corporation was faced with two or three emergencies whose effect on the final balance of their budget could not be assessed. In those circumstances they were sometimes forced to levy a Scot and Lot but only after they had scraped together as much money as possible by the exercise of their normal powers, and only when they were able to make a forceful demand. It would therefore be unwise to lay much stress on the plaintive descriptions which they published of the poor state of their borough, especially when their own records belie the nature of the decay and when there is evidence for the same period of extensive improvement and rationalisation of the business at their Hythe.

* * * *

It is possible to strip away from twentieth century Maldon the late Victorian villas, the modern council and private estates, the parking lots and factory buildings and, in the mind's eye, see the remainder - Tudor and Stuart Maldon - encapsulated among these later additions which have covered the former pasturelands. And yet the

1. Pridden MS, Brand Collection, Ilford County Library, Essex.

2. Pridden MS.

3. See below, Chapter 5 and Tables 19 and 20.

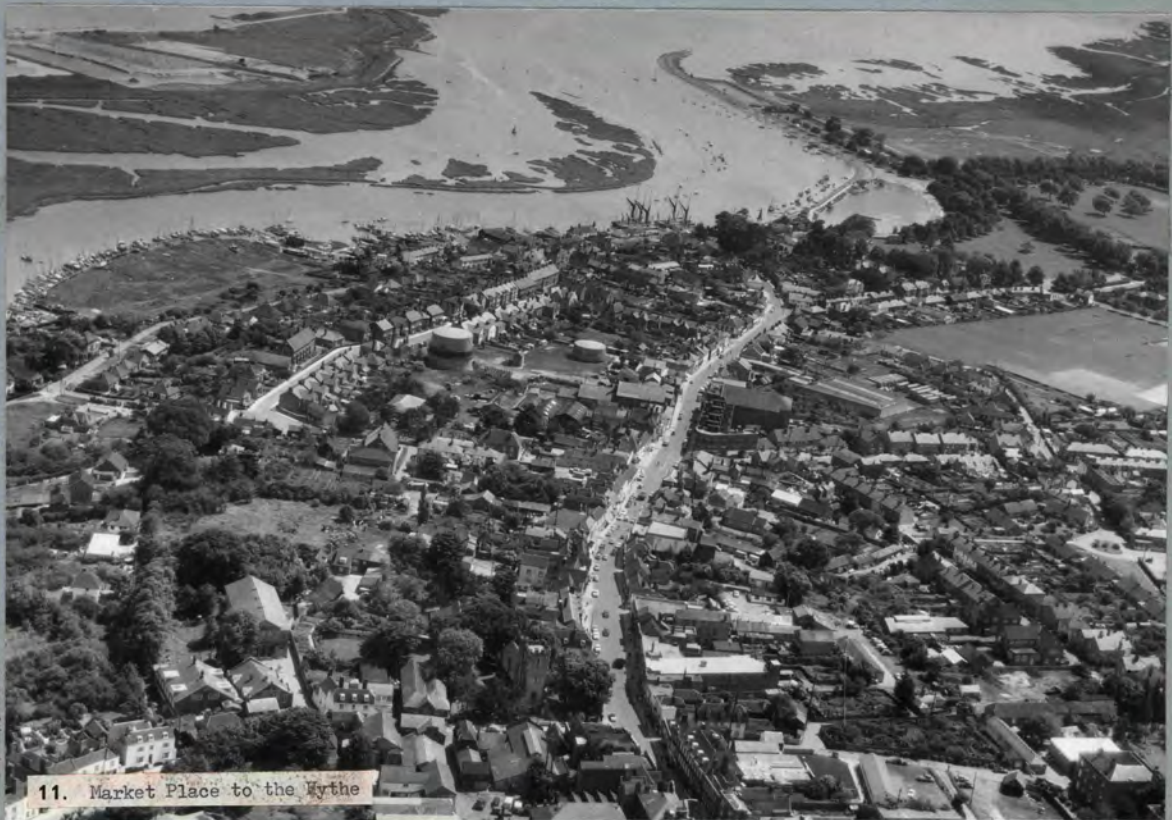
ancient kernel of the town has itself been so changed by constant adaptation, re-fronting and internal modifications that only its matrix really remains. From Fullbridge the visitor sees the outline of an undisputedly ancient borough rising on the hill top above him but it is only an outline.

Just as the physical substance of the sixteenth and seventeenth century town has been diligently scooped out or buried by later alterations, so has the evidence for the changes to the economy and organisation of its life been substantially obscured. What is needed is a profile of population and of occupational movements in the period 1500 to 1700 but the materials for that basic introductory survey are very imperfect and very partial.

The evidence immediately provided by the public and borough archives can be used in two distinct ways; it may be argued, on the information they provide, that the borough suffered a decline in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; or it may be argued that the place enjoyed a long period of comfortable, if unenterprising, stability. Although the preliminary arguments which can be put forward for each case are not very satisfactory, they both provide an introductory insight of the essential characteristics of this little borough.

Apparent decline, 1524 to 1671

About 1500 Maldon was a place of some consequence and esteem. Along with Colchester it returned members to parliaments: no other towns in the county did so then. There were also only three towns in the county which ranked as boroughs: Colchester, Thaxted and Maldon. And of all the towns in the county Maldon ranked third for the purposes of taxation. That is evident from the first general payment of the newly



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11. Market Place to the Wythe

reconstituted lay subsidy, which was required to be levied and collected in the period Martinmas 1523 to February 1524¹. and which has for Essex the greatest number of contributors and the largest valuations of all the subsidy records.² The towns in the county which had the most taxpayers and the highest aggregate valuations were:

1. Colchester (Tax return damaged)
2. Saffron Walden (Tax return damaged)
3. Maldon (194 taxpayers; £1,791 aggregate valuation)
4. Thaxted (194 taxpayers; £1,097 aggregate valuation)
- and 5. Gt Coggeshall (118 taxpayers; £699 aggregate valuation)

Perhaps three other places should be considered:

6. Chelmsford (97 taxpayers; £810 aggregate valuation)

if its adjoining hamlet of Moulsham is counted in with the town, and:

7. Bocking and Braintree (for which only the second payment, of January 1525 is available)

which together had 239 taxpayers and a gross valuation of £1,130. The two places were contiguous but separately they came well below the first five townships:

- Braintree, 100 taxpayers and £546 aggregate valuation
 Bocking, 139 taxpayers and £583 aggregate valuation

1. Statutes of the Realm 14 and 15 Henry VIII, c.16.

2. Dr. R.B. Smith found that the 1544/45 returns for the West Riding townships were much more full in respect of numbers and highest in the level of valuations (Land and Politics in the Reign of Henry VIII, Oxford 1970, pp. 264-266) but that is certainly not true of Essex returns.

whilst Maldon had 157 taxpayers for its second payment and a valuation of £1,199.¹

What the lay subsidy returns indicate, therefore, is that Colchester and Saffron Walden were the two largest towns in the county, whose incomplete tax lists are still far larger than any others in Essex in numbers of taxpayers and in aggregate valuations. Maldon came third, or at least third equal with Thaxted, and in terms of average valuation it came a clear third, with £9.2 per capita against Coggeshall's £5.9 and Thaxted's £5.6.

The town of Sudbury, just over the border in Suffolk, was apparently similar in rank to Maldon. It paid a little less in tax (£60 - 14s - 4d to Maldon's £71 - 9s - 4d) but it had slightly more taxpayers (219 to Maldon's 194).² If the lay subsidies are any kind of guide to relative size and wealth of towns, it seems that Maldon might have held a rank comparable with

Aylesbury (202 taxpayers; £1,004 aggregate valuation)³.

High Wycombe (175 taxpayers; £1,118 aggregate valuation)³.

or possibly,

Nottingham (295 taxpayers but £1,301 aggregate valuation).⁴

1. Lay subsidy returns, 1524: P.R.O., E.179/108/170, 154, 161; and of 1525: P.R.O., E.179/108/176 and 244.

2. S.H.A.H(ervey), Suffolk in 1524, Suffolk Green Books, X (1910).

3. J. Cornwall, 'English Provincial Towns of the 1520's', Economic History Review, Second Series, XV, pp.54 and 62.

4. D. Charman, 'Wealth and Trade in Leicester in the Early Sixteenth Century', Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological Society, XXV (1949) Table 2.

Local conditions - especially the degrees of efficiency with which the lay subsidy was levied - preclude any firm estimation of towns' comparable sizes from tax returns but the lay subsidies do permit a broad general impression to be gained and they suggest that about 1500 or 1524 Maldon was among those towns which formed a third layer in the hierarchy of English urban communities. Above it came, first, London and the great cities of the realm; then, in second place, the large provincial centres (of which Colchester, Ipswich and Cambridge were geographically the nearest to Maldon) with populations generally of three to four thousand. The third grade was composed of market towns whose populations have been estimated to have ranged between one and two thousand people, not large enough to be confused with the provincial centres but often much greater than the mass of English country towns, whose size was often far below a thousand inhabitants. Towns in that third grade would include such places as Sudbury, High Wycombe, Aylesbury, with which Maldon was comparable in terms of the level of taxation, and among its other peers there would appear to have been Lavenham, Stamford, Abingdon, Bideford, Faversham and Stafford.¹

A comparison of the rank of Maldon c.1524 with its position according to the Hearth Tax returns of the early 1670's suggests a distinct decline over the intervening hundred and fifty years. Third, or third equal, in 1524, it was fourteenth in 1671 according to the number of occupied households in the towns of the county.² The order was thus:

1. J. Cornwall, op. cit., pp. 57, 59 and 61.

2. Based on E.R.O., Q/RTh 5 and K.H. Burley, op. cit., pp.393-397.

Occupied Households

1. Colchester	2,096
2. Coggeshall	455
3. Saffron Walden	435
4. Chelmsford **	392
5. West Ham	386
6. Great Dunmow	384
7. Bocking	359
8. Thaxted	326
9. Braintree	282
10. Witham	272
11. Halstead	265
12. Dedham	255
13. Harwich	233
14. Maldon	225
15. Billericay	202

** With Moulsham hamlet.

There seems to be no reason for discounting this ranking as untrustworthy: the returns of 1671 are among the fullest of the Hearth Tax assessments, giving occupied and unoccupied households and listing those which were exempted from the tax; and a comparison of the 166s return with that of 1671 shows no diminution at Maldon in the numbers of households returned, so it cannot be that the borough was under-taxed.¹ Colchester certainly remained the greatest town in Essex,

1. See Table 1.4 (a) and (b): the difference between the numbers of households taxed is not great and there is considerable similarity in the numbers of hearths per household in the categories 3-5, 6-9 and 10+ in each return.

Walden nearly retained its second place (which it apparently had in the 1520's) and Chelmsford had developed as the county town, where Quarter Sessions and Assizes for the shire were conducted, where the elections of Knights of the Shire for parliaments were held and which was the market of a fertile, grain producing area. The position of these three towns in this list is reasonable. It will be noted, too, that all but one of the towns which had overtaken Maldon were in the northern half of the county, which was a notable clothing area. This also is reasonable. "A breife declaration concerninge the state of the manufacture of woolls in the Countie of Essex," compiled in 1629, had reported that

"There are within this countie aboute 12 or 14 towns wherein is exercised the manufactures upon wolls...

The principall of the clothinge is Colchester, Cogshal, Witham, Bockinge, Braintree, Dedham ..."¹.

all of which were towns which had overtaken Maldon by 1671. There had been textile manufacture at Maldon, of course, but its operators never formed a prominent occupational group in the town and of all the freemen whose occupations are known between 1561 and 1670 (597 freemen), those engaged in textiles formed only 7% (See Table 12.3 below.) Numerically the associated crafts of this occupation in Maldon were insignificant by comparison with the northern Essex townships. Witham in 1629 was said to have 2,000 persons who were

"mainteyned and have dependence by the manufactures of Woolls into Bays and Sayes"².

1. A. Clark, 'Essex Woollen Manufacture, 1629,' Essex Review XVII (1908), pp. 203-206, which prints selections from the Firth MS Lieutenancy Book for Essex in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

2. Ibid.,

but at that time only four baymakers are known to have lived at Maldon and it would have required ten times that number, each with five dependent operatives or wives and children, to match that total at Maldon in the early seventeenth century.

One other town which had apparently overtaken Maldon must also be considered: Harwich. This had grown throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and its position ahead of Maldon seems justifiable when the number of vessels based on each port are compared. Dr Burley worked out that there were

	<u>in 1629</u>	<u>in 1676</u>	<u>in 1702</u>
at Maldon	5	14	16 vessels
at Harwich	16	19	26 vessels

and that, by the end of the seventeenth century, Maldon had no foreign-going ships at all (unlike Harwich, which had become one of the chief ports of embarkation for the Low Countries) but only coasters which mostly plied towards the Thames and London.¹ Moreover, these were small vessels, which Dr Burley estimated would require only half the crews needed for the ships of Colchester and Harwich.² That is borne out by local evidence: mariners formed only 7% of the 597 freemen whose occupations are known (as was the case for textile workers); and the number of mariners remained steady over 150 years at Maldon:

<u>1570-1580</u> ³	<u>1664</u> ⁴	<u>1702</u> ⁵
34	20	31

1. Burley, *op. cit.*, p.228.

2. *Ibid.*, pp.248-249.

3. From annotated lists of decenners (tithingmen) which are described below, Chapter 2.

4. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/21 f.5v. (List of mariners sent to Sir John Bramston, Vice-admiral for Essex, December 1664.)

5. Burley, *op. cit.*, p.241.

whilst Harwich in 1702 had 78 seamen and Colchester 344.^{1.}

It seems that between 1500 and 1670, whilst other towns and townships in Essex grew, Maldon stood still. It had no textile industry of any size to be noted by commentators; it was a Port but it had only the smallest of fleets and the fewest of mariners. Indeed, a straightforward, conventional picture of a declining town could be painted and it would be easy to accept that such was the actual state of Maldon in the seventeenth and perhaps the sixteenth centuries. It was struck by misfortunes from about 1600: first there was serious dissension between the Corporation and the townsmen; then there was a schism in the Corporation itself; the tower of St Mary's collapsed in 1596 and was only rebuilt some thirty two years later with the aid of a charitable collection throughout the Eastern Counties; and in 1603-1604 the plague struck, spreading from London to Maldon. Two more outbreaks of the sickness (as also at London) occurred in 1625-1626 and 1638-1639; and in 1624 the bailiffs excused the defects in the militia armaments of the town as

"occasyoned and growen by the great decay of the wealth
and former estate of the Towne within few yeares past
and much impaired."^{2.}

Surely these were all symptoms of a decline and to be expected in a town hit by three demographic crises, suffering a declining trade and crippled with social division and broken corporate authority; to which the collapse of yet another church tower (St Peter's, c.1665) added a final touch of physical decay and the imposition - four times - of new charters by James II in 1687-1688 a final humiliation.

1. Ibid.

2. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/392/47.

Population estimates of decline and stability

It is also possible to argue a population decline consonant with this apparent decline in economic status. In 1671 there were 225 occupied households and as that was the longest, the most comprehensive hearth tax return, it must provide the most generous population estimate for the late seventeenth century. (All the calculations required for estimating population size, together with the discussion of their relative merits, have been relegated to Appendix 3 below, since they are complex but do not provide much insight into Maldon history in themselves.) On a basis of 4.75 persons to a household, Maldon in 1671 had a population of some 1,070, or - since estimates are more sensible if rounded off - about 1,100.

Now a comparison is required of the 1671 figure with another for 1524, based on the largest lay subsidy return. There were 194 taxpayers but with this source the conversion of that number into an estimate of gross population raises difficulties. At one extreme it is possible to argue that there were as many as 2,000 people in Maldon in 1524; at the other extreme, there may only have been some 920.

An argument that there was a decline in population at some time between 1524 and 1671 rests on the assertion that the lay subsidy assessors did not include or tax part of the population and that the exemptions (which must remain an unknown quantity at Maldon) might have applied to as many as half the heads of households.¹ At that extreme, it is easy to assume that there were at least 1,843 inhabitants in 1524.

1. I owe this suggestion of sizeable exemptions from the lay subsidy to Mr C.V. Phythian-Adams, based on his investigations of Coventry in the 1520's.

A subsidiary estimate can be added, for 1547, based on the number of "houseling folk" who were claimed to be in each parish at the time of the chantry commissioners' report on Maldon. That was a total of 720 persons, from which can be derived a figure of 1,000 rising to 1,200 inhabitants. (See Appendix 3.) Even if the higher of those two figures is accepted, there cannot have been a population decline of less than 800 people in twenty three years.

Estimates based on later sources, of 1576 to 1580, suggest a population then of 980 to 1,100 and so there is a possibility that the trend was of a steep decline in the period 1520 to 1550 from about 2,000 to 1,200; then a continued, though decelerating decline in numbers from c.1550 to c.1580, reaching, perhaps, its lowest level at about 950 to 980 persons; and after that a period of ninety years in which the population may have steadily climbed to some 1,200, although there is little evidence of the size of population movements at that time.

This suggested pattern depends on the acceptance of under-taxation in 1524. Maldon was not, however, a town with the type of craft organisation of, say, Coventry or Norwich or Bristol; there are no good reasons why it should be assumed that it had a sizeable proletariat of textile or leather craftsmen and wage-earners who were either unemployed in 1524 or earning less than twenty shillings per annum. It should also be borne in mind that a man only had to be at work on daily rates of two pence for just under one third of a year to earn that twenty shillings. The rates paid by the chamberlains from the borough chest in the 1530's and early 1540's suggest that the normal rates of pay - even for labourers - were higher than that and so it may be argued that the picture of economic divisions of the Maldon populace shown in the lay subsidy assessments are a fair impression, that there were few men whom

the assessors might fix at the minimum of twenty shillings per annum.

Furthermore, it must be noted that there is a remarkable similarity between the numbers of taxpayers and the number of houseling folk at Maldon and Thaxted: in each case there were 194 taxpayers in 1524 and there were 720 communicants claimed for Maldon in 1547, and 700 at Thaxted. A similar decline might be argued for Thaxted as for Maldon and yet it should also be noted that the Thaxted subsidy returns give a much higher proportion of men assessable at the lowest rates than was the case for Maldon. (See Tables 2 and 3.)

Assuming that the lay subsidy is not under-manned, that 194 represents a majority of the taxpayers of 1524 and that most persons paid tax, then the population of Maldon in the first quarter of the sixteenth century may have been no more than 900 to 1,000. If that were the case, then in place of the steep decline during 1500 to 1550 suggested above there may have been a steady population figure of some 1,000 people throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Possibly this level may have fallen here and risen a little at other times, especially towards 1671. A glance forward to the Census returns of the early nineteenth century helps to set this proposed pattern in a reasonable perspective. In 1801 there were 2,428 inhabitants; in 1851 there were 4,558. Thus, if a figure of about 1,000 is correct for 1671, the population doubled in the century 1700 to 1800 and again doubled in the half-century 1801 to 1851. That produces, diagrammatically, a steady growth curve which could indeed have grown out of a static situation in the previous century or more.

Apparent stability

A re-examination of the Hearth Tax returns of 1671 also shows that

there are grounds for arguing that Maldon managed to hold to its third place among the towns of Essex. That it ranked fourteenth when the numbers of householders was compared may not really be of any significance since a town of great size might well have a large proportion of its inhabitants with only one or two hearths each, which means a largely labouring or poorly placed population, the sector of urban communities where disease, poverty and unemployment were most common. On the other hand, a town whose householders mostly possessed four or five hearths each would be probably more prosperous, even if it were smaller in terms of total population, for the number of hearths in each house is a general guide to the standard of living of a community, in that only the prosperous could afford large houses and the consequent number of domestic servants.

So, by comparing the numbers of houses returned as possessing six or more hearths and by showing what proportions of the totals they formed, a general guide ought to be found to the relative ranking by prosperity of Essex towns. It is thus:

	<u>Householders with</u> <u>6 or more hearths</u>	<u>% of all hearths</u> <u>(in occupied dwellings)</u>
1. West Ham	86	22%
2. Chelmsford	58	14.8%
3. Maldon	32	14.2%
4. Dedham	28	11%
5. Harwich	25	10.7%
6. Colchester	166	7.5%
7. Saffron Walden	31	7.1%
8. Billericay	14	7.%
9. Braintree	19	6.7%
10. Bocking	22	6.%

Maldon also comes third among Essex towns in 1671 when it is ranked by the proportion of its householders who were exempted from payment of the Hearth Tax. In the earlier returns that group of people were not written into the collectors' lists but in the 1670's they were included at the foot of each parish return as "discharged by a legall Certificate." Since those who were exempted were either in receipt of poor relief or eligible for it, this calculation should indicate the position of Maldon over against the larger but more artisan populations of the North Essex townships:

	<u>Exempted</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>100%</u>
	<u>households</u>		<u>(total of occupied households)</u>
1. Harwich	48	20.6	233
2. West Ham	99	25.6	386
3. Maldon	72	32.0	225
4. Dedham	114	44.7	255
5. Chelmsford	184	46.9	392
6. Saffron Walden	214	49.1	435
7. Colchester	1,157	55.1	2,096
8. Witham	162	59.5	272
9. Coggeshall	274	60.2	455
10. Thaxted	202	61.9	326
11. Dunmow	245	63.7	384
12. Halstead	175	66.0	265
13. Braintree	190	67.3	282
14. Bocking	292	81.3	359

The townships which had overtaken Maldon in sheer size had a larger proportion of their population in receipt of (or eligible for) charitable relief and on looking back to the lay subsidy of 1524 a similar situation may be observed. What is being extracted from the hearth tax and the lay subsidy is a statement about relative wealth:

either in terms of household size; or in terms of poor relief; or as an expression of per capita valuation for tax purposes.

Tables 2 and 3 below set out some observations drawn from the lay subsidies about the proportion of taxpayers assessed at less than £3 in lands, goods or wages in 1523-1524; and also some comparable observations about towns which were in the same general category of urban communities as Maldon. It will be seen that Maldon was outstanding as having very few of its inhabitants taxed at less than £3 (though not so exceptional as to be incredible, Chelmsford offers a similar case) and this position appears to mean the same as the low proportion of exempted hearth taxpayers and the high proportion of houses in 1671 with six or more hearths - that Maldon was not possessed of any large wage-earning artisan group either in the early sixteenth or in the late seventeenth centuries. For it would be among such people that assessments for subsidy taxation on wages or on goods valued at less than £3 per annum would occur; the hearth tax assessments for them would most likely be on houses with only one or two hearths and - apart from the sick, infirm or elderly - it would be out-of-work artisans and labourers who would be represented by the exemptions from taxation in 1671.

It may therefore be significant that poor relief does not appear to have been a special feature of communal activity at Maldon during the period under review. There had been almshouses there in pre-Reformation times and the borough had appointed freemen each year to be Wardens of the Almshouses, who collected the rents secured to the maintenance of the almshouses. By the time of the first sixteenth century chamberlains' accounts, however, the office of Warden and the administration of the rents had been absorbed by the chamberlains and after that there is no further reference to almshouses. By 1630 the site of the buildings was a vacant plot of ground, although it is no-

where stated when they were demolished.¹ Furthermore, Maldon did not have a House of Correction until 1676, when the corporation established one by the conversion of a house in St Mary's parish.²

Of course there were bequests of money, firewood or funeral doles to the poor of the three parishes in the wills of many townspeople but such legacies were no more than the generalised charitable acts expected of Christian persons in the final disposition of their worldly goods. Charitable trusts, however, for the permanent relief of the poor are not to be found, except for three legacies whose conditions may be indicative of the level of poverty to be found at Maldon in the early seventeenth century. One was a charity founded in 1594 by John Hunwicke, a Colchester alderman, not a resident of Maldon, who bequeathed £300 to the poor of Colchester or (on default of that borough's corporation to employ the fund) to the poor of Ipswich, Sudbury and Maldon. If the corporation of Colchester did employ the fund they were to render account every fifth year to the bailiffs of Ipswich and the interest yielded for that fifth year was to be divided equally among the three alternatively named towns.³ The second and third legacies were specifically for the relief of impoverished Maldon freemen but they were intended to be loans and they were both short term loans. One was a gift of £40 by Samuel

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1. Amendment of 1484 to the 1444 custumal (E.R.O., D/B 3/1/2) and a conveyance of 1630 in D/B 3/1/34 (no folio number but under that year.) [Memorandum of the establishment of a House of Correction.
 2. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/21. \ MCA 1677 has payments for repairs to the House of Correction and of half a year's rent to the house owner, "the wife of Thomas Terry of Deptford."
 3. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/3 f.265v and D/B 3/3/424 (digests of the terms of Hunwicke's benefaction).

Bedell in 1651, which was to be lent to poor freemen in sums of no more than £10, without interest but on security.¹ Each loan from Bedell's charity was limited to one year and similarly a non-resident freeman, Nicholas Catton of Hornchurch,

"did many years before his death and of his pious disposition give twenty pounds in perpetuity to be always lent out by the bailiffs ... freely, without use or interest for the forbearance thereof, upon sufficient security by them always to be given for the repayment thereof at the end of one year next after every such lending."²

Each loan was of one year only, each required securities. Poverty does not seem, from the tenor of these bequests, to have been pressing, or of serious proportions in seventeenth century Maldon if these were the only permanent arrangements that anyone cared to make for poor relief. The special problem to which they addressed themselves was to secure the livelihood of temporarily embarrassed tradesmen or craftsmen, who were evidently expected to achieve independence quite quickly.

Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the accounts of the chamberlains also show that the officials of the borough were diligent in keeping out all those persons who were likely to be a liability to the parish funds for the poor. There was an element of population control in the borough policy which was undoubtedly aimed at preventing any influx of unemployed people from other areas. The policy worked in three ways. Firstly, the bailiffs and chamberlains were diligent in the relief of vagrants who were passing through their

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/20 f.217r.

2. Ibid.

town and they sought out the fathers of illegitimate children born in the borough (especially if they had a chance of fathering a bastard on an inhabitant of an outside parish), whilst the constables saw to it that vagrant women who might be pregnant and near to labour were physically examined. Those women whose time was near were hurried off by cart to the heathland hamlet of Runsell Green (some three miles beyond the borough boundary) lest their babies should be a charge on any of the town parishes.^{1.}

A second line of action was to search out masterless (or unwanted) men and women. They were arrested by the constables, prosecuted by the head burgesses of the corporation at the borough Quarter Sessions and sent out of the borough by the aldermen's judgement. Thus Agnes Simon was prosecuted in 1593 because she was

"dwelling with her mother in a chamber of the house of
John Merchaunte in the parishe of Sct Mary"^{2.}

and householders who entertained wanderers were also liable to prosecution, like William Alleyn, labourer, in 1574, who

"received into his house one Nicholas Darye and his wife as
an Inmate."^{3.}

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1. Accounts throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries refer to charities for poor people, soldiers, sailors and, passing through the town. Accounts with special references are MCA 1570, 1611, 1614, 1622, 1623, 1640, 1661 and E.R.O., D/B 3/3/392/45 and D/B 3/1/208.
 2. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/8 ff. 128v-129r.
 3. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/6 f.161v.

In 1618 another wanderer was adjudged

"like to be a charge to the parish if he be not spedely removed"¹.

and at the same time an unwanted competitor for the freemen was run out of town on the excuse that he was likely to need poor relief:

"for that he is lately come into this Burrow and hath settled himself in the parish of St Maries, who is a forreiner and useth to sell smale wares, to the damage of the freemen of this Burrow and is likely to be a charge to the parish and therefore we desire he may have good fines imposed upon him and spedely removed"

along with two other men.²

Thirdly, the lodgers and the inhabitants of subdivisions of houses (the equivalent of "flat" dwellers) were rigidly controlled. Innacy had become an acute problem in the south of Essex during the late sixteenth century, according to Dr Felix Hull, who associated the building of new cottages and the subdivision of old buildings into smaller dwellings with an influx of artisans and labouring men from the clothing districts of northern Essex.³ At Maldon all inmates were governed from 1567 by a regulation which clearly embraced all occupiers of every subdivided building, as well established residents of the borough as newcomers, householders as well as lodgers, and it was a means of regulating

1. D/B 3/3/476.

2. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/477 item 23.

3. Felix Hull, 'Agriculture and Rural Society in Essex, 1560-1640,'

(unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1950) pp.490-492 and Appendix 10.

the settlement of people in the town. A house had inmates, said the order,

"when a householder taketh and receiveth some other to dwell with him and so there be two or more families in one house, dwelling under one roof, though their going out and in be at several doors to and from the street."¹.

This was amplified in a seventeenth century paper copy of the customs, which states that

"the annceyent custome of this Burroughe is that no man shall take anye inmate into his house without lycens of the Baylieffes."².

A prosecution of 1569 showed that the corporation regarded any form of subdivision as a provision for inmates. In 1568 Daniel Winterbourne described in his will how he had divided his house

"by an entrey lately made, commynge out of the streat, withe the newe parlor therunto and a part of the kytchine and the one half of the yarde, beyng equally devided in the meddest;"³.

but in 1569 his widow was imprisoned because she kept house in one of those divisions "contrary to the ancient ordinances of the town."⁴. Inmates were, of course, objectionable elements in the population when they were unemployed or vagrant; then they were liabilities to the parish into which they had drifted; they might be criminals; they might

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/6 f.29r. Ordinance Quod due familie non erunt sub uno tegumento.
2. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/551/1 para. 81.
3. See Appendix 3, item 39.
4. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/6 f.69r.

be a threat to public health. But why prosecute the widow of Daniel Winterbourne when she was simply continuing to live in a part of her old married home, when she was an inmate only under her son's roof? There were many whom the corporation did not disturb, such as another widow, Mistress Moore, for whom living quarters were to be provided under the terms of her husband's will (1619) in her brother-in-law's house: she was to have the use of the Great Chamber over the Shop, part of the yard was to be her's for storing firewood and she was to share the use of the "stayers chamber" for airing linen.¹ Also there were newcomers who were craftsmen or in other ways acceptable to the corporation who were permitted to take lodgings or to become inmates in subdivided buildings, like Robert Barbor and John Warner who were inmates with John Barrington of the triply divided messuage called Francesces Garden in 1620.² It is likely that Mistress Winterbourne had not obtained the permission of the bailiffs to live as an inmate (or may have felt the custom of the borough to be an impertinence in her case!) whilst these others had received the licence to be inmates from the corporation.

Stability and continuous prosperity of some sort are also suggested by the topographical features of the borough. True, there were no suburban extensions but there was ingrowing instead and the evidence for thirty-nine new dwellings provided by new buildings and the subdivisions of older houses³ must be weighed against the very limited evidence for abandoned or derelict sites. Two buildings are mentioned which required

1. E.R.O., D/ABW 26/298 (will of 1619).

2. D/ABW 43/105 (will of 1620).

3. See Appendix 3.

extensive rebuilding in 1496 and c.1550; the Darcy Tower was, apparently, a derelict building until it was converted into the Moot Hall in 1576; the Carmelite Friary was a ruin from its dissolution in 1536 until its conversion into a mansion house in the early 1570's; and the buildings of St Giles' Hospital which became "Spittelhowse" Farm in the late sixteenth century. Each of those five buildings was in fact re-used and only another four plots of land are known to have remained derelict after about 1540.^{1.}

Similarly the history of the market place and the quayside indicate steady progress and development from c.1540 onwards. The evidence was all of reconstruction, renovation and reorganisation. The market place grew in size and in the diversification of its facilities throughout the sixteenth century and there is no reason, as has been shown, to suppose that the demolition work of the 1620's was anything other than rationalisation and improvement. Similarly the Hythe grew in accommodation and the "decay of the haven" was shown to have been - most probably - a case of special pleading, deliberately alarmist but really a reference to the state of the corporation finance than a hydrographic statement.

Yet decay there must have been, since the borough was named in

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/2 (1542); D/B 3/1/34 f.4r (1574); ibid. f.11v (1577) and under the year 1630 (no folio number); and D/B 3/1/3 ff.263v - 264r (1598). These refer to (i) a vacant plot, once built on, called Stoneardes (1542 and 1574); (ii) a plot of land formerly property of St Giles' Hospital (1577); almshouse site (1630); and "voyde growndes where have beene buylded houses of habitation and decayed houses and not fullie fallen downe, called The Rentes" (1598).

two statutes for the repair of decayed towns in 1541 and 1544¹ and the first reason for the incorporation in 1554 given in the preamble of the letters patent was the decayed state of the borough: "one of the most ancient in the realm and at present very ruinous and decayed ..." It may be, however, that physical decay had been halted by then, for the statutes were retrospective up to twenty five years and the growth of the market at Maldon from the 1540's runs counter to the statement of the grant of incorporation. As in the case of the "decay of the haven" these more general complaints may well be examples of special pleading, referring to the competition faced by Maldon either from other markets or from craftsmen working in the countryside. The complaints may well represent the burgesses' attempts to secure a greater control over the occupations and the marketing in their part of Essex, rather than refer to actual physical decay on an alarming scale or to a long-term decline in the numbers of inhabitants.

A decline in numbers, a period of stagnation of trade, a time of recession can tentatively be pushed back to the beginning of the century - to the very beginning - and the fifteenth century. It seems that the trend of the lay subsidy assessments, the topographical evidence, the policy employed by the borough to control its population and the stress laid on self-help in poor relief, are strong pointers towards a stable population of about 1,000 throughout the period 1524 to 1671 - fluctuating a little no doubt - which began in the 1540's after a period of stagnation and continued until in the later part of the seventeenth century it began its exponential growth from 1,000 to over 4,500 in the mid-nineteenth century. The description offered by William Camden, who visited Maldon

1. Statutes of the Realm 32 Henry VIII c.19; and J.S. Brewer (ed.), Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII, XIX, Act of Parliament 14th January 1544.

in the 1570's when he was compiling material for his Britannia appears to be a judicious statement:

"for the number of the inhabitants and the bigness ... worthily counted one of the principal towns in all Essex ... a haven, commodious enough and, for the bigness, very well inhabited."¹.

* * * *

It is one purpose of this study to show that whilst Maldon "stood" by marketing (as Leland might have said².) it is insufficient to rely on the mechanics of urban life - the state of communications, the number of people employed, the volume of trade which can in some places be measured by the declarations of the Port Books or from local toll records - to examine the success or the failure of the borough to exist as a community. Too much has gone, anyway, to make more than a superficial inspection of the essential problems and trends of urban life at Maldon. The evidence which survives cannot be examined in sufficient depth for a completely trustworthy or convincing interpretation at this level and, moreover, the chronology of decay and recovery or stability are very confused.

Decay and prosperity were, indeed, co-existent in sixteenth and seventeenth century Maldon. At the same time that the shoemakers were pleading the decay of the haven, the market in which they traded was being enlarged; at a time in the early sixteenth century when the first charter of incorporation and two statutes declared the borough to have decayed, it apparently ranked third of all the urban communities of the

1. William Camden, Britannia (1637 edition) p.448.

2. Unfortunately for any historian of Maldon, Leland's Itinerary does not include any account of Maldon, except for a brief note on the origin of the Darcy family.

shire; at the same time that the corporation pleaded the decay in their borough's wealth and estate, around the 1620's, at the same time as three plagues, there were in the town a diversity of trading and manufacturing activities and a good range of specialist services which suggest a broad-based economy.^{1.}

The obscurity of the trends in economic and social patterns of life in Maldon are, however, explicable, for the essential characteristic of Tudor and Stuart Maldon was the continuity of change. Already ancient in 1500, it was physically subject to constant alteration and reconstruction within the bounds laid down by the surrounding fields and pastures. By 1600 only the shards remained of inessential medieval buildings: if they had been houses they had by then been renovated, divided, reconstructed, enlarged or encapsulated with new work; if they were churches, two (the Friary and St Helen's Chapel) had been torn down as unnecessary, two more (Beeleigh Abbey and St Giles' Hospital) had become farm buildings and a fifth (St Peter's) had become a school whilst its congregation had been merged since 1577 with that of All Saints' parish.^{2.} St Mary's stood in ruins from 1596 until at least 1628 but for that there were special reasons and it was later rebuilt

1. See below, Chapter 4, for a discussion of the characteristics of the occupational structure of Maldon between 1500 and 1688.

2. E.R.O., D/Dqs 134. E.R.O., D/AFA 8, f.280: order by the Archdeacon of Essex that, with the consent of the churchwardens of All Saints, the wardens and parishioners of St Peter's henceforth repair in orderly fashion to All Saints' church on Sundays and Holy Days; that the wardens of either parish merge functions; and each parishioner to be placed in All Saints' according to his degree.

and re-used.¹ The only church to receive repairs and regular attention for its fabric was All Saints. In the same way the market place and waterside trading facilities were subject to regular alteration, removal, extension or contraction as circumstances required.

Above all, the people who lived in the borough were constantly on the move and that regular change in the personnel of Maldon lies at the very heart of the nature of the town. It is the characteristic which above all others can be seen to have dictated the essential course of the town right through the sixteenth and much of the seventeenth centuries. It is to that special characteristic that the attention of this study must now be turned.

1. The delay in rebuilding St Mary's appears to have been due in part to religious differences of opinion in Maldon, which are considered below in Chapter 6.

Chapter 2

THE PEOPLE OF MALDON, 1500-1688

Transience was the governing demographic characteristic of Tudor and Stuart Maldon. There was constant movement in and out of the borough at such a rate that the mobility of the population exercised a pervasive influence on the structure of the community. It reached through the occupational groups from the hired labourers and the vagrants to the merchants and gentry of the town; it affected the composition of the ruling group, it is reflected in the topography of the borough and it even dictated some of the trends in house construction.

However, the usual processes by which the changes in the numbers of inhabitants of a sixteenth and seventeenth century community can be estimated involve assumptions about the sizes of average households or about the proportion of adult males to females and children, which in their turn, assume that the size of a population is largely determined by natural replacement rates. So calculations based on the lay subsidy returns of 1524 and 1525, the communicants of 1547, the recorded baptisms, marriages and burials of the parish registers or on the hearth tax assessments of the 1660's and 1670's, are the more reliable the more enclosed and self-replacing the community to which they refer: they cannot be applied so easily to a community which replaced itself as much by immigration as by births or whose losses were due to emigration as much as to mortality. And it seems that Maldon was such a place (at least from 1550 to c.1660), dependent on recruitment from outside its boundaries as much as on the natural increase of its population.

In itself any form of mobility, social or geographical, is to be expected in a sixteenth or a seventeenth century town. It is the extent

to which Maldon was dependent on immigration to replenish its population which is so striking and some preliminary indications of the central part played by mobility at Maldon can be gathered from the lists of the borough common council and corporation.

The extent of mobility: (i) evidence of the freemen and corporation

Professor Hoskins noted that in the early 16th century "successful urban families came and went in a matter of three generations at ^{the} most" and that among the ordinary run of freeman families (as at Leicester) the same rate of movement was observable.¹ At Maldon the rate of replacement may have been yet faster. Only three families who had provided bailiffs for the borough in the first quarter of the sixteenth century had representatives holding that office in the second quarter and none of those families who provided bailiffs between 1500 and 1550 are represented in the second half of the century. Similarly these Tudor Maldon family names are not to be found in the lists of bailiffs of the seventeenth century.²

That is, of course, only a crude general impression. It is possible to refine it by examining the lists of members of the common council and corporation which were drawn up at each annual Court of Election of Officers, most of which are enrolled in the registers of the town clerks. They can be collated with the memoranda of freemen's admissions, which usually state the men's places of birth and so a measurement can be obtained of the number of immigrants which the borough needed to recruit in order to maintain its establishment. To begin with, it must

1. W.G. Hoskins, Provincial England, pp. 74-76.

2. The bailiffs are listed in Appendix 4.

be noted that each year two bailiffs jointly held office as the consuls of the borough and that men born outside the borough occupied this place at least 37 times out of a possible 100 between 1500 and 1550.

After 1555 the borough was governed by a corporation of 24 head-burgesses and aldermen, so from that date the composition of the ruling group can be measured by counting each annual seat as one place and expressing each man's number of places as a percentage of the total. There were 240 places available in the corporation between 1571 and 1580, of which 44% were held by immigrants. Similarly in the decade 1631 to 1640 newcomers filled 42% of the 259 places available in the corporation.

On a still broader level 633 memoranda of the admissions of freemen to the franchise of the borough (1501-1580 and 1611-1659) also indicate the importance of immigration for the replacement of the community. These are tabulated below (Tables 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3) and it appears that nearly one half of the freemen were recruited from outside Maldon. About 37% came from places in Essex and about 16% were from outside the county, percentages which roughly match the measurement made of the proportion of immigrants in the inner ring of the freeman body, the corporation. It seems, too, that such a rate of replacement applied in both the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries. The validity of this observation can be criticised on the grounds that in the sixteenth century it was not customary for the admissions of freemen who inherited the franchise and were residents of Maldon to be recorded and that this omission in the official records will have distorted the proportions shown in these tables. However, a check of the memoranda against the available lists of the complete freeman body during the 1570's and 1580's indicates that few claimed (or were resident to enjoy) an inherited franchise and a correction of 10% has been applied to the tabulated

figures which probably errs in favour of the resident, native freemen.^{1.} If this is allowed for, then it seems that at least 50% of the freemen were immigrants and their proportion may have been even a little higher.

Three remarkable features of recruitment at freeman level, 1501-1660, are displayed by Table 4.3. Firstly it will be seen that very few apprentices availed themselves of their opportunity to become freemen, although the fee for them was only 6s 8d, payable by their masters. Between 1560 and 1660 at least 568 apprentices were indentured in the borough courts but only 50 became freemen: that is, 9% of all the known apprentices in that period became freemen, and, secondly only 8% of the freemen in the period 1501-1660 are known to have been previously apprenticed in the borough.

It is also remarkable how few were the freemen who had "married into" the franchise, although marriage into a mercantile or tradesman family was an acceptable English pathway to financial security and even to social advancement. Even Sir John Ferne, a writer of fantastic heraldry, was forced to admit in his treatise on the nature of Nobility that he had "heard it received as good pollicie with wise men to match their sonnes as it might be with a usurer's daughter of the city for the increase of their patrimony. A jolly helpe it is, when as a noble Gentleman, throughe a liberall minde hath something shortned his revenewes, to inlarge the same by the plentifulness of their (*ie. townsmen's*) bagges."^{2.} Not by marriage with Maldon families, it seems, for no more than 12% of the freemen are known to have obtained their franchise by marriage to the daughters or widows of freemen.

1. See the note at the foot of Table 4.3.

2. Sir John Ferne, The Blazon of Gentry (1586) p.10.

Thirdly, the majority of the freemen had paid for their franchise and it must be noted that the terms of entry were sufficiently varied and cheap to promote the influx of newcomers. Four methods were available: (a) by serving an apprenticeship with a freeburgess of the town; (b) by descent from a freeman; (c) by marriage; or (d) by paying an entry fee of 33s 4d.¹ Few difficulties were raised and the table of fees was not altered throughout this period. Aliens had to pay three pence more than English "foreigners" and they were debarred from gaining cheap admission by marriage to a freeburgess' widow or the widowed daughter of a freeman. Nor might a man acquire the freedom by marriage if his wife had already been married and the first husband had acquired freedom in her right. Apart from that, the terms were attractive and in some cases the corporation apparently waived part of the fees for the poorer applicants and, where possible, made up the loss by charging more to richer men.

The extent of mobility: (ii) the lists of freemen and decenners

For one decade, 1570-1580, the scope of this enquiry can be broadened yet further by using an unusual and extremely interesting source of information about the adult male population. During those years John Barnardiston, who was the town clerk, wrote down some lists which he had prepared for sessions of that ancient court, the View of Frankpledge. He also entered in his court book some of the lists of freemen which he prepared for checking the attendance of the freeburgesses at the January courts for the election of officers and together these lists form an extensive catalogue of the townsmen. Indeed, every male aged 12 or over should be in these lists, for every man was obliged to belong to a tithing

1. The fees are set out in Table 4.5.

and by its charter of 1555 the borough was empowered to hold a View of Frankpledge, in which these tithings could be reviewed, twice a year:

"the Baillieffes of the Bourough ... may have and hold before them in the Motehall a courte of viewe of Frannok pledge of all tennantes, inhabitantes and residentes within the Burrough and the subburbes of the same, and all that which to the viewe of Frannok pledge belongeth, twice every yeare: (that is to saie) once within a monethe after the Feast of Easter and once within a moneth after the Feast of St Michaell tharchanngell ..."¹.

All the townsmen who were not freemen were styled decenners, which meant a member of a tithing (although the term was misleadingly corrupted to "doziners") and every male over twelve years of age was to be a member of a tithing and had to be sworn in. So these lists, combined with the tables of freemen, should provide a complete roll-call of all the adult males in the town.

The reputability of the lists of decenners is enhanced by the rigour with which the View of Frankpledge was carried out. Before each court the constables of the parishes prepared schedules of all the decenners and warned each to appear at the Moot Hall of the borough on the day of the View. Those who would not give their names to the constables or who failed to make suit of court were prosecuted, so the court was not treated as a mere formality. At the Easter Quarter Sessions of 1571, for example, nine men were presented who owed suit of court and whom it was deemed should be fined because they had not attended but had defaulted, to the contempt of the court:

1. 1555 charter. Translation in E.R.O., D/B 3/1/3 f.18.

"qui debent sectam huius lete et licet solempniter exacti,
quod non comparuerunt sed default' fecerunt ad hunc diem
in contemptu curie."¹.

The rigour with which the View was carried out is also attested by the charges levied against William Soan in 1594 that, "in disdayne of the government," he had forbidden his sons and his servants to appear "to do their royall sute to the Queen's Majestie's Leete but hath rebuked the officers that have warned them"; and by his own words when he "reproved the governors that have sent for them, sayinge he hadd other thinges for them to doo then to stande waytinge at the Hall."².

Every newcomer and every boy who reached the age of 12 was required to take the Oath of the Decenners, by which he swore loyalty to the Crown, to maintain the Peace and to be obedient to the town government. This latter obligation was a particular incentive for the corporation to maintain the vigour of the ancient system of the Frankpledge. The copy of their oath which is entered at the beginning of the White Book of Maldon is a version composed c.1603-4 and it is really a charge to each new, male, adult member of the town community:

"Yew shall trew lege manne be and trew faythe and trowthe
shall beare to our soveraigne lorde the kynge, Jeames, by
the grace of god now Kinge of England, and to his heires,
kinges of this realme.

"Yew shall be no thefe nor thefes fayer or compaynyon, nor
any thefte or treason knowe and that keepe or conceyle;
but yew shall shortlie thereof enforme the Kinges Officers
that haith the Law in government.

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/6 f.114r.

2. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/423/1.

"Yew shalbe obedient to the Baylieffes and other officers of this towne for the tyme beinge in all thinges they shall bidd and commaunde yew to doe, well and trewlie, and well and indifferently use and demeane yourself like a trew liege man.

"So help yew God."¹

Throughout the early seventeenth century the swearing-in of newcomers was scrupulously observed and, whilst the rest of the View's business was left "on the files" and has consequently disappeared, the names of new decenners were always enrolled in the court book. Thus the View of Frankpledge held on October 1st 1632 is enrolled with, firstly, a list of the jurors, secondly a note that, having been sworn and charged, they made their presentments "prout patet super filacijs dicte Curie" (after which there is a space left blank for these presentments) and then, thirdly, there is a list of thirteen decenners who had taken their oaths of allegiance at the court.²

It is clear from the provisions of the charter that freemen were also included in the View. So were the eighteen head burgesses and the six aldermen of the corporation but the town clerk already had his roll of these and of the freemen, the one he used to check their attendance at the court of election in January. The unenfranchised inhabitants, however, had to be specially listed for the View of Frankpledge and they were registered in Catalogi continentes omnia nomina decenariorum - and

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/3 (the White Book of Maldon).

2. D/B 3/1/20 f.16. "Christofer Keeler, Thomas Chese ... (and 11 others) ... desinerii et residentes infra precinctum huius Lete ceperunt et quilibet eorum cepit sacrum suum pro eorum Legeianc' domino Regi secundam formam Legis etc."

be it noted that the list claimed to be complete - which the town clerk prepared from the schedules returned to him by the parish constables.

Some early seventeenth century copies of the instructions given to the constables before each View have been preserved. They are set out as letters patent from the clerk in his capacity of Steward of the Leet jurisdiction of the borough and "in his majesties' name" requiring the constables to warn all the head burgesses of the corporation ("headborowes" is the term used) and all the decenners to make suit of court:

"These are in his majesties name to require you forthwith to warn all headborowes and diseners (that is to saie, men and men children resident and dwelling within the said parish, being above twelve years of age and no freemen) to make their personal appearance at and in the Moot Hall of the said Borough at the Court Leet there holden on Monday, being the 20th day of this instant April, by eight of the clock in the forenoon, then and there to do their royal suite and services ..."

Next the letter instructs the constables to bring to the View all masterless men and women, all idle and dissolute persons found within their parishes, "then and there to be ordered as to Justice appertaineth." Lastly, the constables were also ordered to bring to the clerk "the names of all such as you shall warne, in a schedule hereunto annexed, fair written" and among the bundles of filed papers - such as have survived - there are some fragmentary examples of these lists, annexed to the clerk's letters patent which the constables returned before the View commenced. The best preserved is a schedule of the decenners of All Saints' Parish in April 1619 (with 74 names) but unfortunately the lists for St Mary's

and St Peter's parishes are too fragmentary to be used.¹ They and the instructions given to the constables do, however, show that the preparations for each View were carefully performed and so the lists which John Barnardiston compiled in his court register during the 1570's can be used with real confidence that they, combined with the catalogues of the freemen, do represent a call-over of all the males aged over twelve years in the borough.

The town clerk rewrote his constables' returns, placing in one column all those with a common forename - all the Richards and all the Johns, for example, in distinct blocks - so that he could quickly locate the name when a man appeared before him in the court room of the Moot Hall. Those who failed to make a personal suit of court, and some others, had notes written beside their names, for these enrolled catalogues were working lists. Some men had left the town and were marked "ex" (extra burgo); others were still at sea (super mare) and some were dead. Others were marked with "def" (deforciant) for prosecution at the next Quarter Sessions but some were marked "pard" (pardonatur) and others found pledges for themselves. Some were ill (egrotatus) and others had become freemen and then there were the newcomers, against whose names he wrote "nov'iur" (novus iuratus) when they had been administered the oath of the decenners. Not all, therefore, attended the View but all who owed suit were listed.

From these and the freemen's lists² it is possible to attempt

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1. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/476 and /477 (letters and schedules).
 2. The decenners' and freemen's lists are in E.R.O. D/B 3/1/6.

Of decenners: folios 91, 113, 134, 153, 168, 194, 204, 217, 227
and 240.

Of freemen: folios 172, 187, 213 and 234.

a precise measure of the extent of mobility within the whole population for at least the decade 1570 to 1580. By recording every year for which each man is listed in the two sets of lists three standpoints can be taken:

1570, 1576 and 1580;

and a count can be taken of:

- (1) the decrease between 1570 and 1580 in the numbers of the men who were present in 1570;

(Table 5.1: Decenners and Freemen of 1570: decrease 1570-80.)

- (2) the numbers of those men who were listed in 1580 and who had been present during the past one to ten years;

Table 5.2: Decenners and Freemen of 1580: increase, 1570-80.)

and (3) a survey of the men listed for 1576 to show

(i) their increase, 1570-1576; and

(ii) their decrease, 1576-1580.

(Table 5.3: Decenners and Freemen of 1576.)

Before considering the results of these three counts, there are several features of the lists and of the counting processes which must be explained. For the middle year of the decade (1575) there is no extant list of decenners, so for the purposes of this count it has been assumed that those present in 1574 and 1576 were also there in 1575 (this, as will be seen below, was not necessarily true) and it has also been assumed that those who were present in 1574 but not listed in 1576 were also absent in 1575. A third assumption has been made that those who were freemen in 1576 but whose admission between 1570 and 1576 is not recorded, and who were not listed as decenners during that period, were also present and freemen throughout. These are difficulties due to the deficiency of the records but these assumptions err in favour of the residents who were permanent; they should not, therefore, lead to an over-statement of the case for migrancy.

Another problem in using these lists raises an interesting feature of the nature of mobility in Maldon. Besides those who lived permanently in Maldon and those who lived there temporarily, there were others who can be classified as "sporadic residents". Such was Thomas Syttery: he was a decenner in 1570 but extra was marked against his name in 1571 and he does not reappear in the lists until 1576. Another example is John Spigurnell, a decenner in 1570 and 1571 but not recorded in 1572 or 1573; then, in 1574 he was admitted a freeman of the borough. John Jesper was a decenner from 1571 to 1573 and again from 1577 to 1579 but he was not recorded during the intervening three years. In the table compiled for those listed in 1576 (Table 5.3) these "sporadic residents" formed 15% of the male population. It does not seem likely that their apparent absences from Maldon are the result of faulty registrations: it has already been shown that the View was taken seriously; they do not appear in the lists of men prosecuted for non-attendance in the years of their absences; and among the records of the freemen throughout the later sixteenth and seventeenth centuries there are cases of men going "out-of-town" for a few years and then coming back into residence. In fact, as will be seen, short-distance mobility was one of the special features of the pattern of migration in Maldon.

However, for the purposes of the counts of residents between 1570 and 1580 (Tables 5.1 and 5.2) they have been treated as "temporary" rather than as "sporadic" and their stay has been measured in those counts from their earliest to their latest appearances at the courts leet.

Now to the results of the counts. Altogether 786 men are named either as decenners or freemen in the decade 1570-1580. Of these, only 106 were present at every court leet. Another ten were noted as iuratus - that is, newly sworn as decenners and so newly come of age and twelve years of age - and these ten remained permanent residents until at least

1580.¹ Thus the number of males who are known to have been permanent residents from 1570 to 1580 was 116.

This little group formed only 14.7% of the 786 men who are known to have lived in the town in the decade. That is the proportion which they formed over-all but it varied from year to year according to the extent of immigration and emigration. In each of the three years for which special counts have been made they formed the following percentages of the listed men:

116 Permanent Residents, 1570-1580

40% of all males listed in 1570	(100% being 287 men)
34% of all males listed in 1576	(100% being 343 men)
39% of all males listed in 1580	(100% being 294 men).

It is possible to estimate from these totals what proportion of the male, working population was transient at that time. In the three years which have been measured nearly two thirds were either recent immigrants or were about to emigrate from Maldon but the calculation for the whole 11 years is not a simple subtraction of the 116 permanent residents from the 786 listed freemen and decenners (which would suggest that 85% of the adult male population was migrant!) because mortality has to be allowed for and the "sporadic" residents who chose to be absent in 1580 but later returned have also to be counted in.

Fifty men are known to have died between 1570 and 1580 and though

1. Their numbers are thus: (i) 1571, two newly sworn and resident thenceforward; (ii) 1573, two similarly sworn in; (iii) 1576, another two and (iv) 1577, four sworn and resident until 1580.

this is not a firm figure¹. it suggests an annual mortality rate of 16:1,000 (male and female) in the 12-60 age group.² A crude rate of 20:1,000 is usually regarded as the lowest limit of general mortality in urban areas before the nineteenth century but, since death was most frequent among the under-12's and the over-50's, it does not seem that 50 is far from the truth for this group of freemen and decenners. To be on the safe side it has seemed best to increase this estimate by 20% to 60 deaths, which will err by understating the case for migrancy.

The "newly sworn" boys who reached the age of twelve during this decade do not pose any difficulty. They are counted in with the others who came in from 1571 to 1580.

"Sporadic residents" formed 15% of the males listed in 1576 and if this be allowed as a representative proportion then in 1580 they numbered some 64 of the 432 men who can be classified as temporary residents. A calculation will make this less confusing:

Number of Migrants between 1570 and 1580

1. The total number of men listed, 1570-80 is: 786,
of whom ...

-
1. 40 males are listed in the parish burial registers but these are certainly not a complete record. 10 more and different names can be added from the decenners' and freemen's lists, which have mortuus written against them.
 2. Assumptions: (i) that male and female numbers and mortality were level; (ii) that the average number of males aged 12-60 in this decade was 300; (iii) that in each year 1570-80 there were 5 male and 5 female deaths per 600 adults (ie. 50 male burials in 10 years). This long trail of assumptions gives a rate of 16:1,000.

Number of Migrants between 1570 and 1580

- | | | |
|--------|---|------|
| 2. | 116 were resident throughout, leaving ... | 670; |
| 3. | 178 had come in from 1571-1580, leaving ... | 492; |
| 4. | 60 had died (approximately) leaving ... | 432; |
| and 5. | 15% of 432 were sporadically resident (64 men), | |

leaving:

368 men who were migrants,

which is:

46.8% of the decenners and freemen of 1570-80.

It does not seem unreasonable to suppose that, in round figures, some 50% of all the adults and male, working population of the 1570's were transient.

To describe the residential pattern revealed by these lists is no easier than to chart the movements within a kaleidoscope. There was constant change in the personnel of the town (and if men came and went, so did many wives and children) recalling the nearly contemporary comment of a London parson c.1587-1590 about his flock: "the most part of the parish changeth, as I by experience know, some going and some coming" every twelve years or so.¹ In 1587 two head burgesses had to be elected to replace Francis Anthony and John Pagett who had removed themselves and those who dwelt with them from the borough ("qui se et commorancios suos amoverunt extra libertates hos in partes alienos") and in 1591 Thomas Young was declared to be no longer an alderman "for that he hath removed hymself and his dwellinge out of the Borowe for the space of this whole yeare and intendeith not to retorne agayne to the Borowe".² In both

1. Quoted by Lawrence Stone, 'Social Mobility in England, 1500-1700', Past and Present, number 33 (April 1966), p.30.

2. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/8 ff. 21r and 26v.

cases these removals meant the loss of a substantial number of inhabitants: at least four must have gone when Anthony and Pagett left the town, more probably from eight to twelve persons if they each had children and domestic servants; and Thomas Young was a gentleman and a farmer so his removal with "his dwelling" must also have caused the departure of a number of persons. It is all in sharp contrast to the stability of the New World community of Dedham, Massachusetts, where "from 56 to 76 per cent of the taxpayers at any given time had been around for at least ten years".¹ Whereas "to be born in Dedham meant to live and die in Dedham" in that new country, at Maldon in Essex about fifty per cent of the males left the town within one eleven year period and only fifteen per cent resided there for the whole of those eleven years.

Although the filed decenners' lists of the seventeenth century have not survived (apart from a few fragments) there is a series of freeman lists from 1606 onwards to each of which the town clerks added notes of death and, in the case of corporation members, of emigration and to which they appended yearly lists of the freemen living outside the borough. Though far more limited in their scope than the 1570-1580 lists which have just been examined it is worth while to inspect the rate of movement which they indicate for the freeman group of the seventeenth century. A comparison of the freeman's lists of 1632 and 1641 shows that:

of the 103 freemen resident in 1632

- (a) 48 remained at Maldon for the whole decade;
- (b) 22 died in Maldon during the decade;

1. K.A. Lockridge, 'The Population of Dedham, Massachusetts, 1636-1736,' Economic History Review, Second Series, XIX (1966), pp.318-344 (and especially pp.322-324).

and (c) 26 are stated to have moved out of the borough from 1633 to 1641 (and seven others are unknown).

Those who died or moved on formed 50% of the 103 freemen but the effect of mortality is more marked in these than in the Elizabethan lists because they deal with a section of the community which was inhibited from movement by occupational ties and their stake in the life of the town. Even so, the rate of emigration was 25% and for 10 years the necessity to recruit immigrants in replacement of lost or deceased members echoes the trends of the 1570's.

By 1641 there were 88 freemen and of them 40 were new to the borough within the past ten years - which means that 73% of the replacements for the 53 freemen lost between 1632 and 1641 were immigrants - and additionally many others had been admitted to the freedom of the borough but had stayed for a shorter time than 10 years.

In the next decade, 1642-1651, the same movement is observable. Only 50% stayed the whole ten years but there are too many unknowns in the list for the incidence of death and migration to be traced. One other count can be made, however, by comparing the freemen resident in 1632 with those of 1641 and 1651. Only 23 were living in Maldon throughout those twenty years, which was only 13% of the 172 men named in those three lists.

Apart from the deaths of freemen, the effects of warfare in the last decade must be allowed for. The mortality rate among the freemen at that time cannot be satisfactorily ascertained because the clerk ceased his practice of making the note mort beside the names of the deceased and the parish burial registers do not seem reliable after about 1640. Some men may have been recruited for the Eastern Association's forces but on the other hand the civil war could have inhibited movement

and the rate of replacement (although there were five freemen admitted from Suffolk, four from Norfolk, two each from London, the West Country and Yorkshire, and one from Thanet in this decade).

Though the evidence of these freemen's lists is more restricted than the lists of decenners and freemen combined, they point the same way and indicate the importance of immigration for the maintenance of the population in Maldon. Whether it was to replace deceased freemen or ones who had moved out, 40 immigrants replaced the losses of 1631 to 1641 and, since there was a fall-out of 50% among the freemen of that decade, there was also a replacement rate of 50% just as there was in the adult, male population generally during the 1570's. Thus the governing factor in the population of Maldon throughout the later sixteenth and early seventeenth century does seem to have been social and economic, not biological: immigration rather than natural increase, emigration as much as mortality. And this conclusion can also be drawn from a study of the parish registers.

Population replacement: evidence of the parish registers

The parish registers exist for each Maldon parish from 1558 and moving averages of the baptisms and burials recorded in them 1601-1645 are set out in Table 7 but they have not been used so far in this study of the population because there are several reasons for considering them deficient as sources of statistics on population growth. At first sight the registers all appear to be complete until just after 1660 but in fact their range is severely curtailed by three considerations. Until 1598 (or, in the case of St Mary's, 1599) they are transcripts of earlier registers and though the work was done with evident care they are, nevertheless, copies of very incomplete originals. For 1558 St Peter's transcript has this note:

"In this yeer of Our Lord, eyther ther wer none baptyzed (as it is very unlyke) or els the names of them wer not recorded."

For 1567 the All Saints' transcript notes:

"In all that year there is no record or mencyon of any babbisinges,"

and there were no marriages recorded for 1567, 1579, 1580, 1588 or 1596 in that, the principal church of the town. Though the Archdeacon of Essex found the registers of these two parishes "sufficiently kepte and discharged" in 1576 (whilst most in the Dengie Deanery were reported to be "insufficient") it has already been noted that the decenner's and freemen's lists of 1570-80 are a fuller source for the record of male deaths and it is likely that the archdeacon's report referred to the physical condition of the registers rather than to their comprehensiveness.^{1.}

It must therefore be expected that the registers will provide incomplete totals before 1599. Aggregation is made difficult by the duplication of scattered entries in the registers of All Saints' and St Peter's parishes (which were united as one benefice but retained separate registers). It is also unsuitable for the entries made from about 1645 because from that time the yearly totals of baptisms yield birth-rates which are unacceptable for what claimed before Parliamentary commissioners in 1650 to be "soe great a people and in a Towne of such consequence" that it required more than its two parish ministers.^{2.} The

1. "The register books showed for Dengie Hundred at Badow the xiiijth of September" (1576); E.R.O., D/AEA 9, f.118r.

2. Parochial enquiry, printed in H. Smith, Ecclesiastical History of Essex, p.266. (The enquiry did not elicit any statement of the number of people living in Maldon in 1650.)

birth-rates which can be derived from the registrations after 1645 are:

1645-1649	...	31.2 births per thousand
1650-1654	...	34.6 " " "
1655-1659	...	25.0 " " "

but on present evidence the birth-rate should rarely be found to fall below 30 per thousand of a seventeenth century population.¹ At this time, too, the ministers of the parishes, Israel Hewitt and John Simpson, were elderly men who had reached the tail end of long ministries in the town and they may well have become slack in their clerical chores.

From 1653 to 1658 marriages were solemnised before civil registrars and, though scrupulously recorded, they are of no use for the demographic study of the town. St Peter's register lists 24 marriages between 1654 and 1659 but not one involved a Maldon partner; all were contracted between outsiders. (The clerk stated the partners' domiciles in each case.) Later still the marriage registration is extremely unsatisfactory: none at St Mary's from 1667 to 1695; none at All Saints' between 1669 and 1694; none at St Peter's from 1662 to 1672 and 1676 to 1682.

Between these periods of unsatisfactory registration, from 1601 to 1645, the registers can be used with some confidence. The information derived from them demonstrates for the first half of the seventeenth century what the lists of decenners showed for the 1570's, that immigration played an essential part in the maintenance of the population at Maldon, for during that time there were 426 more burials than baptisms. Had it been a closed community it would have been reliant on a sufficient number of live births to replace itself and on the survival of a

1. See E.A. Wrigley (ed.) An Introduction to English Historical Demography (1966) p.54 for a guide to the plausibility of parish register evidence by D.E.C. Eversley.

sufficient number of children to maturity and marriage. And in that case Maldon would have disappeared within a century, for according to the parish registers there was an annual mean of 9 burials more than baptisms from 1601 to 1645:

Totals of Baptisms and Burials, 1601-1645

	<u>Baptisms</u>	<u>Burials</u>
1601-1610	497	587
1611-1620	441	512
1621-1630	471	566
1631-1640	441	548
1641-1645	219	282
1601-1645	2,069	2,495
Yearly mean:	45.9	55.4

When the numbers of burials and baptisms are compared on a year-to-year basis it is apparent that the excess of burials is not the result of faulty recording nor of a continuously greater mortality rate. In fact there were 21 years (that is, nearly half the years surveyed here) when there were more baptisms than burials. These would have balanced the birth-rate against mortality had it not been for the six years when the mean rate for burials was doubled by outbreaks of the plague. There were three epidemics:

1603-1604
1625-1626
and 1638-1639

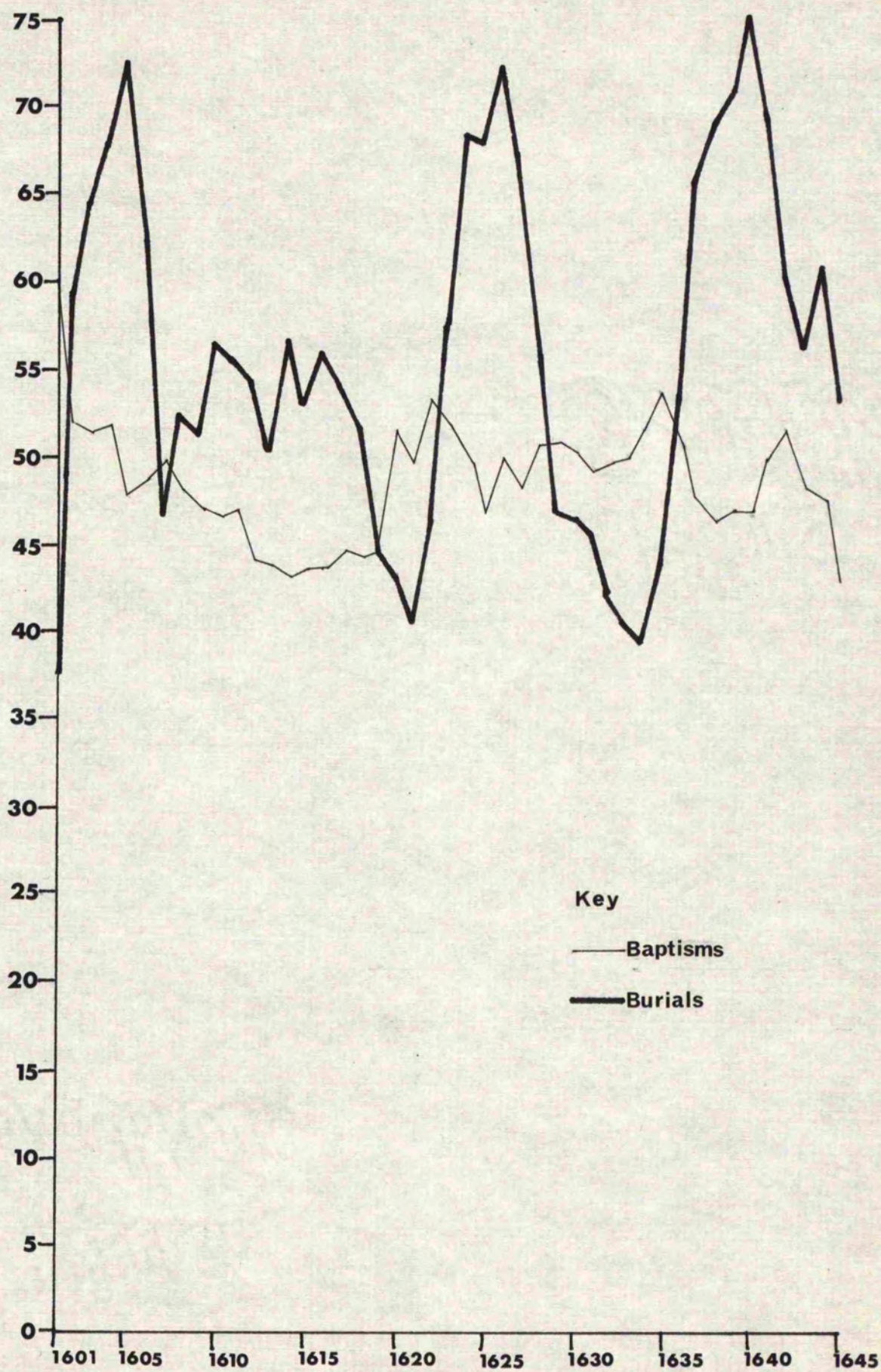
and even though they were not such severe visitations that the population was decimated, their overall effect was to create a mortality-rate which was not compensated for in the healthier years by a sufficiency of live

births. (Table 6, Burials during Plague Years.)

This picture is also presented by the graph of the five-year moving averages for the years 1601 to 1645. (See figure 12. The moving averages are also set out in Table 7.) There baptisms are seen to have remained quite steady, fluctuating by only 11 places after 1602. The number of interments, on the other hand, moved in great sweeps from the peaks of the three plague epidemics down to the intermediate troughs when baptisms matched or exceeded the burials.

The fact is that the population of Maldon did not compensate for its high mortality during the epidemics by a correspondingly high birth-rate during the intermediate years. Now it has been shown that in the 1570's 46.8% of the male population was replaced by immigration; it has also been shown that in the 1630's about 50% of the freeman body similarly replaced itself with immigrants; and it has been shown, too, that the general recruitment of freemen over the larger period 1500 to 1659 echoed this replacement rate with about 50% of the men coming from outside Maldon. Consequently it would be wrong to use the aggregate figures of the parish registers as if they were evidence of the birth and death-rates of a settled population. Migration at this massive rate every ten years or so means that the rates are the chance products of a mobile population.

The natural factors of births and deaths among those families which were established in Maldon are masked in the registers by the high level of migration. Consequently only the simplest form of aggregation has been presented here (in the table of burials and baptisms) for the more elaborate the analysis the more unreliable it must become in so unstable a society. The rate of migration makes it impossible to re-constitute family histories from these town parish registers; indeed, even the simplest comparison of births with burials may be misleading,



12 Five-Year Moving Averages of
Burials and Baptisms, 1601-1645

since there is no guarantee that the same families are involved in both sets of figures. Immigrants brought their families with them in many cases (and in the case of the freemen, it is possible to see this by the names of their children which were recorded in the memoranda of their admission to the franchise of the borough) and some children were born in Maldon but either they or their parents died and were buried elsewhere. Emigration must be expected to have caused often the removal of complete households from the town and only fragments of their histories will be found in the parish registers.

Evidence of Migration Patterns

The two largest sources of information about the origins of the immigrants are the memoranda of admissions of free burgesses and the indentures of apprentices. There is no special Freeman Register but the notices of their individual admissions are contained in the general court books and follow a set form, stating the candidates' birthplaces, listing the names of all their children and recording their methods of entry (as by full payment, after apprenticeship, or without fine because of parentage or marriage). These register entries have been checked against the receipts of the freemen's fines in the chamberlains' accounts and, in years which have no account rolls, from the lists of freemen prepared for the annual courts of election. Apart from the years 1595 to 1606, when no records of admissions have survived, and a few other slack years, the list can be claimed to be tolerably complete.

Most of the apprenticeship indentures are contained in one volume of the borough court of record¹ and they only cover the century 1560-1660 in sufficient numbers (568 in that period). The distinct falling-off in

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/33.

the numbers of indentures enrolled after about 1630 suggests that other volumes have been lost or that only filed copies were made but the surviving enrolments of indentures are a valuable record of trades and of the "catchment area" of Maldon apprentices, particularly for the reign of Elizabeth I.

These two sources refer only to the more prosperous or more fortunate sections of the town population but it is difficult to find information in any quantity about the labourers and artisans who formed the base of Tudor and Stuart society. Unless they were arraigned before a court, people of this lowly class are poorly documented and their movement about the countryside remains obscure but there are two sources which provide a little illustration of their movements at the end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth. The first is a series of depositions to articles administered in a High Commission case in 1594.¹ The other is a schedule of men enlisted for an army sent to the Palatinate in December 1624.² Both sources give the birthplaces and in some cases the intermediate places where the men had stayed or worked on their way to Maldon; and those places are all distributed in the areas from which the freemen and apprentices of Maldon came.

The data derived from these sources have been plotted on the maps which form figures 13, 14 and 15 below. Two distinct forms of immigration are to be considered, as those distribution maps show: a very picturesquely far-flung group, some of whom even came from the furthest parts of the country, from Cornwall, Westmorland and Denbighshire, and with notable contingents from Yorkshire and East Anglia; the other a

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/178.

2. D/B 3/3/422/29 and /30.

short-distance group with relations and acquaintances and roots in the villages of the surrounding countryside or in the market towns nearest to Maldon.

Short-distance migration: (i) Maldon and its market area

The relationship of Maldon to its surrounding countryside, of townsfolk to countrymen, becomes clearer when the admission of freemen and apprentices is related to that area which looked to the town for either its principal market or as its source of various services. The data employed by geographers to determine the urban field of modern towns are obviously not available for this study but, besides the information which can be found in the presentments before the clerk of the market or of contributors to the repair of Fullbridge, there is a very interesting source in the records of the borough Court of Record from which to construct the boundaries of the urban field of Maldon.

This Court of Record at Maldon had an extensive range of business. It enrolled apprenticeship indentures and examined conveyances of property which were held in the right of wives. It also dealt with pleas of debt and they provide material for determining the extent of Maldon's market area in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Some of the pleas concerned real debts but many were about credit sales, bargains, loans or more sophisticated transfers of credit among several merchants. As soon as a bargain was struck the creditor entered his plea of debt as a means of safeguarding his business and when the transaction was completed he formally withdrew his action and paid a fee of 6d which appeared subsequently in the chamberlains' account as a "Withdraught of Action". Men used the court even if they were not freeburgesses, since they were simply required to find freemen as sureties when they filed

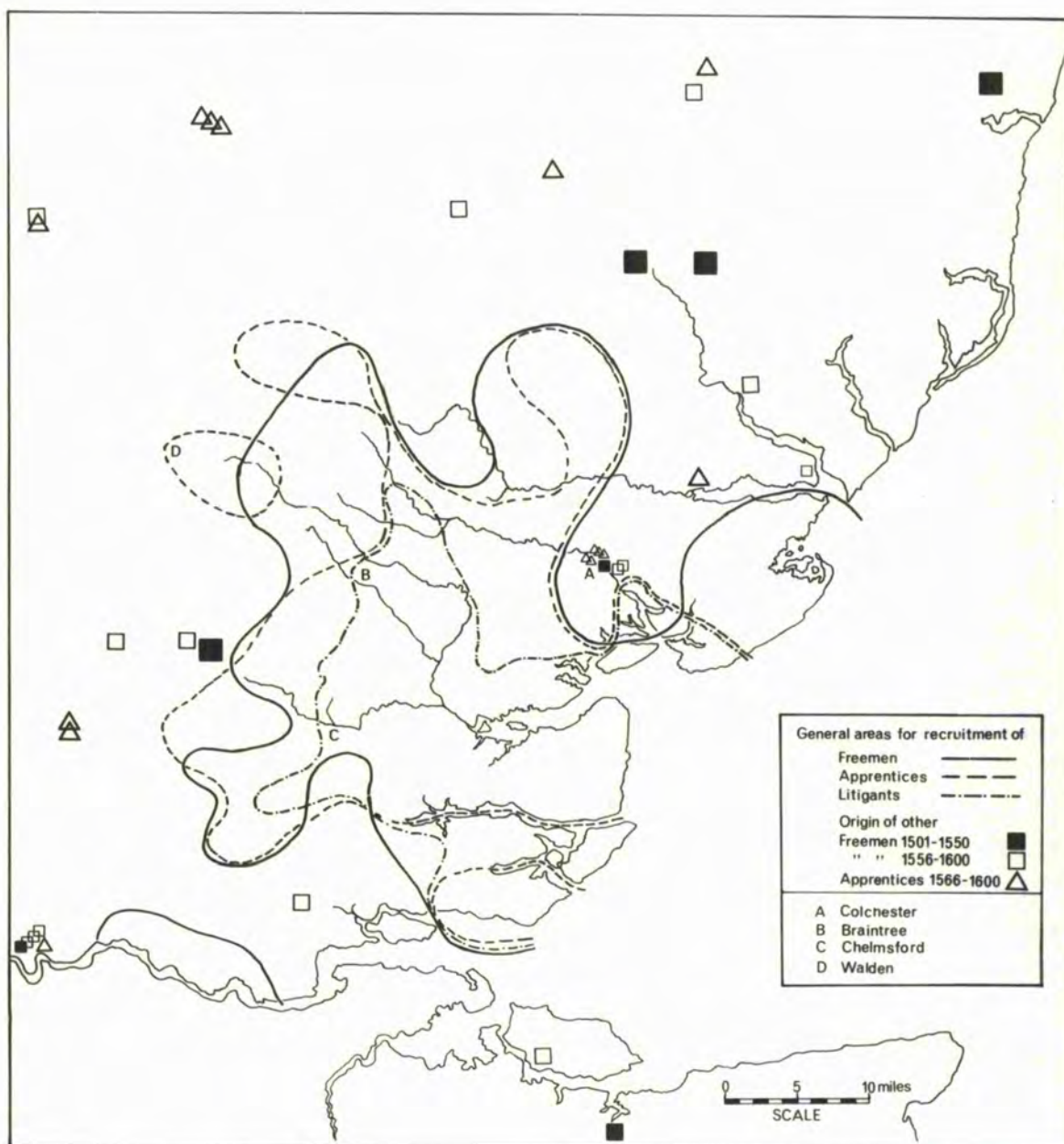
their suits and so the recorded pleas often involve outsiders entirely. The attractiveness of the court of merchants and tradesmen either who needed loans or dealt with promised consignments of goods and foodstuffs was further enhanced by the competence of the borough to hear and handle business up to any amount. The charters of some boroughs imposed an upper limit to the sums of money which could be impleaded in their courts (the 1554 charter of Aylesbury set a ceiling of 100 shillings^{1.}) but the 1555 charter which established the court at Maldon prescribed no limit to the magistrates' competence and one case concerned credit of £1,000 to a Yarmouth man.^{2.}

Some of the town clerks were assiduous in stating the occupations and the domiciles of the litigants and so it is possible to abstract from the court registers the location of the outsiders who used the Maldon market and court at certain periods. These, when plotted on a map, indicate the area from which Maldon drew most of its business or in which men looked to the borough for commercial services (see figure 16). From the nature of the material, this inference can be drawn with rather more confidence than H.B. Rodgers felt he was able to do from his map of the distribution of "stallengers" at Preston, Lancs. in the seventeenth century.^{3.} The business district of Maldon was much the same as the area from which the majority of the Essex-born freemen and apprentices

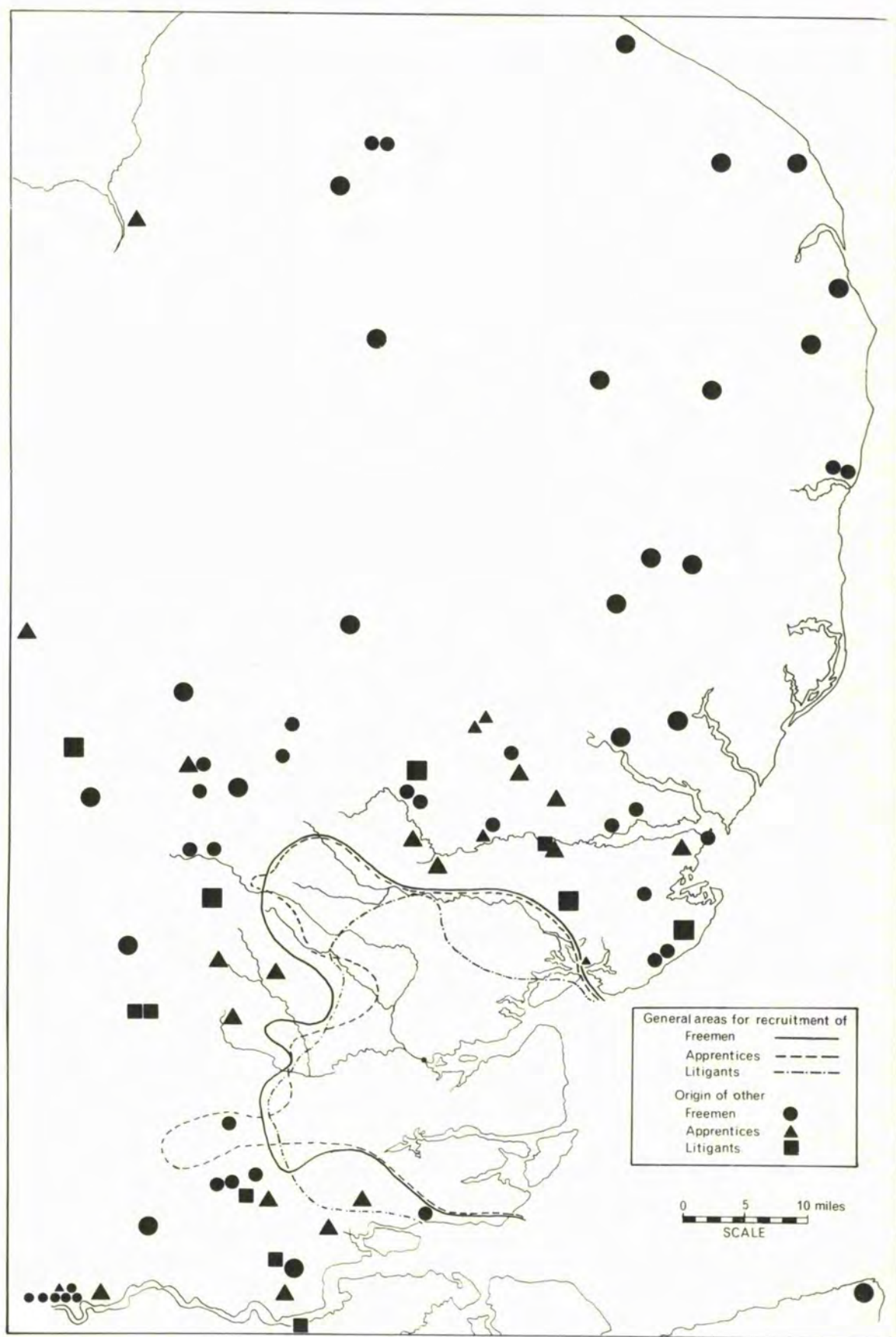
1. CPR P & M, I (1553-1554) p.45.

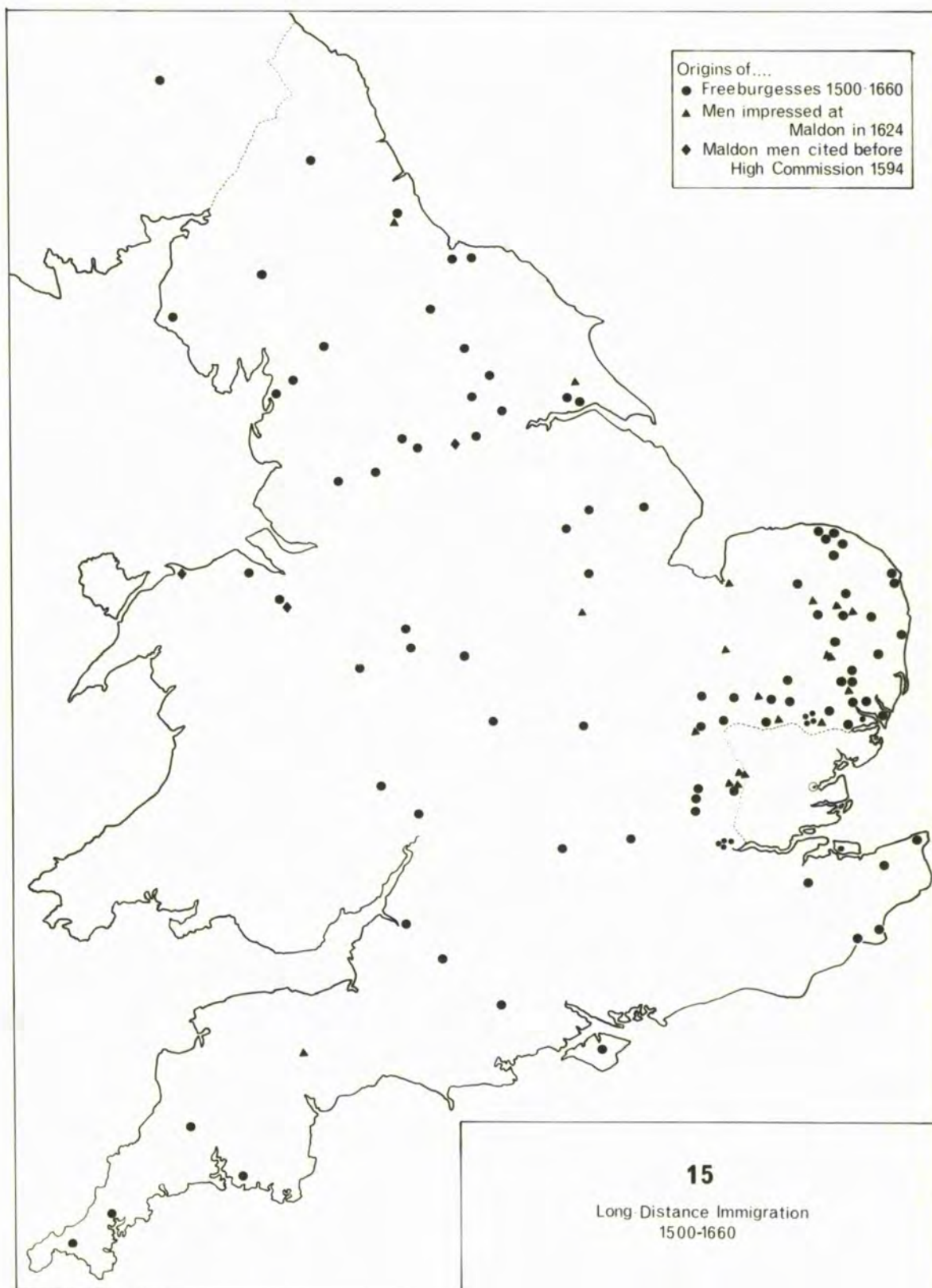
2. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/10: suit entered by Robert Snape of Maldon versus John Seman of Yarmouth, 8th January 1622; withdrawn by Snape 21st January 1622.

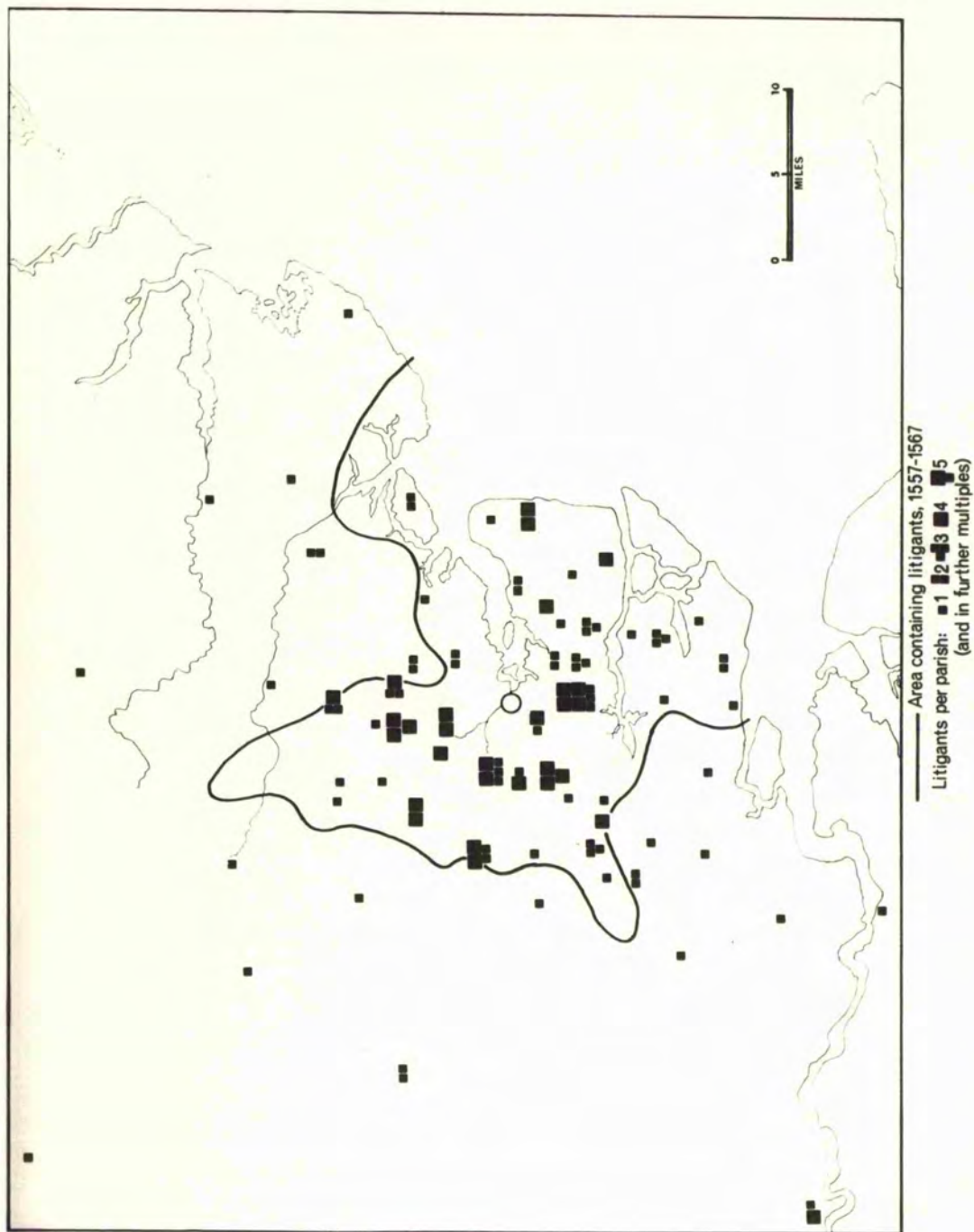
3. H.B. Rodgers, 'The Market Area of Preston in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries.' Reprinted in Geographical Interpretations of Historical Sources (ed. A.R.H. Baker, 1970) pp. 103-113.



13 Market Area 1500-1600







were recruited, though a little smaller and with some incursions by men from Lavenham and the Stour Valley or from London and south-west Essex.

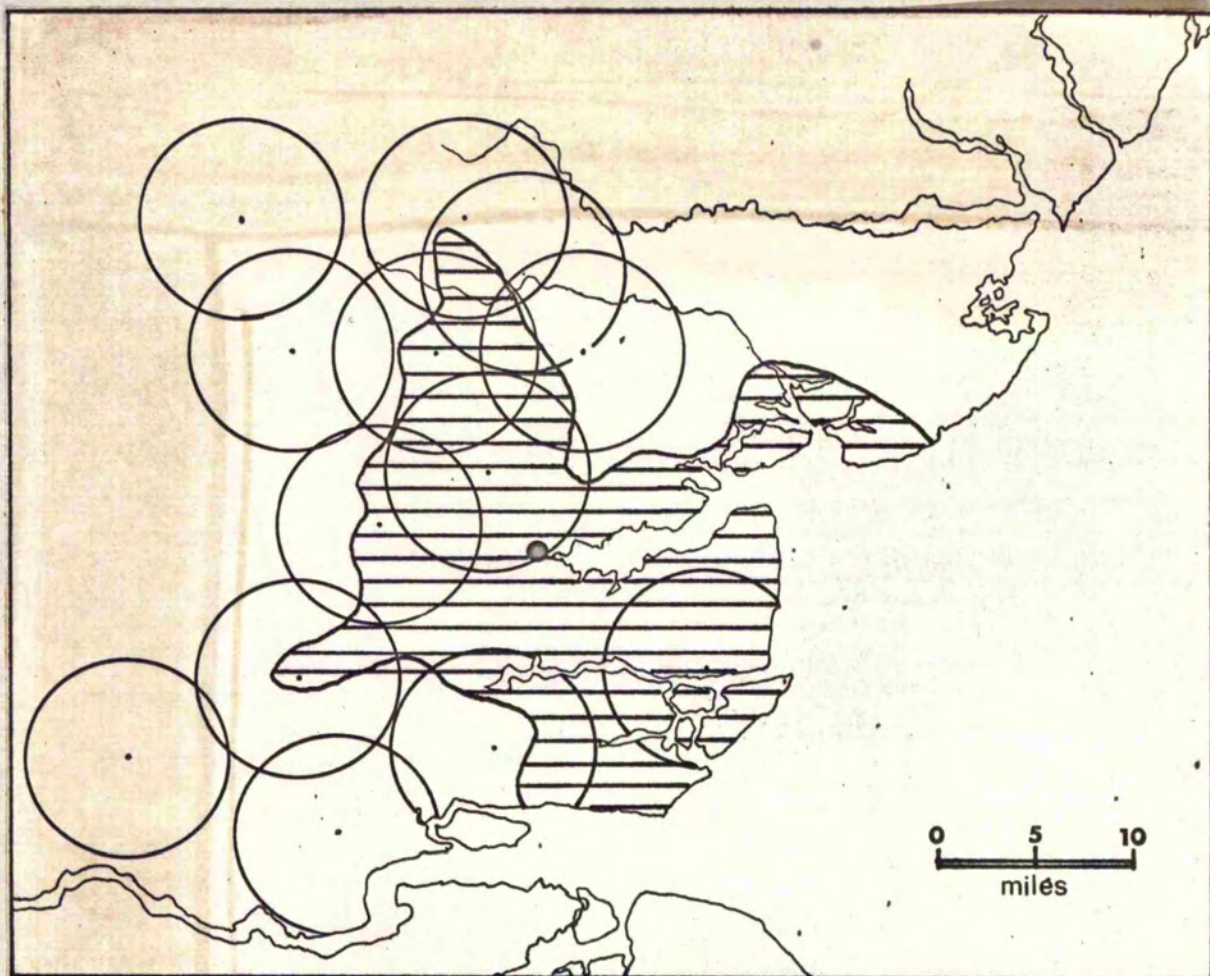
The market area of Maldon must not be conceived as a tightly defined, protected district where crafts and commerce were concentrated in the borough and monopolised by its freeburgesses, or where all the settlements depended primarily on the town. Instead it overlapped with the markets of Chelmsford, Braintree, Witham, Burnham and Rayleigh; and of those the Witham and Braintree markets were entirely within the districts which contributed the greatest number of non-resident litigants in the Maldon court of record. (See figure 17.) Moreover, Maldon residents spread their business right across this area. Richard Simpson, a haberdasher of St Mary's parish in Maldon, had a shop in Braintree in 1628 as well as his shop in Maldon, both stocked with hats - worth £15 - 18 - 6 in Maldon and £5 - 10 - 0 in Braintree.¹ In the course of an action against Henry Stevens, a yeoman of Witham in 1600, it was noted that

"Steven's wyffe tolde the Under Bailiff of Witham that they hadd a great deale of goodes here at Maldon which they would shortlie fetch awaye."²

The earliest example which has been found of the diffusion of commercial enterprise is to be found in the subsidy returns of 1524, where Adrian Johnson, a Dutchman, paid tax at Witham and of 1525 where he paid the subsidy as a Maldon man. The two entries refer to the same person because he is not listed at Witham in 1525 and in both cases one James King was stated to be his servant (and also a Dutchman, despite his

1. Westminster Public Library, Maldon 28: will and inventory.

2. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/9 (1600).



17 Maldon and other Market Areas



area from which Maldon drew litigants 1557-1567

Circles drawn of 5 mile radius around markets

anglicised name) and paid tax in the same places. This Johnson was a shoemaker and after his death c.1532 his widow returned to Witham.¹ In the subsidy rolls there can also be faintly discerned a flow of labourers, serving men and artisans between Maldon and the countryside. There were 78 men named on the 1524 return for the borough but missing ^{from} ~~from~~ its 1525 return; and in their places 40 new men are listed at the same assessments; and whilst it is difficult to substantiate any identifications, it is possible that the movement of these six men can be traced:

Robert Annable:	20s wages, Maldon, 1524; 20s wages, Langford, 1525.
Robert Baker:	40s goods, Maldon, 1524; 40s goods, Leyer Marney, 1525 (where he is said to be a servant of Lord Marney).
Hugh Brakett:	20s wages, Langford, 1524; 26s 8d wages, Maldon, 1525.
Richard Hertzz:	20s wages, Purleigh, 1524; 20s wages, Maldon, 1525.
Andrew Purfoote:	20s goods, Heybridge, 1524; 20s goods, Maldon, 1525.
and possibly John Sylvester:	50s goods, Mayland, 1524; 26s 8d wages, Maldon, 1525.

In each case these men are not recorded in Maldon and the other villages during the same year and each of these places were within ten miles of Maldon.

1. P.R.O., E.179/108/154 and /174 (Witham) and /170 (Maldon, 1525);
E.R.O., D/AER 4/135 (will of Adrian Johnson); D/B 3/1/33 f.62v
(enquiry of 1572 on the goods of certain deceased townsmen).

The pleas of debt between 1606 and 1630 include twelve men with dual residences: another feature of the relationship between Maldon and its market area. The first nine of these men each followed one trade in two places:

Richard Skarlett, yeoman, of Maldon and Little Totham	(1615)
George Want, husbandman, of Maldon and Little Burstead	(1618)
John King, husbandman, of Maldon and Mundon	(1622)
Thomas Fairfield, glover, of Maldon and Colchester	(1624)
Edward Dowsett, husbandman, of Maldon and Great Totham	(1624)
John Umpton, gentleman, of Goldhanger and Maldon	(1625)
Richard Collett, draper, of Maldon and Colchester	(1626)
Nathaniel Harvey, husbandman, of Maldon and Runsell	(1626)
Jeremiah Pledger, joiner, of Maldon and Chelmsford	(1627)

and the wording of the pleas leaves no doubt that these were references to real dual residence. Thus:

"Johannes Umpton, generosus, de Goldhanger' alias dictus
Johannes Umpton, generosus, de burgi de Maldon in comitatu
Essexie queritur ..."

It is clearly stated, too, that another three men each had two quite distinct occupations as well as two places of residence:

Robert Bryant, yeoman of Sudbury and shoemaker of Maldon	(1608)
Robert Nothersall, yeoman of Brentwood and vintner of Maldon	(1624)
Thomas Shergate, shoemaker of Maldon and Chandler of Leigh	(1616) ¹ .

The market area which Maldon men looked over from their hilltop was a wilderness of heath and saltmarsh, traversed by the broad river estuary and swampy inland river valleys, ringed to the south and west by

1. Pleas, 1600-1620: E.R.O., D/B 3/1/10; 1621-1630: D/B 3/1/11.

low, heath covered hills and woodland. It was a wealden district which had never known the communal organisation of farming and where arable cultivation was only practicable in patches of enclosed land on the edge of the gravel hills. On each side of the Blackwater estuary there stretched wide saltings, backed with enclosed marshland pastures called Wicks, where sheep were grazed. Behind them, inland, the soil of the low land was unsuitable for ploughing until this century, a heavy, blue-grey clay, "a stiff, tough, numb, dumb and impervious soil" which required three horses to draw the special ploughs which were devised for this land in nineteenth century Essex; a clay which lay waterlogged and stiff in wet weather but baked into hard clods in the summer and "would yield to no known implement of husbandry".¹ So this area too was devoted to pastoral farming. Its water supplies were so meagre that the few settlements which were established had to rely on dew ponds and surface water for both human and animal consumption; and only on the gravel uplands (as in the case of Maldon) could a population establish itself with supplies of water springing from the wells which lay between the permeable gravel topsoil and the impermeable clay subsoil. Like other wealden districts the Maldon market area (or the larger part of it) had dispersed settlements, no tradition of communal economic organisation and a very low density of population. About 1670 the Thurstable Hundred had, according to Dr Burley's calculations, between 41 and 65 persons per square mile² but on its coastal marshland edge it was more likely to have had the lower density of under 40 persons per square mile which characterised the Dengie Hundred and the other coastal marshlands of

1. R. Hunter Pringle, Maldon and Braintree District Report, Royal Commission on Agriculture (1898), p.39.

2. K. Burley, op. cit. p.21.

Essex.^{1.}

The apprenticeship indentures and the pleas of debts show that in the scattered settlements of this heathy, wooded country a variety of occupations were followed which might have been restricted to a town in more tightly organised, arable farming districts. That non-resident craftsmen were litigants in the borough courts is an indication that they had little difficulty in using the town's market facilities. The only statutory inhibition on outsiders' trade was concerned with the retailing of clothing and grocery,^{2.} and the custumal of Maldon, which was compiled in 1555, envisaged trading by non-resident men. It permitted "foreign" butchers who were not freemen to commence sale on market days immediately on their arrival in the town (though giving an advantage to resident freeman butchers by ordering non-residents to cease trade at 2 o'clock); it had a regulation forbidding millers and bakers to buy grain in the market, but that applied to resident and foreigner alike; and it ordered that the foreigners who kept shops in the town were to have lattices before their shop windows and were to pay a quarterly fine.^{3.} Only one attempt to exclude foreigners is on record, that of seven Maldon shoemakers who, calling themselves "the whole and entire nomber and companie of tharte, mysterie and science of shomakers within this towne", petitioned the corporation in 1581 that country shoemakers might be prohibited from "selling of there wares by retaile or otherwise on the merkett daies or in anie other daies, other then in the open faires within the said Burrowe." The outsiders, these seven Maldon men complained,

1. Ibid.

2. Statutes of the Realm, 1 and 2 P & M c.7 (1554).

3. 1555 custumal, paras. 53, 56 and 59: E.R.O., D/B 3/1/3.

"latelie have and now doe most uniustlie and unlawfullie intrude themselves in to the libertie of (the borough) and there doe sell there weares on the merkett daies to the great decaie and utter undoing of us the shomakers inhabitantes ..."¹.

This petition was unsuccessful. Moreover, these seven were not the "entire number" of the resident shoemakers of Maldon. This was one of the principal crafts of the town at that time and with the largest number of apprentices and masters of any craft in the town. There were at least twelve self-employed shoemakers there in the 1580's but there were no such organisations as craft guilds in Maldon either for shoemakers, craftsmen in any of the leather trades, or for drapers, tailors or merchants, so that a man might establish himself in the borough or live outside but use its market without interference from other practitioners of his craft. In May 1569 the jury of the Quarter Sessions at Maldon did present one cooper who had been a resident freeman but had moved out to Woodham Walter, because he continued to practice his craft in the town. A year later he was still being ineffectually presented by the jurors for the same offence, apparently without punishment.²

Crafts and commerce were spread widely over the market area. (See figure 18.) A vintner who was prosecuted at Maldon for selling musty Rochelle and Burgundy wine was a resident of Witham.³ Some of the apprentices who were indentured at Maldon between 1566 and 1588 had parents in the villages round about Maldon who practised metal crafts

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/34 f.22r.

2. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/6 ff.39 and 92.

3. Ibid., f.73 (1569).

18 Occupations of the Maldon Market Area
 (From apprentices' indentures, 1566-1650
 and litigants' pleas, 1556-66, 1596-1603.)



KEY

○ Highland of sand and pebble

▲ Textiles

△ Metal

○ Leather

□ Building

■ Butcher and Drovers

— London to Colchester Road

(especially at Hatfield Peverel on the main London - Norwich road), textile and leather trades, as well as the expected rural trades such as basket weaving and horse gelding. Between 1596 and 1630 the actions for debt which were commenced by and against non-residents provide other examples of this spread of industry. Metal crafts were represented by a locksmith at Little Baddow, a cooper of Purleigh, a brazier of Hatfield Peverel. The building trade had a bricklayer at Terling, brick makers at Woodham Ferrers, Danbury and Runsell Green, carpenters at Wickham Bishops, Langford and Woodham Walter. There were tanners at Witham, Tolleshunt Darcy, Pattiswick, Danbury, Langford and Woodham Walter; glovers at Heybridge and White Notley. Weavers, clothiers and tailors occupied their trades at Heybridge, Kelvedon, Burnham, Purleigh, Great Braxted, Woodham Walter and Witham; and two bay-makers established themselves in the country, one at Great Totham, the other at Heybridge.

There were many attractive opportunities for investment by Maldon residents in the farms of this countryside. There were salt cotes along the creeks of the river, whose salinity was built up by the tidal water which was trapped against the mud banks so that this district had some of the saltiest water in England. There were marshland dairies and wicks to pasture the flocks of ewes whose milk was made into huge balls of creamy cheese. There was grazing land for cattle which were fattened for both the Maldon and the London markets. Inland the woods supplied building timber and firewood ("ostrey wood") for the suburbs of London. A lifetime's experience was not needed to undertake these enterprises (as it would have been for successful arable farming): they could all be maintained by wage-earning shepherds or labourers and administered effectively with the expertise gained in shopkeeping. Thus Maldon men had a stake in the country just as the inhabitants of the rural settlements had a place in the town's market.

The outstanding example of a Maldon shopkeeper with country interests is Ralph Breder, an alderman of the borough and a haberdasher. He owned three estates in The Dengie Hundred in and before 1608, from which the supply of butter and cheese was evidently organised as a business concern. On his death-bed he forgave his shepherd at Nayland Wick in Mundon

"for the wants and defaults of his complement of cheese and butter which he wanted the last year of his heardwick."¹.

He had also seven acres of coppice. There was a "salt shop" in his Maldon house. One of his Mundon farms was stocked with cattle. He had bought an option on ten seams of barley (before the harvest), eight seams of which he ordered to be used for sowing his third farm, East Newlands, and two he ordered to be converted into malt "or otherwise to make money". Yet, so far as the town clerk of Maldon was concerned, this Ralph Breder was always to be described as a haberdasher.

Just as craftsmen could be found living and working in hamlets and villages all over the market area of Maldon, so could the yeomen farmers of the district be found resident in the borough. William Rochell, described as a yeoman and a native of Mountnessing (near Ingatestone) became a freeman of Maldon in 1594 and a member of the borough corporation. At his death the following year his second cousin received a reversionary title to copyhold lands in Wickham Bishops and the leases of Asheldham Hall and Barn Wick in the Dengie Hundred; and the nephews of this William Rochell received "the lease and farm of Shrill in Dengie."².

1. PCC 27 Dorset.

2. E.R.O., D/ABW 32/55 (1595).

In some cases the estates owned or leased by these yeomen farmer residents of Maldon were simply inherited property, retained as sources of income; in other cases they were investments and were worked by the farmers. Robert Tannar, a merchant, bequeathed to his cousin, a Maldon glover, lands in Thorpe-le-Soken.¹ Alderman Richard Brett held a lease of Shopland Parsonage near the Thames (1588)² and Edmund Seredge of Maldon had, just before his death, sown with wheat and barley two acres of land in Great Waltham in mid-Essex which had been mortgaged to him for 40s by a Felsted man.³ A saddler, John Barnes, left his only child a copyhold messuage and lands at Woodham Ferrers (1673).⁴ Sara Cole bequeathed to her husband (who was a brewer) a tenement, a close and a barn at Broomfield near Chelmsford in 1675.⁵ A grocer, Peter Robjent, gave one son a marshland pasture in Mundon (Shethouse land) in 1689 and to another son he gave a house in Woodham Ferrers; to one daughter he gave Webbes Farm at Bradwell-juxta-Mare and to the other daughter he left 42 acres of woodland at Ardleigh near Colchester.⁶

Short-distance migration: (ii) Borough English

Inheritance played a special part in the patterns of short-distance mobility, helping to send out townsfolk to live in the country and bringing in fresh men to the town. At Maldon the custom of Borough

1. "Coke tayllars in sokyngs of sayn polles liynge as ye goo to landymayelaynd": E.R.O., D/ABW 37/5 (1529).

2. D/ABW 4/142.

3. D/AMR 3/148 (1572).

4. D/ABR 9/271.

5. D/ABW 67/188.

6. D/ABR 12/375.

English was observed, by which the youngest son inherited from his father. If the parent had married twice, the youngest son of the first wife to bear sons was to be the inheritor.¹ Ignoring the ancient belief that this custom arose in districts where the jus primae noctis applied, it is evident that Borough English ensured the security of a younger male child whose parents were likely to die before he had reached manhood. In the situation of a family composed of several sons, the elder children had time to seek their fortune away from home whilst the parents brought up the youngest son to inherit the house and craft; but the system rarely operated in such uncomplicated circumstances.

Borough English was a system of impartible inheritance, but from at least 1444 (when the custom was first written down)² it had been weakened at Maldon by three modifications. If there were only daughters as heiresses, the estate was partible and the youngest took first choice.

If the son was under 14 years old, his mother assumed wardship of the inheritance; but if she married during his minority, she was to take a dowry from the estate and then the wardship was terminated (whatever the age of the child, it seems) and the child was "to have here herytage with out any lettinge." Thirdly, the 1444 custumal stipulated that lands might be devised either by will or through the borough courts and thus two alternatives were provided to the customary descent. The Statute of Wills of 1540 confirmed the viability of testamentary inheritance and the growing security of enfeoffments-to-uses provided methods of securing a complicated pattern of descent. By the mid-sixteenth century there are signs that even when Borough English was observed it was subject

1. Cf. G.C. Homans, English Villagers of the Thirteenth Century (1942), chapter 9, especially pp. 123-124.

2. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/1 f.32v.

to further modifications which were sanctioned in the borough court of record. When the widow of Alderman Edward Garrington remarried in 1574 her son, John Garrington, was still under 14 years of age and in her wardship; but she and her second husband (Alderman Thomas Turner of the borough of Colchester) obtained seizin of this minor's Maldon estate, although by the custom he should have succeeded to it on his mother's remarriage. This can be regarded as a precedent case, for it is fully enrolled in a court of record of 1574 under the special heading of "Burrowe Englishe".^{1.}

Again, in 1587 the three married daughters and coheiresses of John Browne alias Newe succeeded to their father's estate. According to the custom this was partible among them and so it was except that the youngest did not choose first as the custom also directed. Instead, the Justices of the Peace ordered the estate to be divided into three allotments "part and part alike" and then each daughter drew a share:

"wee did wryte the said three several partes of all the said messuages, landes, tenementes, rentings, reversiones and hereditaments, so parted and devyded, in three severall scrowes and covered the said scrowes all over the waxe and made them in three lyttyl balls and put them all in one bonnet in an indifferent man's hande..."^{2.}

Despite these modifications of ultimogeniture and the pressures against impartible descent, Maldon men tended to observe the customary precedence of their younger children, although the practice of subdividing buildings at Maldon into smaller and distinct dwellings often

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/34 f.24v.

2. Ibid., f.29v.

obscured the effect. Thomas Beane bequeathed one of his houses (and this one was divided into three dwellings) to his "youngest child" Mary, his "youngest son" Christopher and another daughter; but his other house was to be divided after his death into four dwellings "and distributed to my other foure children equally."¹ Some copyhold lands in Brightlingsea were bequeathed by Vincent Hastler (of St Peter's parish, Maldon) first to his wife for a term of 16 years but thereafter to his youngest son, Samuel Hastler.² This looks like a deliberate attempt to stick by the rules of Borough English and ensuring its observance by testamenatry disposition: the wife held the land for her son and by the time he came to inherit them he would have reached maturity.

It is possible to see from their wills and from deeds enrolled in the borough courts how families had the opportunity to disperse when their parents or relatives died. Richard Samwell inherited a reversionary interest in The Star (in St Peter's parish) in 1576, as the younger son of his father but from then he lived in Hatfield Broad Oak because he was a minor and his mother had married a tailor, George Staines, of that place on the other side of the county.³ Edward Noxe of Great Yarmouth possessed a tenement in St Mary's parish in right of his wife who was the only daughter and heir of John Wilson of Maldon.⁴ Locke's in St Mary's parish belonged to Thomas Harrison of Leigh (in Essex) in 1612: it had descended from Alderman William Poulter of Maldon (but a native of Leigh) in 1561 to Richard Poulter - his second but not his youngest son - whose daughter Elizabeth married Thomas Harrison of Chatham, the father of the

1. E.R.O., D/ABW 5/245 (1592).

2. E.R.O., D/ABW 20/249 (1614).

3. D/B 3/1/34 f.8v (1576).

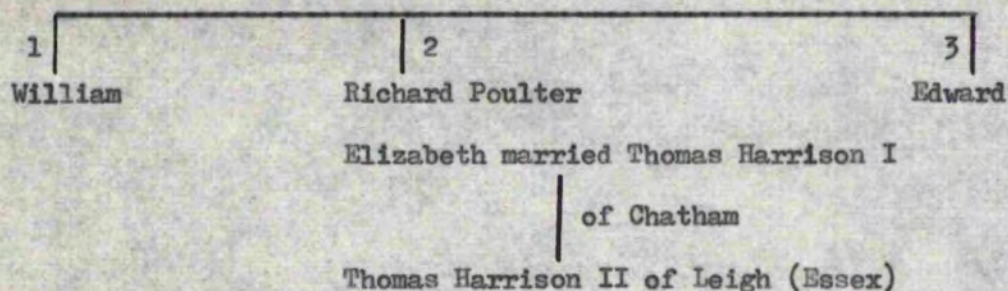
4. Ibid. f.13r.

1612 owner.^{1.}

The effects of partibility and testamentary divisions on a family are also illustrated by the Burles family, who were farmers of Beeleigh Abbey for the Frankes of Hatfield Broad Oak. When Alderman Thomas Burles died in 1585 he bequeathed to his eldest son (Thomas) the lease of Chedingsell Grange in Suffolk and a saltcote in Stowe Maries beside the River Crouch in Essex. His younger son, William, received the farm of the family home, Beeleigh Abbey, together with lands in Little Baddow and Springfield, which lay between Maldon and Chelmsford. This younger son remained in the borough, succeeding his father in the corporation, and when he died in 1609 he bequeathed to his eldest son a freehold in Great Baddow, a house and lands in Stowe Maries (which he may have obtained from his brother) and more lands and tenements at Burnham-on-Crouch. To the second son he gave the property in Little Baddow and Springfield which he had received from his father in 1585. His third son - the inheritor by Borough English - received only a third part of a messuage in Heybridge and reversionary rights to lands in Paglesham (a remote village between the Blackwater and Colne estuaries) but this third son also received the farm of Beeleigh Abbey, the family "base," thus preserving

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1. PCC Loftes (1561) and E.R.O., D/B 3/1/34 f.100v (1612). The Poulter family tree will help here to show the descent of the tenement:

Alderman William Poulter (deceased 1561)

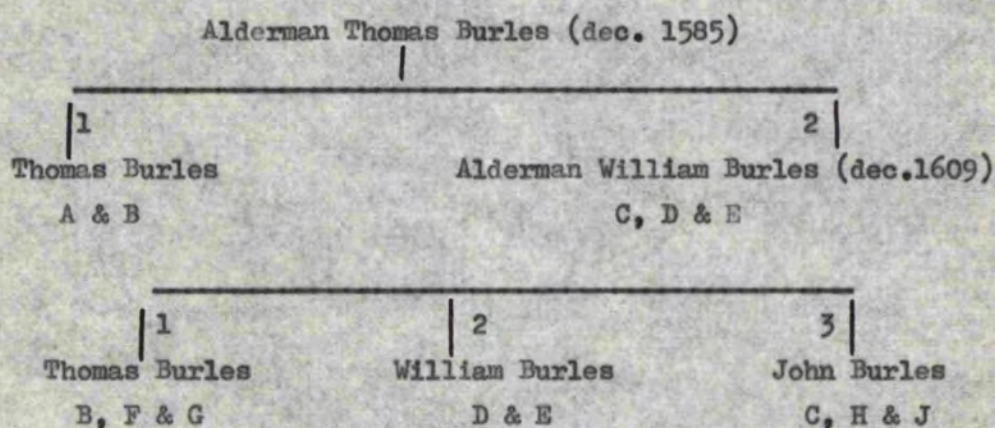


the tradition of Borough English.^{1.}

Short-distance migration: (iii) the Port of Maldon

River transport was faster, cheaper and easier than road haulage in the eastern regions of Essex. The clay land, waterlogged in wet weather, hard rutted in the summer heat, was as poor a road base as it was farming land; the gravel mantle of the hills was too loose and shelving a surface for heavily loaded waggons. The names of only three carriers from Maldon are known earlier than 1700.^{2.} Water transport, however, was available to a great many villages and hamlets all down the coast of Essex, for the tidal creeks and inlets into which the south-eastern shore has

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1. E.R.O., D/ABW 5/70 (Thomas Burles, 1585) and 6/288 (William Burles, 1609). The family tree will help to make these dispositions of property clearer:



A, Chedingsell Grange; B, Stowe Maries salt-cote; C, Beeleigh Abbey; D, land at Little Baddow; E, land at Springfield; F, Freehold, Gt Baddow; G, land, Burnham; H, one third of Lodge Leas, Heybridge; J, land at Paglesham.

2. John Merritt in the 1620's; Henry Pleasant in the 1660's and William Webb, who died in 1696.

sunk and crumbled reach deep inland, so that a place like Woodham Ferrers, fifteen miles from the sea, had its own landing place at Clementsgreen Creek on the western end of the long Crouch River, and there, according to a survey of c.1625, lighters daily received cargoes of timber, firewood, grain and dairy produce which was sent by sea to London.¹ One of the services of the tenants of Stansgate Priory on the Blackwater shore of the Dengie Hundred (as set down in a fourteenth century custumal and translated in a 1524 copy².) was to provide transport to Maldon by water, a distance of six miles:

"Item, all the tennants of the lorde which be resident within the lymytes of the parisshe - that is to saye, Ramyngsey, Stepill and Stannesgate - which have botes or barges of there owen, shall every Saturday cary and recary to Maldon market the lorde prior, monkes and other of the lordes sevantes by water; and the lordes vittels from the said towne of Maldon shall recary upon lawfull warning of the lorde his bayly or eny of the lordes servants, taking nothing for there labour but that they shall come to dynner to the lorde on the Sondag folowinge."

In these circumstances shipping was dispersed over a wide area and administratively this was reflected in the organisation of the Port of Maldon. It was a creek of the Staple of Ipswich and covered an area

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1. D.W. Gramolt, 'Coastal Marshlands of Essex between the Seventeenth and Mid-Nineteenth Centuries,' (unpublished M.A. thesis, 1960, London University) pp.320-321; E.P. Dickin, 'Notes on the coast, Shipping and sea-borne trade of Essex, 1565-1577,' Trans. E.A.S., XVII (new series) 1926 pp.153-164.
 2. E.R.O., D/DCf M35.

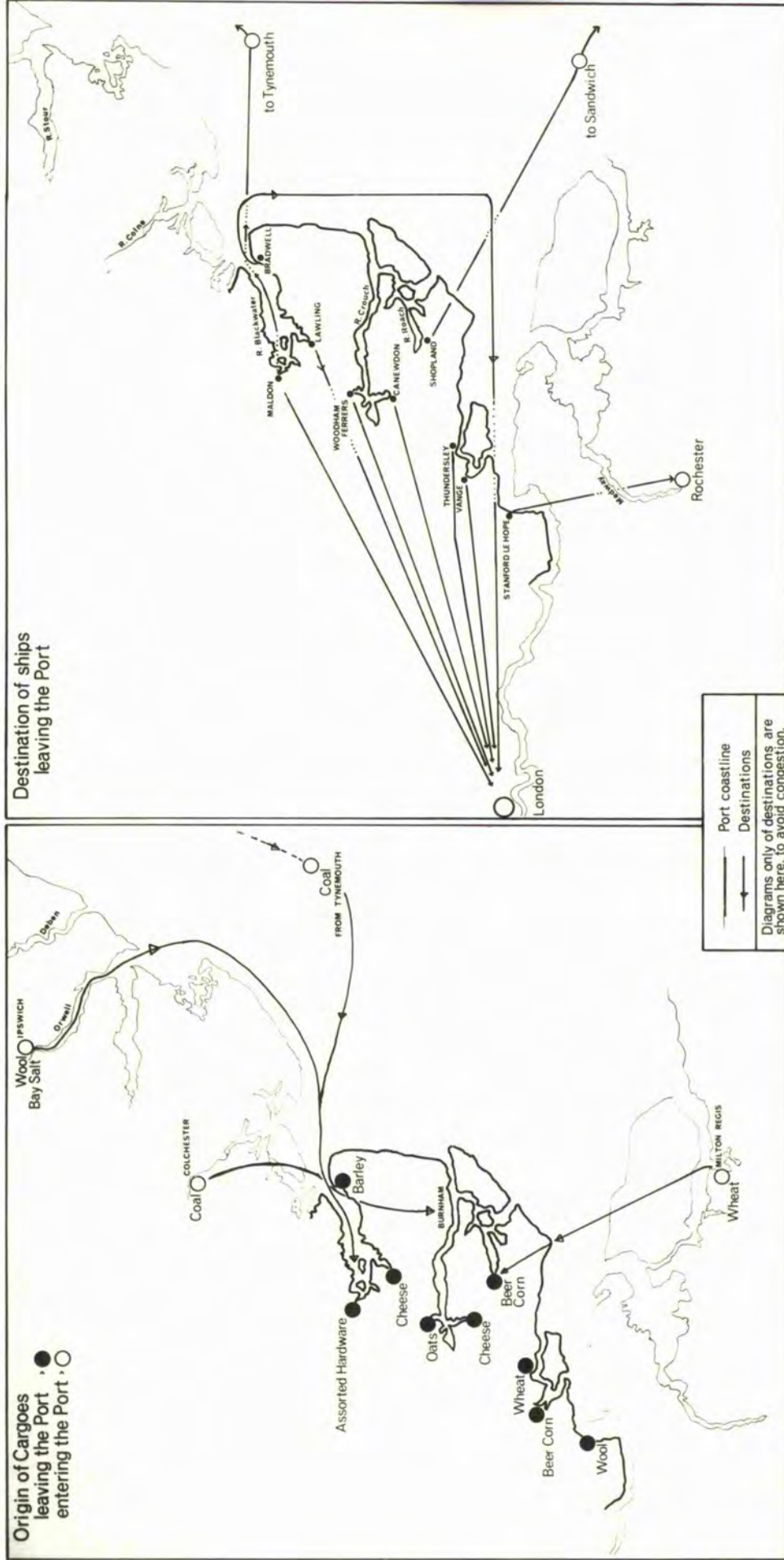
from Tollesbury on the north bank of the Blackwater southward to Thurrock on the Thames,¹ a maze of islands, waterways, sands and tidal rivers in which Maldon Hythe was but one of many lading places. (See figure 19.) Much of its shipping was concerned with the conveyance of wood and grain, cheese and butter and beer from the countryside (which was largely the market area of Maldon) to London. The farmers generally made the arrangements directly with London merchants, so little of the business of the Port passed through the hands of Maldon men and few of the ships were based on the town. Hence the small size of the Maldon vessels and their small number which Dr Burley noted for the seventeenth and Dr Hull for the late sixteenth centuries.² In fact the Port Books are of no use for the study of the borough's maritime trade: they mainly concern the movement of goods from obscure creeks and not in Maldon ships but in vessels based on the hamlets and villages which lay in the borough market district. The recorded sailings of Summer 1568 are plotted on the map of the Port in figure 19 and illustrate this dispersal. In 1631 the Justices of the Peace for Dengie Hundred explained to the Privy Council that they could not get their grain to the local market (Maldon) "by reason of the foulness of the ways" and, because it was usually difficult to take it by road to Maldon, it was customary to send it to London by sea.³ It is easy to see that, once aboard ship at some rural creekside, the journey to London was no more costly but far more profitable than the passage to Maldon Hythe; and the fifty miles by water was easier than a maximum of fifteen miles by road.

In such conditions of dispersed though very active trade, sea-

1. Exchequer definition, transcribed in K. Burley, op. cit. p.404.

2. F. Hull, op. cit., pp. 189-192; Burley, op. cit. pp.228 and 248-9.

3. CSPD, January 18th, 1631.



faring families were spread about the countryside which composed the Creek of Maldon. An early example is to be found in the family of John Richmond, one of the bailiffs of Maldon in 1535 and 1536. He and a quite distinct John Richmond (who was his elder step-brother and is here designated as 'A') were both born at Lawling on the south bank of the Blackwater. John Richmond 'A' moved to Harwich and in 1523 he was collector there of the Anticipation to the lay subsidy. In St Nicholas church in Harwich there is a latten inscription commemorating him and his two wives. The younger John Richmond also moved from Lawling: first to St Osyth, just across the Colne mouth from Lawling, where he too was a collector of the subsidy, and then to Maldon, but leaving a son at St Osyth. At Maldon he became a freeman in 1533 (described as "natus apud Lawlinge" and as "nuper de St Osyth") and he became a Wardman, or member of the common council of the un-incorporate borough, in 1534 and one of the two bailiffs in the following year.^{1.}

In the middle of the sixteenth century one of the most influential burgesses of Maldon was a merchant seaman called William Poulter. He was a native of Leigh on the north-eastern shore of the Thames estuary and he divided his affairs and life between the two places. His will of 1561 refers to shares which he held in two ships at Leigh - one part of the Dragon and £6 stock in the trade of its master, William Fowle of Leigh; two parts of the Mary Grace and £10 stock in the trade of William Smith (also of Leigh) - but he had another ship under construction at Maldon and he arranged for his executor to devote all his profits on

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/2 for admissions of the Richmond family to the borough freedom (15, 25 and 27 Henry VIII). P.R.O., E.179/108/206 for collectors of the lay subsidy in north-east Essex. Mill Stephenson, List of Monumental Brasses (1926) p.121 and Tr. E.A.S., n.s. X, p.200.

the two Leigh vessels to the building of this vessel:

"to buylde, fynnysh and make upp or cause to be fynnyshed
and made upp my new shipp begone and lyeng in frame at
Maldon Hithe according to the covenants devised and made
between Robert Gye, shipwrighte and me."¹.

A Maldon yeoman in 1545 (William Raven, for whose will this William Poulter was an executor) had a "bott or monger called the Dorathe" and a "crayer callyd the William and his bott" at Maldon and "two botts at Iye in the countye foreseyd" (Leigh).² After the death of William Poulter in 1661 his three sons continued his association with the borough - William Poulter II was a member of the corporation from 1574 to 1577 - but they eventually returned to Leigh where Richard Poulter, the second son, became "one of the six principall maistres of her Majesties navie royall" according to his description in an indenture of 1596.³

It is thus impossible to consider the population of Maldon in isolation from the market area of the town for there was an intimate relationship between the two. On his death bed a Maldon resident might, as has been shown, be worrying about the fields in some village five or ten miles distant which he had recently sown with wheat or barley; the efficiency of his shepherd on some bleak marshland might be exercising his mind or the fortunes of some Thameside trading vessel. In the settlements scattered through the woodland and heath round about Maldon, craftsmen prepared goods for the market or for their shop in the town;

1. PCC 27 Loftes (1561).

2. E.R.O., D/ABW 31/45 (1545).

3. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/33: apprenticeship of John Furnes to Richard Poulter, gentleman of Leigh, "in and about his marine affairs", 8th Sept. 1596.

or they were pondering the deal which they had made with another villager and which was recorded in the register of the borough court of record. The families of the town were also the inhabitants of the villages: Gaywoods, Carringtons, Harrises, Petcheys and Cokers who had relatives as yeomen and gentry in Southminster, Dengie, Tillingham, Mundon, Creeksea and Lawling, and as farmers and craftsmen in Maldon. The Herris family had estates and houses in Creeksea, Mundon, Woodham Mortimer and Margaretting; they also constructed a great mansion out of the ruins of the Carmelite Friary in Maldon and Christopher Herris of Margaretting had another great house called Spencer's (alias Harding's) in St Mary's parish in Maldon. Trade and relationship merged town and country, nor could distances separate the Maldon family from its country cousins. When Agnes Ryeners made her will in 1542 she had bequests for a niece and nephew at Ware (in Hertfordshire, some 35 miles distant) and for acquaintances in Chelmsford and Witham. She also bequeathed 40 shillings for her sister Joan Angell, "dwelling in Sancte Albons" but on the condition "that she wyll come for yt hyr selfe or elles I wyll that she shall nott have ytt."¹

Long-distance migration

In November 1590 a woman who believed herself to be Joan Anderson, the wife of a shoemaker called William Anderson, was questioned by the bailiffs of the borough about her past life, for she had apparently made a bigamous marriage. Originally she had lived at Totnes in Devon. There she had married George Carpenter, "which George taryed lyttle with her after they weare maryed togeather but came and went from tyme to tyme without any long staye", apparently working as an itinerant shoemaker. Six years after their marriage she heard that he had died in Somerset

1. E.R.O., D/ABW 31/36 (1542).

and three years after that another itinerant shoemaker, William Anderson, came to Totnes "to seeke woorke" and within twelve months he, "falling into famylyaritie with her", took her to Truro ("Terrerowe ... about 1x myles from Tottnes"). There they married, they had two children who both died and then they came together, right across England, to Maldon. However, William Anderson's work took him and his wife to Chelmsford Market and there Joan's supposedly deceased first husband also appeared and made himself known to them both.^{1.}

There must always have been families at this humble level who settled for some time at Maldon during their wanderings over the breadth of England but their movement goes unrecorded unless they got themselves into trouble or into the burial registers, for they contributed little or nothing to the occupational and governing structure of the borough. The long-distance immigrants with whom this study is primarily concerned were the freemen, the apprentices and the gentry who chose Maldon as their home - albeit temporarily - and who were born outside the county of Essex. The "market area" of the borough extended so far into the county, judging by the location of apprentices' parents and the litigants, that the boundary of Essex has been taken as the line for determining long and short distance migration. Even though some men came from parts of the county further off than men from the nearer parts of Suffolk, they have been classified as short-distance immigrants here because they were Essex men. All those from beyond the county have been deemed to be in the long-distance group.

They made their greatest contribution to the structure of the borough community in the sixteenth century. After about 1600 the numbers of apprentices born outside the county of Essex suddenly dwindled.

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/8 f.77v.

All the 16 boys who came to Maldon from north of the Trent to learn a craft had arrived by 1626 and after that none came from towns or villages more than 41 miles distant (direct). That proportion of the freeman body which consisted of men born outside Essex also diminished during the seventeenth century, so that there was a marked contraction in the size of the catchment area of Maldon from about 1600. This was not unusual, judging by the evidence for London, Sheffield or York, where the numbers of apprentices and freemen coming from distant areas also decreased during the mid-seventeenth century.¹ During the sixteenth century, however, some of the long-distance immigrants were among the richest of the burgesses.

Before c.1550 such were the Cornishman Richard Beynham in the 1520's, John Basse of "Westilton" in Suffolk and bailiff in 1538, Edward Shovelard from Abingdon, Berkshire, in the 1540's and John Sherman of Suffolk, bailiff five times between 1536 and 1546. During the years 1520 to 1546 the office of bailiff was available 52 times (there being two joint, annual bailiffs) and these four men occupied it fifteen times: that is, nearly one third of the chief "office space" for those years was held by long-distance immigrants.

In the second half of the sixteenth century one bailiff was a Scot (John Boswell, a member of the common council from 1544 to 1566) and the longest-serving and perhaps the most influential of all the corporation's members, the merchant William Vernon, was born in Nottingham and was descended from a family of gentlemen of the Peak District of Derbyshire. The grammar school founded in 1609 was but one of many bequests by the haberdasher Ralph Breeder, whose will has already been

1. L. Stone, op. cit., Past and Present number 33, pp.31-2 and 47.

mentioned. He was a Suffolk man who came to Maldon as an apprentice in 1570 and became one of the richest freemen of his time. A visitor to an assembly of the borough corporation in the 1570's would have heard the accents (if not the dialect) of Nottingham, Staffordshire, Lincoln, Devon, Dorset, Suffolk, Norfolk and of the Pennine dales, all mingled with the native Essex voice, for immigrants from all these parts of England had sufficiently established themselves in the town to become members of its common council.

Whilst short-distance mobility can be related to the social and economic characteristics of the Maldon area, the reasons for long-distance migration are much less clear. Why, for example, should Henry Capstack forsake Dent, among the north-western fells of Yorkshire to set up his tailor's shop in Maldon during the 1550's? Or why should John Jacques alias Hannikin come from Bruges about 1544 to be a yeoman farmer and freeman of this town?¹.

The arrival of some was possibly fortuitous and opportunist. This appears to have been the case of Thomas Furnes, who became a freeman in April, 1572, who was a head burgess in the corporation from 1576 to 1585 and thrice a bailiff. His birthplace was Mirfield near Leeds ("Morefeild in comitatu Eboracensis") but further information about him can be found in a dossier of allegations concerning wool smuggling which was presented to Sir Francis Walsingham about 1582.² Apart from stating that this man

1. Capstack: freedom 1557 (E.R.O., D/B 3/1/5). Jacques/Hannikin: not listed in the 1544 lay subsidy but the account of his freedom states that he was granted letters of denization 11th July, 1544; born at "Bridge civitatem" in Flanders, he paid £5 entry fine.

2. Printed in full in R.H. Tawney and E. Power (ed.), Tudor Economic Documents, I (1924) pp.195-196.

was engaged in the secret conveyance of wool overseas, the informer said that Thomas Furnes had been resident in London, where he had become an acquaintance of many alien merchants. Then he had moved from the city to Maldon and kept an inn there (this must have been about 1572 when the chamberlains' account records his freedom as "Inkeper at blewe bore"), whither resorted many merchants-strangers. Beside its harbour facilities Maldon must have been attractive to Furnes on account of the lack of trading restrictions. It seems that he was engaged in many simultaneous ventures whilst he lived there. He was involved in the purchase of wool from Northamptonshire and Lincolnshire, and as an innkeeper he would have the opportunity to enter into the private market activity of the borough. Soon he put a manager into the inn and moved to "a great house in the town" and developed a new line of business:

"and by way of merchandise sends into France and from thence hath much wines and therewith serveth the said town and a great part of Essex."

In addition to this wholesale extension of his interest in the food and drink trades he also added to his clothier's affairs by introducing the new drapery of bay-making at Maldon (so the informer said) although this was alleged to be only "a colour to convey wool out of this realm."

Fortuitous movement of this sort is one aspect of contest mobility, the chance product of prolonged and open competitive struggle, and Thomas Furnes was the sort of man who would seize the opportunities which offered themselves in the course of his progress from Yorkshire to London to Maldon. He could be a wool factor and a clothier; a vintner, innkeeper; wholesaler and retailer; merchant; justice of the peace and smuggler, as occasion required or offered. The settlement in Maldon of Henry Capstack from Dent (free 1553), of William Cornish of Garstang in north Lancashire (free 1560) or of John Donne of Redesdale in the Cheviots

(free 1541) might also be examples of contest mobility, accountable (perhaps) by the conditions prevalent in those northern areas where the natural increase of the population was interacting with the effects of centuries of partible inheritance, so that many had to choose between a life of poverty and social decline in their birthplaces or seek their fortune in new but distant homes.

Fortuitous movement will, however, be haphazardly documented and in the case of sponsored movement (a type of geographical and of social mobility) the documentation is also so inadequate that it is impossible to pin down firmly any case histories, although there are many tantalising juxtapositions of locations and trades in the recorded admissions of freemen and apprentices. Thus, William Markes of Barking became a resident freeman of Maldon in 1576. He was a clothier and four years later a weaver of Barking called William Mugges was also admitted to the freedom of the borough. It looks as if the weaver followed the clothier to the town so that they could continue a former association - but of that there is no proof. In 1595 a glover called Thomas Harekwood took two apprentices (of different families) from Haverhill and a third from Great Wrattling which is close to Haverhill on the Essex-Suffolk border. There is no explicit relationship stated either between the boys or between them and their master, who was himself a native of Maldon. Yet that part of the Colne valley, among the high chalk ridges of north Essex, western Suffolk and Cambridgeshire, seems to have had a traditional association with Maldon and it is likely that these boys' apprenticeship there was the result of some negotiation rather than fortuitous.^{1.}

A clearer example of sponsored migration is to be found in

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/8 (1558) and D/B 3/1/33 (1595); and fig. 13 above.

the 1560's when three men came into Maldon from north-western Lancashire. A freeman admitted in 1560 was called William Cornish, whose birthplace was the market and chapelry of Garstang some eleven miles from Lancaster. In 1568 he was followed by a boy from Garstang (John Bell), who was apprenticed to a Maldon shoemaker called John Hornccliffe, who was in his turn a native of York. William Cornish was a linendraper but it seems very probable that he was responsible for the migration of this Garstang boy down to Essex. In 1571 two more men came from that area to Maldon. One was James Cornish (William's brother) and the other was a cooper of Lancaster (James Bond). Both became freemen in 1571 and again it is difficult to escape the notion that their arrival was (in both cases) sponsored.^{1.}

An instance of acquaintanceship may exist in the apprenticeship of George Staines, the son of a Northallerton yeoman, to John Morris, who was a woollendraper of Maldon but himself a native of that North Riding town. That was in 1597. It is also likely that Morris was involved in the apprenticeship of an orphan boy from Northallerton to a Maldon blacksmith in 1593, for his will shows that Morris maintained a sufficient connection with his birthplace to bequeath money to the children of an acquaintance there.^{2.} Another Yorkshire boy (from "Kirby" - the town clerk failed to give a more precise location) was apprenticed in 1592 with the consent of Edward Pyke of Maldon, whom the indenture terms amicus certissimus of the boy; but this title may be a legal fiction.

One more instance must be cited for, after the fashion of Richard Whittington, it shows the combination of vertical (or social) mobility with geographical movement. It concerns the residence at Maldon of two Cornishmen in the 1520's. The first, Richard Beynham, was born at "Seynt

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/5 and D/B 3/1/33.

2. John Morris: freedom, April 1565; will, PCC 22 Dorset (1609).

Mighell Orathe" in Cornwall (probably St Erth, a short way inland from St Michael's Bay) and he became a freeman of Maldon in 1520 and a bailiff of the borough in 1524. In that latter year he was also a collector of the lay subsidy and in its assessments there appears one Simon Phelyp, rated at only 20 shillings a year in earnings. Beynham was, it seems, a lawyer and certainly one of the richer men of the borough. Phelyp was a wage-earner but he certainly made rapid social advance for, although he was not assessed at all in the 1525 payment of the lay subsidy, in that year he became engaged to marry the daughter of John Dale, a former bailiff of Maldon. Consequently he was able to become a freeman of Maldon without payment. Like Beynham, this Phelyp was a Cornishman, born at "Treroo" (Truro) and his existence as a wage earner in the town when Beynham was a bailiff suggests some dependent relationship, although they dwelt in separate parishes. His advantageous marriage is intriguing: doubly so, for he already had a son aged 20 according to the memorandum of his enfranchisement. But by virtue of his new marriage and (possibly) through the influence of Beynham, the wage-earner of 1524 became a wardman or common councillor of the borough from 1528 to 1530.^{1.}

Aliens

Chronologically the aliens in the community should have come before the other out-county or long-distance immigrants in this enquiry but they are a special case requiring separate consideration. They are only recorded in Maldon during the first three quarters of the sixteenth century and their presence is not connected with the immigration of Flemings and Dutchmen into East Anglia between 1560 and 1590 (especially

1. PRO., E.179/108/148 and /170. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/2. In his will Beynham referred to his "boke of lawe and presidents": E.R.O., D/ABR 6/43 (1536).

to Halstead, Colchester and Norwich). Rather they were the last of a medieval phase of immigration by wandering Flemish craftsmen and of a period of close contact between the Netherland and English sailors who shared identical shipping and navigational systems.

Many of them were servants or migrant artisans. This is implied by the regulations laid down in the 1444 custumal and repeated in the new edition of 1555, which ordered that all aliens should be indoors by the same times in summer and winter as the serving men of the town and one custom, ordained in 1465, ordered that Dutchmen and other aliens should carry "no manere wepyn of werre, privily ner pertly" other than knives for use at meal times. Since "beer carried beyond the seas" formed a special category of the water bailiffs' tolls in the sixteenth century it is interesting to note that a special exception was made in the 1444 custumal for the aliens who were brewers' cooperers and who were allowed to wear their "long daggers" in the streets.

Thirty one were resident in Maldon when the subsidies of 1524, 1525 and 1544 were collected. Some had English names but were taxed at the aliens' rate. Lewes Rivers was described as a Frenchman, Thomas Hills as a Scot. Eight were described as Dutchmen and three more appear by their names to have been so.¹ Neither their presence nor their numbers were exceptional for a coastal town. There were more than 33 at Lewes in 1524,² there were Bretons and Normans in Totnes and Dartmouth³ and the subsidy returns show Flemings and Dutchmen at large all over the

1. See below, Appendix 6: Aliens Listed in Subsidy Returns.

2. J. Cornwall, 'English Provincial Towns of the 1520's,' Economic History Review, 2nd Series, XV, p.61.

3. L. Nicholls, 'The Lay Subsidy of 1523,' Birmingham University Historical Journal, IX, pp.117-118.

Essex countryside. Nor can Maldon boast any alien as exotic as Witham's "Johannes da Salvo a Janua" (a Genoese?) of 1524.¹

Sixteen - half of the aliens in the Maldon subsidy returns - were described as servants and all but six of the 31 listed were assessed at 40 shillings or less in goods and wages, or were only liable for the poll tax. But there were some aliens who were independent craftsmen and men of some substance. Between 1508 and 1536 one of them, John Dutchman, built and inhabited a house on Fullbridge Street which was large enough to be subdivided c.1550-1573 into two separate dwellings.² Unlike the late Flemish immigrants who were weavers and brought in the new draperies to East Anglia, many of the aliens at Maldon before about 1560 were shoemakers. One example is Adrian Johnson, whose removal from Witham to Maldon in 1525 has already been described, together with his namesake Henry Johnson (alias Peter), another Dutchman. In 1545 Richard Frank alias Dyrek was admitted a freeman of Maldon and described as "natus in Senley in Gylderland sub dominio Emperatoris". In 1549 he took three apprentices (all natives of Maldon) into his shoemaking shop.³

A shadowy figure, though much more influential than these, is John Boswell. In the 1544 lay subsidy he was assessed at £30 in goods and also paid a tax of 4d for his bequests of goods worth 20 shillings to William and Peter Boswell, so he was not by then reckoned to be an alien although he was later described as "an alien born in Scotland". He had a family in the district and he had been an active resident of

1. P.R.O., E.179/108/154.

2. See Appendix 3, items 1 and 40.

3. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/2 (37 Henry VIII and 2 Edward VI.) It has not proved possible to identify a Senley (or was it perhaps a Sanct Loy?) on modern maps of Guelderland.

the town and closely associated with its leading freeburgesses long before 1550 when he was admitted to the borough franchise. In 1536 he was an executor of the Cornishman, Richard Beynham, who gave him (as "my friend Johann Boswell") a legal precedent book. Both Beynham and Boswell were also associated with the Gaywood family, yeoman farmers of the district and one Robert Gaywood was, with Boswell, an executor of Helen Beynham, widow, in 1538. Both were bailiffs of the newly incorporate borough in 1559.¹

By the beginning of Elizabeth I's reign the aliens were a diminishing group. One of the last was Cornelius Peterson, a beer brewer, who first appears as a craftsman assessed at only 40 shillings in goods in 1544. Another alien - guest or employee is not clear - committed suicide in Peterson's well in 1557.² The latest alien recorded at Maldon is possibly Mardocheus Depeis (a Frenchman?) who was a decenner in 1578 but was noted as extra ville in 1579. At that time the Flemish colony at Colchester was established: the corporation asked permission of the Privy Council to receive them in 1571 and there were about 500 in the "Dutch congregation"³ of that town by 1573. The favours extended to the aliens at Colchester may have drained away from the smaller Essex

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1. CPR 1569-72, p.229; E.R.O., D/AER 6/42 (1536); D/AER 6/103 (1538); PCC 2 Mellershe (1559); and D/B 3/1/5; P.R.O., E.179/108/244 (1543-1544 lay subsidy).
 2. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/5 f.18r: borough chamberlains' receipt of £6-12s-8d "de pecunia que fuerunt Petri Fox alligeneri qui moriebat se in quiddam puteo eiusdem Cornelij Peterson", with a marginal note, "felo de se" and 20s "pro le twyble (axe) que fuerit dicto Petri."
 3. G.H. Martin, The Story of Colchester (1959) p.49; R.H. Tawney and E. Power (ed.), Tudor Economic Documents, I (1924) pp.310-317.

towns the foreigners who had been so widespread in the early years of the century and although there is no evidence that Maldon men felt any antipathy towards the aliens (such as the craftsmen of Halstead evinced about 1590^{1.}) they certainly made no efforts to accommodate them so comfortably as at Colchester, Norwich or Canterbury. Indeed, the traditional attitude expressed in the borough customals had been to treat aliens as servitors and to deny them weapons or the right to move about the town freely during the evenings. By 1558 the choice of a Colchester shoemaker, Winken Grenerise, as principal executor by the alien Richard Frank alias Dyrek of Maldon suggests that by then the Colchester Flemings and Dutch were leaders of the alien community in Essex. Grenerise, like Frank, had been born in Guelderland.^{2.}

Gentry

In 1590 Thomas Walker, a Yorkshireman but an alderman of Maldon, won a suit at York Assizes for land in Holden (a district of Bolton-by-Bowland) which had lately been in the occupation of his father and had passed into the possession of Thomas Baxter of Bolton-by-Bowland.^{3.} Although he had been dispossessed temporarily of his inheritance in Wharfedale, Alderman Walker was still (as his rank indicates) a well-to-do man. He was styled a gentleman, he was elected a bailiff of the borough, he acted as a Justice of the Peace and he was the farmer of the demesne of Little Maldon Manor. So he is a representative of the gentry who moved into the town, as well as being classified as a long-distance

1. Idem., p.319.

2. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/5 ff.19v-20v and R.H. Tawney and E. Power (ed.), Tudor Economic Documents, I (1924) p.310.

3. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/34 f.47r.

immigrant. He was one of a group who, though they only formed a tiny proportion of the population of Maldon, had a great influence in the corporation and on the trade of the town.

Like other immigrants, most of the gentry were Essex-born. Others were long-distance immigrants: like William Vernon of Nottingham (a freeman in 1563), and Thomas Walker. And at least three were aliens: Henry Twedie, son of George Twedie of Drumelzier in Scotland, c.1550; John Boswell, c.1550; and Anthony Gratiano, "a Gretian"¹ c.1670. Nor were they necessarily permanent settlers in the town. Thus Thomas Cammoche Esq., who has a fine monument in All Saints' (1602), came to Maldon in 1575 or 1576;² his father has a monument in Layer Marney church (1585); thither Thomas Cammoche's eldest son returned and there is a brass to one daughter at Cold Norton, Essex. None of the other eighteen children are known to have lived in Maldon after 1602. The only gentry to make a permanent home there were the Garringtons (c.1500-c.1560); the Vernons of Little Beeleigh (c.1563-c.1700); and the Harrises of the Friars' Mansion (1563-c.1650).

Their motives for coming to the borough are, of course, quite distinct from their humbler neighbours' reasons. It was a distinguishing mark of the gentleman that he should be able "to live idly and without manual labour" for the title was accorded, with or without a coat of arms, to those who could "bear the Port, charge and countenance of a Gentleman."³ Consequently their decisions to move into the borough appear to have been

1. Sir John Bramston, Autobiography, (Camden Society, 1845), p.376.

2. He was not a freeman. Not in decenners' lists 1570-1574 but listed in the next, of 1576.

3. The definition of Sir John Dodderidge, pre-1628. Cf. G.D. Squibb, The High Court of Chivalry (Oxford, 1959), pp.170-177.

based on religious preferences, a wish for sociable surroundings or the attraction of facilities which Maldon could offer to the wealthy.

Maldon was (as will be described later) fortunate in its resident preachers - especially George Gifford (c.1582-1600), Ralph Hawdon (c.1594-1619), Israel Hewitt (1620-1649) and John Simpson (c.1610-1649) - and the corporation also sponsored market day sermons by notable puritans of the locality. Puritanism was strong in the neighbourhood and the religious climate of the borough was brisk, furthermore, St Mary's parish came under the exiguous peculiar jurisdiction of the Dean of Westminster; it was thus an enclave where men might find refuge from the attentions of the Archdeacons of Essex and Colchester.

Maldon also served as a social centre, particularly in the later seventeenth century and especially for those "pseudo-gentry" whose urban settlement during the later seventeenth century has been outlined by Professor Everitt.¹ Some at Maldon were clergy, who preferred the town to their marshland parishes and for them Dr Thomas Plume provided in 1704 a library of some 7,000 books on a wide range of subjects, housed in a beautiful brick house on the site of St Peter's church nave. Others came for the wild-fowling along the Blackwater, "so well known by our London Men of Pleasure for the infinite number of wild fowl...and they go from London on purpose for the pleasure of shooting" according to Defoe.²

1. A. Everitt, 'Social Mobility in Early Modern England.' Past and Present number 33 (April 1966) pp.56-73. Also H.B. Rodgers, op. cit., pp.110-112.

2. Daniel Defoe, Tour through....Great Britain (ed. G.D.H. Cole, 1927), p.11.

Thirdly, Maldon received elderly people, such as widows living off annuities, and husbandmen who retired from farming to enjoy the comforts and godliness of the town. The earliest example is of John Burgess who in 1557 desired burial in All Saints' churchyard. He had stock pastured on the grasslands of Abbess Hall (Great Wigborough, on the north shore of the Blackwater estuary) and arable on the gravel slopes of Great Braxted, which he shared with his brother. Late in life he came to live in Maldon with another brother, to whom he bequeathed "my great caldron that I brought with me." ¹.

Political motives are not so likely as those of religious opinion, retirement and social pleasure. Although the franchise of the borough entailed a right to vote in parliamentary elections during the seventeenth century, that cannot account for sixteenth century settlements. Nor did many choose to become freemen before 1660 and after that date those who did were mostly non-residents. Moreover, to be a freeman of Maldon entailed being debarred from sitting on a jury outside the borough so that any gentleman who did so excluded himself from some part of the county administration. Nevertheless it must be noted that a few did join the freeman body and some accepted membership of the corporation, where their social prestige was acknowledged by the rapidity of their promotion: one day to rise from headburgess to alderman or bailiff. ².

What is certain about all these gentry is that they brought a special dimension to the life of Maldon. It was surely to serve their particular needs that the borough had, between c.1560 and 1640, musicians, cooks, seamstresses, physicians, a clockmaker, vintners, a painter and

1. E.R.O., D/ABW 4/95 (1557).

2. Edward Garrington, 1562; Thomas Wiseman, 1578; Richard Pellett, 1584; William Soan, 1585; Thomas Walker, 1590; Thomas Young, 1589.

three gunsmiths. One inventory of a gentlewoman, Mary Muffett, exists, which indicates the comfortable existence of such people.¹ She owned a house of seven rooms filled with goods valued at £134. In her Hall she had an hour glass (not a clock), looking glass, picture and "all the books." An upper room contained relics of her younger days - a side-saddle, cloths and bridle - and her plate was valued at £52 - 18s - 0d. And she had £43 in ready cash.

Sir John Bramston's report of his father's birth at Maldon in 1577 is illustrative of the way Maldon acted as a focus for the gentry of the county: his grandparents had gone there

"to visit a sister Ann Bramston, married unto John Sherman and liveing there at the time, where she (the mother) falling in labour, she was delivered of the said John, who was baptized in the parish church of Saint Marie in Malden ...his godfathers were Gabriel Crofts and Henry Mildmay, esquires; his godmother was Mrs Mary Harris, widow..."²

1. Westminster Public Library, Maldon 10.

2. Bramston, op. cit., p.5. Crofts was an M.P. for Maldon, 1563-1567; Mildmay was brother to the Chancellor of the Exchequer; Mrs Harris was widow of Vincent Harris Esq. of the Friars' Mansion, Maldon.

Chapter 3

HOUSING A TRANSIENT POPULATION

Urban property ownership is often obscured by a shortage of source material. Most title deeds are privately preserved and not readily available to chance researchers, so propositions and assumptions on this subject have to be based largely on public deposits of estate records, on manorial surveys, inventories and wills, none of which may give an adequate sample of the whole field of investment in building for any given town.

In the case of Maldon, however, there are three useful and unusual collections of information which yield answers to a variety of questions on the state of property ownership in the borough between 1500 and 1700. And the transient character of the Maldon population certainly provokes questions about the ownership of land and - in particular - of housing. The most obvious case is of any of those persons who spent less than ten years in the borough: since there was no safe or efficient method of transferring money or large-scale credit across country, how did, say, the immigrant Yorkshireman acquire a house? Did he bring enough money with him, marks and silver pennies bagged up on his saddle bow, to make a down-payment on a suitable vacant house? Or, even less probable, did he work in the town for a year or so as a wage-earner for an established craftsman or merchant until he had enough money to buy himself a house, and then summon his family to join him? And on leaving the borough, how did he settle his affairs in the place, when there were no estate agents to leave in charge of his property?

It has already been strongly suggested that the problem of poverty was controlled at Maldon partly by a stringent enforcement of customary

laws against inmates and that this custom was extended to subdivisions of buildings, even though they constituted self-contained dwellings. So it is no good assuming that the transients dosed down in outbuildings and barns, or crowded into attics. They had to be able to acquire a proper dwelling and, if that made them inmates, then they had to be granted leave of settlement by the bailiffs of the borough. The question of housing is therefore no mere curiosity of Tudor and Stuart Maldon. It is a detailed aspect of the central theme of how an essentially migrant and extremely mobile urban population managed to hold itself together: and it is argued here that the most general situation in sixteenth and seventeenth century Maldon, of leaseholding residents and of a steady drift of title to property away from the borough into the ownership of non-residents, reflects not only the transient character of the population of Maldon but also the influence of short-distance migration.

Sources of information

Of the three sources on which a study of housing can be based, the first is a special register of the Court of Record containing almost entirely enrolments of title deeds to all manner of messuages and tenements in the borough. It was a custom of Maldon that wives who inherited lands or buildings should be formally questioned by the bailiffs and justices (without their husbands' attendance) before they and their husbands effected any conveyances of their inheritances or dowers. In 1574 a special register was established to record both the formal "interrogation" and the subsequent conveyances.¹ This court book provides a collection of information about one special aspect of the property market, involving heritability and the movement of ownership from

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/34: Liber Irrotulamentorum de Recordo et examinacionarum mulierum viribus co-optarum etc.

the borough.

The second source of information is, it seems, peculiar to Maldon: a custom called landcheap, which was a tax levied on every purchase of land or tenements within the borough at the rate of ten pence for every mark of the purchase price. Receipts of this custom were often recorded item by item in the borough chamberlains' accounts and often they provide many useful details: the occupations and the domiciles of both vendors and purchasers; the actual price (although that can also be calculated from the landcheap); the names and locations of the properties conveyed; and - occasionally - a brief description of special features of either the property or of the conveyance. Thus the 1572 account roll has a landcheap of 6s 3d for the purchase of a shop in St Peter's parish by Thomas Trappes of Danbury for £5. The shop was in the tenure of a blacksmith, John Mendam, and the previous owner (the vendor) was John Sayer. Another landcheap, in the 1625 account, was for the purchase of a reversion and inheritance right in a dwelling house in All Saints' parish for £4 by Samuel Pratt. He also acquired by that transaction a tenement and shops belonging to the dwelling and the memorandum includes the additional information that the reversion was to occur on the death of Margaret, wife of Robert Sandeford Esq. but was purchased from Thomas Rochell.

The information provided is thus varied and the types of transaction unlimited. If all the chamberlains' accounts had survived and if they all gave such meticulous detail, landcheaps would provide a marvellous index to the movement of property by sale in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries at Maldon. They are not so complete and some do not give any detail; but 61 accounts between 1561 and 1658 can be used for the study of the market in real estate, with a total of 282 transactions in buildings. It must be pointed out that sometimes the landcheap was reduced (in needy cases or by special favour) and sometimes its payment

was deferred, partial or even refused. But the levy was always claimed and at least some record of each transaction was made in each of the 61 accounts.

Not all transfers of property were covered by landcheap records. There was no tax on the inheritance of property. Partly the gap is filled by the enrolled deeds but they only concern female inheritance or wardship, not the simple inheritance of property by sons or other males. Some light is shed on the general pattern, however, by the third source, which is a survey of the tenures in Maldon in the early seventeenth century.¹ It is a draft and apparently incomplete, with the middle third of its sixth sheet left blank, only one entry on its final sheet and no summary or other concluding matter. It is also undated and lacks any preamble indicating its purpose. Internal evidence, however, shows that it was compiled in 1609 or early in 1610.² Its purpose may have been to provide a report for the survey of Crown Lands which was begun in 1608 and which, like this document, was intended to declare the quality, quantity, rent and value of land, and to provide a survey of all manner of tenures.³ Alternatively, a lawsuit in the Exchequer, concerning the tenure of the Chantry House which was retried in Maldon in 1609-1610,⁴

1. Essex Record Office, D/B 3/3/421.

2. (a) Sir Thomas Gardiner, named in the draft as lord of the manor of Little Maldon, sold out to Sir Robert Sprignell of Highgate in 1611; (b) Stephen Vessey of Woodham Walter is named as proprietor of a messuage (item 129) which he bought in 1609 (E.R.O., D/B 3/1/34 f.93v); (c) Thomas Cornish of London is named as proprietor of item 165 which he sold in 1610 (ibid. f.96v); and (d) Elias Lufkin, named as a tenant, died in October 1610.

3. AgHEW, p.270.

4. P.R.O., E.134/8, James I, Michaelmas 13 (Mitchell v. Stammer).

might have been the occasion for the survey. Yet that would not have required an exhaustive report on the tenurial structure of the whole town, whereas sales of Crown property in Maldon between five and ten years later give some colour to the proposition that this was part of the Crown Lands survey.^{1.}

Leaseholding

Although it is incomplete, the 1609/10 survey of tenures in Maldon can be treated as a large sample of the types of ownership and tenure prevalent in the borough at that time. The items in it are collected by manors, not by location or by type of tenure. So the entries concern properties dispersed about the housing areas, since the manors did not occupy discrete blocks of territory but had their tenements intermingled, and the 149 cases involved are of all types of buildings, cottages as well as great houses. Some sixty years later there were 225 householders in the 1671 Hearth Tax return and thus the extant portion of the 1609/10 survey may cover a little more than half the number of houses in the borough at the beginning of the seventeenth century (assuming there was no great change in the size of the population, which does not seem to have been the case) and consequently there is a case for using the survey as a good-sized sample of the tenurial structure. Its evidence is set out in Table 8.

Now the special features of the 1609/10 survey are that:

- (a) 54% of all its 149 listed houses were owned by non-residents;
- and (b) 73% of the 149 houses were tenant-occupied.

1. From 1615 to 1619 ten tenements in Maldon were sold off by the "King's Majesty's Patentees" according to the landcheaps recorded for those years.

Table 8 also shows that, by contrast, there were few owner-occupiers among the inhabitants: according to the surveyors there were only twenty-nine, occupying no more than 20.8% of the listed properties. What the survey indicates about the structure of property-holding in the borough - at any rate in the first years of the seventeenth century - is that tenancy prevailed. Such a condition is to be expected in a population as mobile as that of Maldon; and so is the high proportion of non-resident owners, considering the predominance of short-distance migration.

Some aspects of leaseholding and ownership of houses in Maldon can be illustrated by the case of John Pratt, a leading townsman between 1586 and 1619. He was a prosperous man by the time of his death (1619); his cash bequests totalled £460 and he was able to maintain his son Elisha Pratt as a pensioner of Emmanuel College, Cambridge.¹ He was also an alderman and a bailiff of the borough. Yet in all his life at Maldon he never lived in a house of his own. He remained, even when he was an alderman, the tenant-occupier which he was immediately after the termination of his apprenticeship in 1585/86. Like many others in the town, he was a short-distance immigrant who came into Maldon as an apprentice (in 1580) after the death of his father. He made a young and full start to adult life, so it is understandable that he took the lease of a dwelling and working place rather than purchase one, for he was married in 1585 (before the completion of his apprenticeship, it seems),² he was a freeman the next year, 1586, and master of an apprentice from 1589. The building which he took on lease was immediately to the west of the new Moot Hall, on the edge of the market, and in conveyances of adjacent buildings in 1592 and 1605 it was described as "the house where John

1. Will of John Pratt (proved 11th August, 1619, no inventory), E.R.O., D/ABW 48/246; and Venn, Alumni Cantabrigienses.

2. All Saints', Maldon, marriage register, 19th April, 1585.

Pratt dwellith."¹.

Many others - freemen newly come into Maldon, former apprentices and immigrant workmen - would also have needed to rent buildings in that way; and other senior inhabitants can be found in the late sixteenth century and at other times who, like John Pratt, were not owner-occupiers but tenants. John Maldon, one of Pratt's associates in the corporation and in a puritan "faction" of the 1590's, was at first a leaseholder: he had migrated from Chelmsford by 1586 (when he was about 22 years old) but only purchased a house twelve years later.² Thomas Porter, a tanner and head burgess from 1559-1562 and 1571-1583, bequeathed to his wife his lease of the dwelling house called Scarlett's (of which he was certainly the occupant) on condition she paid the rent and maintained the building in good repair "at her own charges".³ In 1588 the widow of Alderman Andrew Michaelson possessed seven houses and a garden whose tenants included four head burgesses.⁴ The survey of 1609/10 names six existing members of the corporation and three future members as tenant-occupiers, including two of bailiff rank (John Sean, bailiff 1606 and 1609; and Edward Hastler, bailiff 1606 and 1610).⁵ In 1663 two more head burgesses were tenants, according to the will of their landlord, a gentleman of the borough named Ruben Robinson.⁶

The mode of tenant-occupation for Maldon property and of non-resident ownership is also illustrated, from another angle, by the history

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/34 ff. 50r and 83r.

2. MCA 1598 - landcheap of £4-13s-9d paid by John Maldon for the purchase of the tenement "wherein he now dwellith of Thomas Furnes."

3. E.R.O., D/ABW 29/67.

4. D/ABW 25/328.

5. D/B 3/3/421.

6. D/ABR 7/75 (1665).

of one of the largest buildings in All Saints' parish, directly opposite the Darcy Tower (the new Moot Hall), which can be reconstructed from a bundle of deeds covering the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. ^{1.}

There are some gaps in the sequence of conveyances but the deeds are so well spaced out over the two centuries that there can be no doubt in this case about the general pattern of ownership, by non-residents, and of tenant-occupation. All but one of the owners were non-residents: the earl of Oxford (1492), a London merchant (1526), a gentleman of Theydon Gernon in south-west Essex (c.1630) and the vicar of East Greenwich (c.1670). The one Maldon man owning the property was William Hale (c.1560) but from him it descended to his daughter Annastacy who, although she was buried in All Saints' church at Maldon and bequeathed her estate there to form a charity in the parish, was nevertheless married to a London lawyer and resided at the Barbican in the city. ^{2.}

The tenants of that house, too, illustrate the mode of tenant-occupation by even the most prosperous of townsmen. Firstly there was William Harding, a merchant and four times bailiff of the borough during his tenancy (1496, 1498, 1501 and 1502). Another tenant, John Busshe, was bailiff at the same time that he took the lease in 1526. In the late sixteenth century the tenant-occupier was Alderman Ralph Breeder, whose wealth and property in and around Maldon have already been described. After him another tenant was Alderman Thomas Plume, an immigrant gentleman from Great Yeldham in north Essex, formerly an undergraduate at Christ's College, Cambridge, and the longest-serving of all members of the seventeenth century corporation.

1. E.R.O., D/DWd 1-13.

2. Information on her monument in All Saints' church, Maldon, 1634.

Leaseholding is the method of occupation which would be expected in a town whose population had so rapid a turn-over as that of Maldon. Few of the immigrants could be expected to have possessed enough capital to afford to buy a house during their first few years of residence (as was the case, apparently, of John Maldon, cited above), whilst those who rented a dwelling thereby rendered themselves less capable of raising capital for a subsequent purchase. (Though here again the case of John Maldon must be mentioned: when, after twelve years' residence he did buy the house in which he had been a tenant, he paid no less than £75 for it, which was far more than the two current modal prices for buildings of £15-£25 and £40-£45.¹.)

However, the borough Court of Record provided a source for loans which could have been used for house purchase or as a means of obtaining credit from workmen in the course of reconstructing derelict building sites. The recorded pleas of debts do not, unfortunately, specify the objects of the loans, so they are of no use for estimating the extent to which men availed themselves of the facility for buying property. But the purchase of the site of the old Friary in 1563 by William Harris was one occasion when that facility was almost certainly used. In that year he ran up debts amounting to £927-6s-8d from five leading local men; and his son Vincent Harris, after he had built a town house on the site, referred in his will (1574) to debts incurred "by reason of the great charges susteyned in the buildinge of my mansyonhowse in Maldon."² It was thus possible to obtain credit for property development but this was also a special case, for the Harrises were among the chief gentry of

1. See below, Table 11. (The landcheap on £75 was £4-13s-9d.)

2. CSPD, Augmentation Book 214 f.133v (1563); E.R.O., D/B 3/1/5,

February 1563 and April 1563; PCC 44 Martyn (1574, proved 1578).

south-east Essex, supplying members of parliament for Maldon at some times, members for the county at others. Also, William and Vincent Harris had a valuable estate in Mundon which, (according to Vincent's will) was secured to the repayment of their debts incurred by the purchase of the friary site and the building of a mansion there. About 1602 John Cade was reported by the corporation to have built a house in Maldon costing £400; but again, he is a special case, a merchant of London as well as of Maldon, whom the corporation alleged to be a man of great wealth in land and goods.¹ There is no evidence that either John Cade or John Maldon had recourse to the Court of Record in the borough for loans to purchase their buildings.

The question was not, in fact, simply whether an immigrant brought with him sufficient capital to make an immediate purchase. In part such a purchase depended on the man's ability to provide reliable security for a loan through the Court of Record. In part, too, it depended on the availability, in the borough or the market area, of cash; and it also depended on the availability of property: having stated the predominance among Maldon residents of tenant-occupation, the liquidity of title and of capital comes in question, and the process whereby so much property came into the possession of men living outside the borough.

Purchasers and Inheritors

In turning to consider the movement of title to property in Maldon the first two sources mentioned at the beginning of this chapter - the Landcheaps and the enrolled deeds - have their greatest use. They cover transfer of title by sale and by inheritance through females, so

1. See Appendix 3 item 11.

that only property which descended by pure, unwritten, male inheritance is left in doubt. Altogether there appear to have been four variations on the method of transfer, two of which can hardly have been common, and two of which appear to have especially led to the accumulation of ownership in the hands of outsiders.

Straightforward inheritance of property by permanent residents of Maldon cannot be checked but it evidently had little influence on the distribution of ownership, firstly because the sample of the 1609/1610 survey indicates that over half the owners were outsiders and secondly because there were few permanent residents anyway.

Secondly, men who had newly arrived might buy dwellings and then sell when moving out. Already some aspects of this have been discussed but it also follows that since the type of inhabitant who would be involved in the purchase and sale of a dwelling simply to provide himself with a temporary home was resident in the town usually for no more than five to ten years, then that would result in the rapid flow of title. That is flatly contradicted by the evidence of the landcheap accounts in the chamberlains' rolls. Although there was constant change in the personnel of Maldon, the market in property was remarkably sluggish and on an average only 4.6 houses a year changed owners by sale in 80 years between 1566 and 1670. (See Table 11, which sets out the evidence of 319 transactions in houses for the 80 years for which suitably detailed accounts survive.) One other way to examine this particular method of transfer of title is to compare the landcheap records for the decade 1570-1580 with the names on the lists of decenners and freemen. It happens that this can be done as there are landcheap records for all but one year of that decade ^{1.} and altogether 44 transactions were made

1. 11 years have been used : MCA 1570, 1572, '73, '74, '75, '76 and 1578; and D/B 3/1/6 for 1571 and 1580, for this enquiry land has been excluded from the calculations.

concerning houses. Not one house was purchased by a newcomer nor sold by an emigrant during the whole of that decade. Moreover, if short-term purchase-and-sale by newcomers and emigrants had been usual, there would have been little movement of title out of the town - which patently was happening - and there would have been far less tenant-occupation.

Two other modes by which residents could acquire and use property were by purchase in quantity for investment, or in a similar way by purchase for subdivision into the kind of dwelling needed by the short-term immigrants. This certainly was being done and once more the case of John Pratt can be cited, for although he never lived in a house of his own he certainly owned four houses in St Peter's parish, all of which were tenanted when he made his will in 1619: Alderman Ralph Breeder bequeathed £150 to Pratt's son, Elisha, in 1609 and that, augmented by money of his own, was employed by John Pratt to buy four houses, whose leases obviously formed an attractive annual return for the outlay.¹ Similarly John Reed, who was the landlord of John Pratt from 1586 to 1593, bequeathed the rent paid by Pratt "towardses the better educacion and bringing up of my younger son."² Possibly some form of sponsored immigration could have operated under such a mode of property acquisition, with one immigrant purchasing a batch of houses (or converting one property into several subdivisions), then leasing them to short-term immigrants or subsequently selling to the immigrant his house if he had decided to stay in the town. Thus, for the first twelve years John Maldon, immigrant from Chelmsford, was a tenant of the Yorkshire immigrant Thomas Furnes (whose career has already been described) and then bought the house from his landlord.

1. PCC 27 Dorset (1609); E.R.O., D/ABW 48/246 (1619).

2. E.R.O., D/ABW 32/23 (1593).

Alternatively, outsiders could have been buying up property as speculative investments. Outsiders could also acquire property by marriage with a Maldon-born heiress; and of course the rate of emigration meant that some non-residents found themselves inheritors of Maldon property. When John Pratt died in 1619, the four houses of which he was landlord in St Peter's parish were inherited by his elder son Elisha; and he was not a resident of Maldon; he was an undergraduate of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, in 1619; after his departure from the university in 1625 until 1650 he was vicar of Lindsell in north-west Essex; and lastly he was vicar of St Lawrence parish in Dengie Hundred.^{1.}

Sometimes the title to property retreated much further from the borough by inheritance and subsequent migration. Such was the case of the house subdivided c.1568 by Daniel Winterbourne.^{2.} The halves were inherited by his two sons, one of whom had a son called John Winterbourne and he, in 1620, was a yeoman of Battle in Sussex. In that year the other son of Daniel Winterbourne died childless and so the other half of the subdivided house descended by inheritance to this yeoman of Battle, who sold the whole building to the feoffees of the new grammar school foundation of Ralph Breder.^{3.}

An attempt to trace the descent of house ownership to outsiders would be vitiated by the absence of a sufficient number of wills (in cases where descent was by testamentary inheritance - the other forms of heritability being generally unwritten) and by the practice of subdivision into smaller tenements. Yet the enrolled deeds provide a guide to one part of the outflow of title from Maldon and these, along with the land-

1. Venn, Alumni Cantabrigienses.

2. See above, pp.11 and 48; Appendix 3, item 39.

3. See Appendix 3, item 39.

cheaps, indicate that the predominance of non-resident landowners (at least c.1609) was closely associated with the factors governing short-distance migration.

Already the possibility that property was bought and sold by transient, short-term immigrants at a fast rate has been eliminated. Yet Tables 9 and 10, where the information of landcheaps and enrolled deeds is collected, indicate that residents generally took the greater share in the transfer of property. Over some 100 years residents were involved in nearly three quarters of all transactions in houses. Even in cases of inherited property Maldonians predominated both as grantors and as recipients of property. The landcheap records of 1570-1580 which have been used above in a consideration of the possible role of new immigrants as purchasers, also show that residents were the dominant section of purchasers and vendors in that decade: they formed 44 out of the 66 persons named in the account rolls of 1570-1580 and they purchased more buildings (29) than they sold (26), whereas only 20 outsiders were involved in property transfers.¹ Altogether, the transactions amounted to £1,117 (on 44 properties) and there too, resident buyers and sellers contributed the larger part. Outsiders provided only 27% of the purchasing money and only 33% of the receipts, whereas resident buyers spent 69% of the £1,117 purchasing value, and they received 67% of the £1,117 spent on the purchase of property.

Thus (in that decade, 1570-1580, at least) it is certain that the flow of title from the borough was not a result of deliberate purchase by non-residents in the form of speculative investment in urban property. Furthermore, nine other transfers of title in that decade are known from

1. The domicile of two men named in the accounts is uncertain.

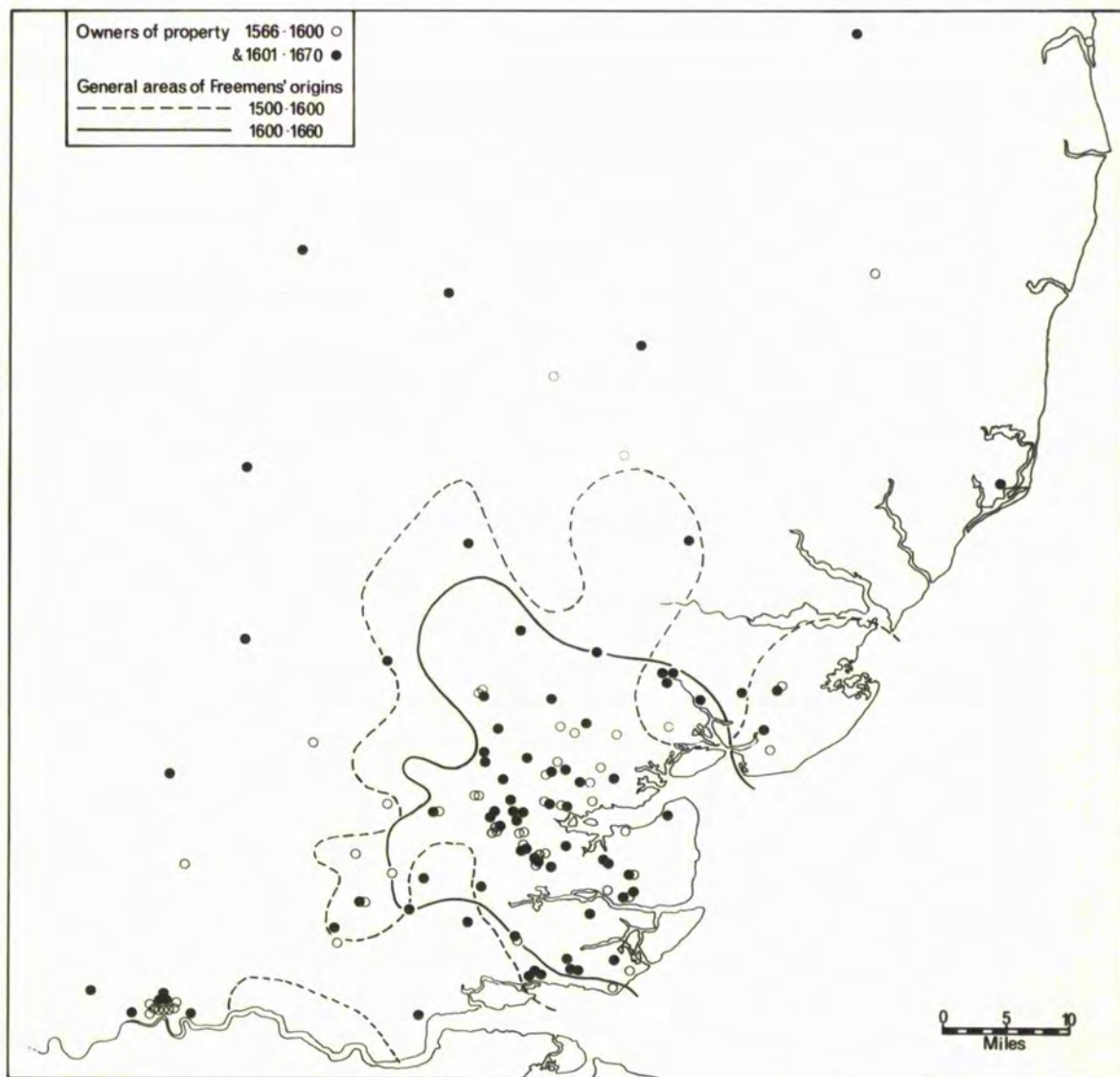
the register of conveyances by women and their husbands.¹ These were, of course, either concerned with inheritances or were enfeoffments to uses. In these transactions residents were again more involved than outsiders:

3 properties were transferred from resident to resident;
 2 properties were transferred from resident to outsider;
 3 properties were transferred from outsider to resident;
 and 1 property was transferred from outsider to outsider.

Throughout the century 1560-1660 the predominance of resident purchasers is clear in the transactions known from the landcheaps and enrolled deeds. Nearly three-quarters of sales were made with residents, less than a quarter were certainly made with outsiders. (See Table 9.) As far as other forms of transaction went, there was more similarity between the two groups (as would be expected) but still it was the residents who received and granted rather more property than non-residents. (See Table 10.)

Yet c.1610 about half the houses in Maldon were owned by men or women living outside the borough. It follows, therefore, that the typical mode of transfer of title and of its removal from the town must have been a result of emigration, or the marriage of Maldon widows and heiresses to outsiders. In short, all the features of short-distance migration, contributed to the ownership of Maldon buildings (and land) in such quantities by outsiders. That is illustrated by the location of non-resident owners: Figure 20, a map which is based on the information of the enrolled deeds and the landcheap accounts, shows a striking conformity between their location and the general areas for the recruitment of freemen in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/34.



20 Non-Resident Owners of Property, 1566-1670

The acquisition of a large share of Maldon property by outsiders - either by marriage or by inheritance and in combination with emigration - can also explain the sluggishness of houseprices which is revealed by the landcheap payments. It may be observed from Table 11 that only 4.6 houses were bought or sold, on average, in any of the years 1561 to 1670 for which transactions are recorded. In 1644 and 1656 there were no sales. Since little property came up for sale, its transmission must have been predominantly by inheritance or marriage. Immigrants were thus obliged to lease dwellings owned, as a result of short-distance migration, by non-residents; whilst the profitability of leasing and occasional periods of demand for extra accommodation, encouraged the owners to subdivide their property.

Chapter 4

OCCUPATIONS AND MARKETING

Because its population was so mobile the urban economy of Maldon was extremely unstable. Instead of a settled occupational structure it had a constantly changing economy, as traders moved out and new men arrived, not necessarily bringing with them the same crafts, nor necessarily with the same contacts or specialities. Short-distance migration, the failure of the borough to establish an effective monopoly in the market for resident traders and the dispersal of the Port of Maldon's shipping activities each militated against the concentration within the town of the commercial or the manufacturing life of the area.

Occupational instability

Spasmodically the town clerks set themselves to describe the occupations of the men who appeared before the courts or who became freemen. That their efforts were spasmodic is itself indicative of the unimportance of a man's occupation, perhaps, but within the periods when they did so (notably the 1560's, the 1590's and the early seventeenth century) there is available a mass of fortuitous information which can be combined with the more widespread range provided by apprenticeship indentures, wills and deeds. Table 12 sets out the apparent ranking of the chief occupational groups within the borough, based chiefly on the memoranda of freemen's admissions, the courts of election to the corporation and the indentures of apprentices. It lists the information derived from these three sources and groups them in nine categories. An attempt has also been made (Tables 12.2 and 12.3) to reduce yet further that information by ranking the occupations according to their "scores" in the previous rankings. The general result is to

suggest that the leather trades and the occupations concerned with clothing were the most predominant throughout the period 1561 to 1680, that food and drink trades grew in importance over the same period but that maritime and metalworking occupations declined.

Unfortunately the table can do no more than set out a very hazy order of priority. In the first place, each method of ranking has an in-built bias, by the nature of the sources. The apprenticeships emphasize those occupations which were capable of absorbing the greatest number of unskilled and semi-skilled artisans: that may account for the high place of metal crafts in 1641-1680 and certainly that accounts for the low place of agricultural occupations, since apprenticeship was not the usual mode of engaging farm hands. Some occupations gained no advantage from the freedom of the borough, which may explain why constructional occupations occupy a low place in all three lists derived from the memoranda of the admissions of freemen. There must also remain uncertainty about the comprehensiveness of the source materials' cover of trades: the numbers of apprenticeship indentures which survive, for example, fall off markedly during the seventeenth century; new freemen are not adequately recorded between c.1586 and 1606.

The lack of clear distinction of economic function among the freemen and tradesmen also poses difficulties of interpretation. All the sources are inadequate for deciding whether any particular occupation relied on wholesale or retail trade. Thus some tailoring and some shoemaking may have been retail and so distinct activities of the Clothing and Leather trade groups: but some tailors and some shoemakers may have been principally wholesalers, in which case they would be better placed under the classification of Mercantile occupations.

Moreover, it cannot be assumed that each man followed only one

trade, let alone any one method of trading. It has been seen (in Chapter 2) that some men followed one trade in the borough and another occupation elsewhere. They were also liable to double their functions within the one market. Thus butchers also maintained inns - to tide them over the periods of the year when flesh-eating was prohibited - and bakers were also often brewers, because the two trades began with the same materials and processes. But whilst those cases present no difficulties for classification (since they were all occupations within the Food and Drink category) there are other and more confused instances of mixed employment which suggest that any classification and ranking of Maldon occupations is unreliable as an index of economic change. Thus, John Dawes, a leading freeman of Maldon in the 1520's, was variously described in 1524 as a merchant adventurer, haberdasher and vintner.¹ Thomas Furnes, whose career has already been cited, traded both as wholesale vintner and as an innkeeper but also as a wool merchant.² William Eve in 1569 was a grocer but his consignment of goods unloaded at Maldon Hythe consisted of a very miscellaneous range of commodities:

dyestuffs, cotton, kersey cloth, three tons of iron,
49½ gallons of oil, alum, canvas, bay salt, baskets
of currants, raisins and "grocery".³

William Lowth described his occupations as "teaching of youthe and making of wrightinge betweene partie and partie" in 1591.⁴ An enquiry of 1608 on the stock of grain at Maldon also described the expected weekly output of bread and beer. In it four brewers are named: for two brewing

1. J.S. Brewer (ed.) Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII, vol.IV (1867) number 293.

2. R.H. Tawney and E. Power, Tudor Economic Documents, I (1924) pp. 195-6.

3. P.R.O., E.190/587/9 (1568).

4. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/33 f.94r.

was "there only mayntenance" but the third was also a glover and the fourth was also an innkeeper. This enquiry lists, too, a blacksmith, a bricklayer, a labourer and a shoemaker as regular bakers with a joint, weekly output reckoned to be about half that of the three full-time bakers of the town.¹ Ralph Breeder was always described as a haberdasher but in 1609 he bequeathed to his three servants

"all my grocerie, haberdashery wares, mercerie wares,
draperie wares and my shop wares"

including the contents of a "salt shop" which were in his great, leased house facing the Moot Hall and it has already been shown that he was also the possessor of farms and standing crops in the surrounding countryside. At the end of the 1608 enquiry on grain comes one who may stand as a type for all the men who used Maldon as a market and whose personal economy was a devious and ramshackle affair:

"Jonas Harrison bothe bake and brue butt we cannot learne
what; and he bothe kepethe an Inne and buyethe and sellethe
small wears and use suche like meanes for his maintenance."

He lay at one end of the social scale, Dawes, Breeder and Furnes at the other; each is representative of an unrestricted, opportunist, changeable economy in a transient social structure.

Despite these objections to basing a hierarchy of Maldon trades on the evidence available, it must be noted that the clothing and leather trades stand out clearly as the principal and most constant employers of labour and capital in the borough, in terms of the numbers of apprentices whom they employed, the number of freemen who were recruited from these occupational groups and also in terms of their proportion of the places in the corporation. Within these categories, too, four specific trades

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/423/10.

had the greatest number of members in the corporation: shoemaking and gloving; haberdashery and tailoring. It is not clear what proportion of their business was wholesale, how much of the shoemakers' and white tawyers' activities were confined to manufacturing, but it is noticeable that the sections of these two occupational groups which are most likely to have been concerned with the supply of materials and the marketing of finished goods - tanners and clothiers - formed only a minor group. There are no details available of the organisation and characteristics of either the Clothing or the Leather trades in Maldon yet it is quite clear that they, as much as any others, were under the influence of the mobility of population which prevented the establishment in Maldon of long-standing family businesses. The effects of that mobility can be seen in three examples drawn from families which followed Clothing and Leather trades in the borough during the period 1555 to 1660, whose histories can be traced in some detail from their wills and the memoranda of the admissions of freemen.

Occupational instability: evidence from the Moore, Welles and Maldon families

The history of each shows that even among the occupations which were among the most numerous and powerful in Maldon society transiency was the rule, governed by the expected factors of short-distance migration and Borough English. The Moores were shoemakers, the Welles began as glovers and the Maldon family were linendrapers and haberdashers. (The evidence for each family is collected in Tables 13, 14 and 15.) All three sprang from immigrants: Nicholas Moore I came from Plympton, Devonshire; Thomas Welles I from Little Totham (three to four miles from Maldon); and John Maldon I came from Chelmsford. By the third generation, too, all three families had dispersed themselves over the market district

of the borough and had ceased to maintain close association with the place. Thus nine descendants of Nicholas Moore I are known but only one - the youngest of his sons - was still working in the town from 1638, which was only 68 years after Nicholas Moore I became a freeman. (See Table 13, The Moore Family.) Similarly the Welles family appears to have maintained itself in the borough for only two generations, although the founder, Thomas Welles I had (like Nicholas Moore I) nine descendants. (See Table 14, The Welles Family.) Altogether the Moores lasted in the borough about 68 years; the Maldons, too, about 68 and the Welles about 66 years.

The dependence of families on recruitment of relations from outside the town to sustain their stake in the place is clearly illustrated by the Maldons - a family aptly named for this present purpose! - who existed in the borough from about 1578 until 1652. Thirteen of them are recorded as coming from or returning to the townships of Chelmsford, Writtle and Bradwell-juxta-Mare and an especially interesting feature of their family history is that many of them failed to establish a life-long residence in the town. One (Richard Maldon, free 1578) always lived thirteen miles away, at Writtle. Another (Thomas Maldon I) was born at Maldon but had moved to Chelmsford before he became a freeman. The original John Maldon I came into the town as a young man but left again when he was about 63 years old. Another three Maldons never claimed the freedom to which they were entitled by inheritance. The members of that branch of the family also had a relation (Henry Maldon, cheesemonger, of Bradwell-juxta-Mare) who, like them, moved into the town, lived there for a while (1617-1626), took his turn as a member of the corporation but finally moved off to Chelmsford. (See Table 15, The Maldon Family.)

In the case of each family the duration of their stay in the

borough depended on the early start in their careers made by the founder members. It did not depend on the number of generations. Thomas Welles was stated to be 23 years old when he became a freeman in January 1565. His subsequent years of residence (1565-1605) spanned two thirds of his family's known residential connections with the town. John Maldon I was only 22 years old when he took his first apprentice in 1584 (in 1594 he was stated to be 30 years old ^{1.}) and his life at Maldon (c.1584-1621) was again more than half the whole residential span of his family. Nicholas Moore's age at his admission to the freedom of the borough in 1560 cannot be calculated so accurately but, since he lived in the borough for at least 34 years (1560-1594), it is almost certain that he was less than 30 when he came into the town.

Similarly the richest of the town haberdashers, Alderman Breeder, was about 25 when he became a freeman in 1578; and he was a bailiff of the borough when he was about 39 years old. ^{2.} When John Soan became an Alderman (1605) he was only 31 years old. ^{3.} A freeman who was a contemporary of the Maldons, Welles and Moores, was Thomas Albert: he was about 30 when he became a head burgess of the corporation but he was only about 24 when he took John Pratt as an apprentice. ^{4.} John Pratt, in his turn, was only about 22 when he became a freeman in 1586.

In the case of the Moores even the longevity of their founders' career in the town would have been insufficient to maintain the family

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/178, article 15.

2. The inscription on Breeder's brass in All Saints' at Maldon stated that he died in March 1609 (NS) "about the years of his Age LVI". (Inscription now lost but recorded 1783 by John Pridden. Brand Collection, Ilford County Library.)

3. 62 at his death in 1636. (Gravestone in All Saints', Maldon.)

4. Apprenticed in 1580; possibly c.16 years old then.

business, for when Nicholas Moore I died c.1594, he left three sons in the town, of whom one (Edward Moore) was a glover but not a freeman until some 16 years later, whilst another son (Thomas Moore) was at least 34 years old in 1594 and there are no subsequent references to him in any corporation or freemen lists after that date. The youngest son, Nicholas Moore II, inherited by his father's will the shoemaking business as he would also have done by Borough English inheritance. But he must have been very young at his father's death, for he did not take up his freedom until 1621 - about 27 years after his father's decease - and the will entrusted the mother with the maintenance of the trade: the lease of their dwelling, the stock of tallow, oil, hides and shoes.

Borough English must often have entailed activity by the mother in that way. In 1559 a blacksmith gave his wife all his tools (which were "in the custody and occupation of Ralph Dod") and instructed her to keep an inventory and receive them back in four years' time for the use of their grandson, of whom she was also to have custody.¹ Jeremy Pledger, a joiner, entrusted his wife in 1613 with

"all manner engyns, tooles and instruments (which I have)
apperteyning to my trade."

until his younger son, Jeremiah, came of age.² Similarly the widow of John Welles in 1607 was given custody of the lands inherited by her son and she was also empowered to manage the leases and collect rents from a house bequeathed to her three daughters.³

Occupational instability: mobility and betterment

It would be rash to generalise on the evidence of only three

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1. E.R.O., D/AER 8/102 (John Rayner, 1559).
 2. E.R.O., D/ABW 30/188 (1613).
 3. E.R.O., D/ABW 41/94 (1607).

families, all living about the same time, except that both the constant necessity to recruit freemen and members of the corporation from immigrants, throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and also the prevalence of leaseholding among every section of the population suggest that the settlements of the Moores, Welles and Maldons do in fact represent the common pattern for the more prosperous of the borough's families.

A situation can be imagined wherein the economy of Maldon in the period of this study relied heavily on a constant influx of men - and in particular on the recruitment of young men - to maintain each occupational group. Conversely, the economy must therefore have been influenced by the constant movement out of the borough of skills and of capital and its dispersal in the market area and port district of Maldon, a general departure of elder sons from their parents' homes and trades and a reliance on female participation in management in order to ensure continuity from father to younger son of the family businesses.

Such a situation corresponds with the demographic pattern which has already been described. There is room, too, within it for many additional factors which could inhibit the establishment of a settled occupational structure of permanent native families. One of those forces militating against permanency was the social mobility of the more prosperous men. Improved fortunes can be discerned faintly as a motive for the emigration of the Welles family, who turned from glove making to husbandry (or, perhaps, from the practice of a craft to the supply of raw materials, hides and cattle, to the borough market). From 1607 the last two known males of the family were landowners; both were described as yeomen and the youngest of them (Christopher Welles) was a non-resident freeman with some land in Maldon - the Tenterfield - but also in Messing on the north-west side of Tiptree Heath, where he apparently lived.

(See Table 14.)

The career of Alderman Thomas Hutt and his family also illustrates the possible upward social movement among immigrants and their descendants. This man was born at Bocking, Essex, and when he was admitted a freeman of Maldon (by fee) in 1576 he was described as a shearman. From 1586 he was calling himself a woollendraper and a clothier - a movement right up the social scale of the textile occupations - and from 1596 he was five times a bailiff of the borough, with the consequent rank (since he was ten times a J.P.) of gentleman. His eldest son (William Hutt) succeeded him as a freeman in 1624 and was also a clothier and woollendraper but after 1630 the Hutt's disappear from the corporation records, apart from Thomas Hutt's nephew, John Hutt, who was Maldon born (1619), was educated at Pembroke College, Cambridge, and returned to the borough in 1656 as a Master of Arts to be appointed master of the grammar school.¹ (He clung to that schoolmastership until he was 74.²)

The same upward movement can be seen in the Robinson family of seventeenth century Maldon. Ruben Robinson I was an apothecary in the town from c.1627 until 1657.³ He had three sons, of whom the first became a butcher and that can be seen as an advancement above apothecary since not only were the food and drink occupations pre-eminent in the mid-seventeenth century in Maldon (see Table 12) but the term is likely to cover men who dealt in herds of cattle, who were graziers and whole-

1. Will of Thomas Hutt, 1623, WPL Maldon 18; Venn, Alumni Canta-

brigienses; E.R.O., D/B 3/1/20 "A certificate to the Schoolmaster of his former election thereunto."

2. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/410: 19th century copy of resignation by John Hutt of his rights in the grammar school, 1693.

3. First apprentice 1627; will, 1657, PCC 128 Ruthven.

salers, as well as retailers of meat in the market. The other two sons were put to college between 1642 and 1653: Henry Robinson became rector of Mayland (1655-1664) and then vicar of Langford (1664-1681); ^{1.} and Ruben Robinson II styled himself a gentleman in his will of 1665 and apparently lived in the appropriate style with his wife, three daughters, silver plate and library of books "as well printed as manuscript" in Maldon. His income was derived, at least in part, from houses in the town and estates at Bradwell and Tollesbury on either side of the Blackwater mouth. He may, possibly, have also practised as a doctor as a continuation of his father's career and he corresponded with his "Learned Friend Doctor Henry Power," a Doctor of Medicine of Christ's College, Cambridge, one of the two first members of the Royal Society (1663) and author of Experimental Philosophy in three books (1664). ^{2.}

During the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries educational expansion increased considerably the chances of social mobility and advancement. Already three Maldon boys have been cited who were sent to Cambridge University between 1637 and 1653 and there were others, too, who went to Cambridge, all sons of Maldon tradesmen or freemen. Four of the Maldon family went to the university (see Table 15) and subsequently moved into the ranks of the clergy and were dispersed about the Essex countryside in available benefices. Similarly John Pratt's

1. J. and J.A. Venn, Alumni Cantabrigienses : Henry Robinson matriculated at Jesus College, Cambridge in 1646 and graduated M.A. in 1653.

2. E.R.O., D/ABR 7/75, will of Ruben Robinson, gent. He was firstly admitted to Wadham College, Oxford, in 1643 but that was the Royalist capital and he moved to Jesus College, Cambridge, graduated M.A. in 1650 and was incorporated M.A. at Oxford in 1664. He left three of his best books to Dr Power (for whom see Peile, op. cit., I, p.477.)

eldest son, Elisha, went to Emmanuel College and then became a country clergyman; the elder son of John Nash, town clerk in c.1600, was educated at St John's College and Trinity Hall, Cambridge, from 1610-1615 and then became rector of Cold Norton in the Maldon market area; and the son of Alderman John Clark, a clothier, was sent to Merchant Tailors' School and then to Christ's College. He, too, became a clergyman and got himself the vicarage of Little Baddow near Maldon.^{1.}

The earliest of the Maldon boys who are known to have been Cambridge students are Robert Sharpe, a pensioner of Christ's College from 1567,^{2.} and John Shereman, admitted to Gonville and Caius College the same year,^{3.} but the others' university careers are coincident with the latter stages of the growth in numbers of English schools and of students at Oxford and Cambridge, between 1600 and 1650. That was also the time when the grammar school at Maldon received some formalisation by the establishment of a charitable trust from which a schoolmaster should be paid. The will of Ralph Breeder, made in 1609, bequeathed £300 to five Maldon men to buy lands and tenements so that

"the ferme rents and profitts thereof shalbe payd alwayes
to the mayntenance of a schoolemaster within the towne of
Maldon to teache a grammar schoole within the sayd towne..."

and after the decease of his five executors he named the bailiffs and aldermen of Maldon as the feofees.^{4.} In 1634 the will of Annastacy Wentworth established a second educational charity which was to provide 60 shillings annually for the education of three poor boys of All Saints'

1. Venn, Alumni Cantabrigienses for William, son of John Nash; and Peile, op. cit., I, p.265 for John Clark.

2. Peile, op. cit., I, 101.

3. Venn;

4. PGC 27 Dorset.

parish or either of the other two town parishes.¹ There had been a chantry grammar school in St Peter's church until 1547 but thereafter, until Breder's feoffees completed the purchase of land and houses in 1621,² education appears to have been under private enterprise. Sir John Bramston reported in his autobiography that his father was born in Maldon in 1577 and "see soone as he was capable he was putt to schoole in the free schoole at Maldon, from whence he removed to Jesus Colledge, Cambridge".³ That remark probably assumes the "free" status of the school but there were educational facilities in Maldon at that time. Two schoolmasters are known, both of whom were scriveners as well: in 1567 there was "Gudlet the scholemaster, the scrivener, which teacheth in the schoppe of John Gill"⁴ and from c.1581 until c.1609 there was William Lowth, who described himself as "schoolemaster" in his relation of his son's nuncupative will.⁵

Just before Breder's foundation was established by the purchase of lands, the school came into the charge of John Danes, a curate of Mundon. There are no formal archives of the school, nor many papers associated with it, so it would be rash to describe him as an enthusiastic schoolmaster or to speculate on his abilities; but he did produce plays (which may have been Greek or Latin comedies, as was the scholastic

1. C. Fell-Smith, 'Schools.' VCH Essex II, pp.516-518; Charity Commission Reports (one volume, 1819-1837).

2. P.R.O., E.301/19/31.

3. Sir John Bramston, Autobiography (c.1692), ed. P. Braybrooke, Camden Society (1845) p.5.

4. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/6 f.24r (June 1567).

5. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/33 f.94r and D/ABW 24/16 (1599). By Breder's will of 1609 Lowth received an annuity of £5.

fashion then)^{1.} and he did compose his own textbook, Paralipomena (see fig. 21), although it was only published in 1639, the year of his death. Moreover it was during his time at Maldon that the greatest number of boys were sent from there to Cambridge: nineteen of the twenty six students who are known to have been educated in the town had been taught by John Danes.

However, his lifetime in Maldon also coincided with a period of expansion in schools and in university places and there is also a migratory character about those Maldon scholars which may be due partly to the transient residence of their parents in the town but which can also be accounted for by the abundant provision for education in the market area of Maldon. Alderman Thomas Plume chose to have his son (the future Archdeacon of Rochester and founder of the Plumian Professorship of Astronomy at Cambridge) educated at Chelmsford. William Blunt of Maldon was first educated in the town but afterwards at Brentwood School (1621-1626) before proceeding to Christ's College. Besides the grammar schools at Maldon and Chelmsford there were the Grammar School of Colchester and the very flourishing school at Felsted. Christopher Harris of Shenfields in Margaretting and of Spencer's in Maldon, sent his only son to Colchester School, as did Aaron Maldon of Ramsden Belhouse, a descendant of the Maldons of Bradwell.^{2.} There were, too, besides these and Brentwood, smaller schools scattered all over the market area of the borough: at Braintree and at Bocking, Earls Colne, Wethersfield, Halstead, Great Yeldham, Billericay, Kelvedon, Cressing, Steeple Bumstead and Rayleigh;

1. MCA 1623: 2s 2d for wine and sugar given to Mr Daynes and other gentlemen when his scholars did last act a comedy in the grammar school.

2. J.H. Round (ed.) Register of Scholars admitted to Colchester School 1637-1740, pp.18, 27 and 98.

all of them places where Maldon men were liable to have kinsfolk, acquaintances or even residences.¹ The scholastic life of John Crackenthorpe illustrates best the possibility that the area contained wandering scholars besides transient families and occupations: the son of Dr Crackenthorpe, rector of Black Notley near Braintree, he was first taught at home, then at Maldon under John Danes, then at Cressing (near his home) and lastly at Braintree before going to Christ's College in 1627, aged eighteen.²

After the Restoration there appears to have been a general recession in the number of boys in grammar schools and at college, which is plainly shown for Maldon by the disappearance of its name from the admission registers of the colleges at Cambridge after c.1650 but in the century before, and especially from 1600, the market area of the borough was plentifully equipped with schools at which the sons of tradesmen and merchants, yeomen and gentlemen, could acquire the education which advanced them, socially, into the ranks of the clergy and the professions.

That was, on the other hand, a special aspect of social mobility and a far greater proportion of those sons of Maldon tradesmen who moved up into the landowning, yeomanry class of Essex society did so by their parents' purchase or inheritance of estates outside the borough which has already been described above in a discussion of the processes of short-distance migration. It was as if Maldon society had an inbuilt process for social, "vertical" mobility as well as geographical, "horizontal" mobility.

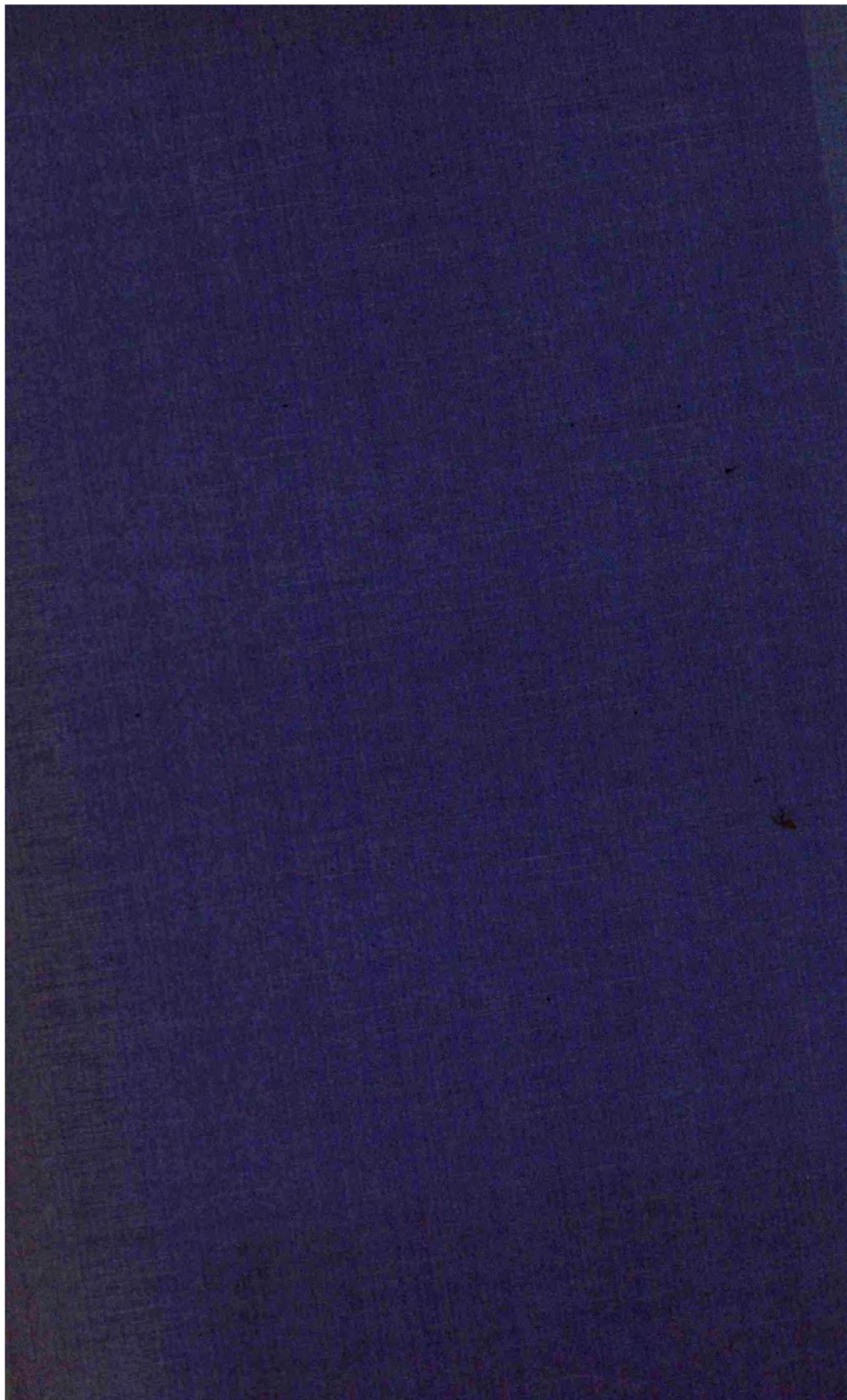
1. W.A.L. Vincent, The State and School Education 1640-1660 (1950), list of grammar schools in Appendix A, p.123.

2. Peile, op. cit. I, p.381.



21. Grammar Book of Maldon
 Grammar School, 1639

From the copy in the Plume Library, Maldon,
 which has an inscription on the fly leaf recording
 its gift by John Danes to Alderman Plume.



Indeed, every aspect of the occupational organisation of the borough appears to have operated within the context of short-distance mobility of the population, so tightly was the life and work of the borough knit with the economy and society of its surrounding countryside. It has not proved possible to single out any aspect of kinship, property-holding, craft or trade as the special sphere of Maldon among the other markets and townships of its widely spread market area. Even in education it offered no service which was not supplied elsewhere in the Maldon district.

* * * *

Loans and Litigation

But Maldon did provide one unique service which singled it out from the other markets in its urban field: a service which formed its special function. That was its Court of Record where, by the provision of the 1555 charter, the bailiffs and justices of the borough were empowered to hear pleas of debt with no limitation on the size of the sums impleaded. Already the suits in that court have been used to demonstrate the extent of the borough's market area. They also suggest that the specialist function of the borough in the marketing organisation of the locality was capitalist; that there it was possible to raise loans, to transfer credits and debts or to contract for supplies on the basis of future payments.¹ This facility thus channelled commercial activity

1. See above, Chapter 2 and figures 13, 14 and 16. A suit of 1599 illustrates the use of the court to transfer credit: "this acccon' groweth concerning dett of vij ^{li} xvij ^s owinge by Richard Amyes of Inworth to John Ryce, for which dett Robert Trome (at the request of the said Amyes) undertook and gave his promise and woorde to the said Jhon for payment thereof." (E.R.O., D/B 3/1/9, December 1599)

in the central, eastern and north-western parts of the county towards the market at Maldon. Since the agency of freemen was necessary for the commencement of suits in the court, that was a focus within their borough for the scattered, non-residential section of the freeburgesses, giving Maldon a share in the trade which was otherwise entirely dispersed about its port and market areas.

Almost a thousand cases remain on record, grouped in two periods - 1557-1566 and 1597-1628 - when the town clerks chose to record them systematically in registers, but the details given for each are of the baldest. Some (which have been disregarded for the present purpose) were clearly genuine pleas of debts; some were attempts by executors to clear up the business of estates; others were suits for damages in cases of assault. Those three types can be distinguished by their formulae in the memoranda of the court. The others, the majority of cases, were clearly registrations of temporary debts since on settlement they were cancelled by the payment of a 6d fine by the creditor (called a "withdraught of action"). It is to those that attention must be given.

In Tables 16.1 and 16.2 below the basic figures extracted from the lawsuits has been set out to show the range of debts or loans in mid - sixteenth and early seventeenth century Maldon. The lawsuits from which they are taken are early examples of that machinery of credit by which, in the period 1650-1714, gentry had money transferred from their country estates to London merchant bankers through "returners" in the Home County markets.¹ Yet they relate only to the transfer of capital within the east, central and north-central parts of Essex and they were not necessarily part of a wider scheme of exchange. Like the returns

1. Cf. M.G. Davies, "Country Gentry and Payments to London, 1650-1714," Economic History Review 2nd Series XXIV (1971) pp. 15-36.

made to the country gentry in London at the end of the seventeenth century, the debts impleaded at Maldon were all of a short-term nature and usually on a small scale. Most suits were cancelled within three months (although that remark must be hedged by the observation that some suits have no memorandum of the formal "withdraught") and it may be seen that, although sums of £200 or more were involved on occasions, the majority of debts (or credits) were for small amounts. The median of all debts in the 1557-1566 period is £3. For 1597-1628 it is no more than £4 and in both periods the annual averages were also low because the majority of debts were for sums of £1 - £2.

Ideally the annual totals of all the sums impleaded should indicate the velocity of exchange of money in Maldon - the greater the total the less money in circulation - and so the short-term character of the pleas could be a reflection of the availability of cash in that part of Essex and its steady rate of circulation in the Maldon market area. Even a plea of £1,000 filed by Robert Snape of Maldon in 1622 against John Seman of Great Yarmouth was withdrawn (and so, presumably, repaid) after only 13 days.

A corresponding feature of the pleas is that whilst the defendants and plaintiffs were numerous, very few were involved in more than one or two transactions each. Thus, Alderman Ralph Breeder, for all his wealth and diversity of business interests, can only be found in three cases between 1596 and 1600, with sums amounting to only £111 (including one of £100). Paul D'Ewes, a gentleman-resident of Maldon and a landowner in Essex and Suffolk,¹ was creditor at the same time in four transactions but to a total value of only £61. Alderman John Pratt

1. The father of Sir Symonds D'Ewes.

was a creditor in another four suits, with a total of only £106-16s-8d, of which one debt was for £100. The earlier series of pleas (1557-1566) provides some examples of men credited with larger numbers of sizeable sums - of whom Anthony Sparrow, a lawyer and estate manager, with six credits amounting to £623 (including one of £347) is an outstanding example - but, as in the later series, there is only a handful of such creditors. The prevalence of short-term, small-sized debts and the absence of a distinguishable class of "capitalists" with a controlling influence in the allotment of credit, indicates that the supply of capital must be added to the long list of economic functions of Maldon which were in fact dissipated across its market area: the transfer of capital was a function of the borough but its resources were dispersed.

Possibly the court of record had two distinct functions, firstly as a source of credit for transactions and bargains among Maldon residents and secondly as an agency for exchange between non-residents living often in widely separated villages. There is an observable difference between the two groups in the size of loans, especially in the second period and particularly in the years 1597-1605. (Outside that period the clerks were less scrupulous in stating the location of every person pleading or impleaded and, without a very long-term and possibly fruitless investigation of those persons' domiciles, the exact ratio of resident: outsider cannot be determined.) From 1557-1566 half the known cases were entirely between residents; half involved outsiders. From 1597-1605 two thirds of the pleas (or 65%) were between only Maldon men but whereas the majority of their debts (ie. 66% of their debts) involved sums of less than £6, the greater part of the debts involving outsiders were for sums upwards from £6 to £400. In some years, indeed, these debts, involving outsiders as either creditors or debtors, formed a very large proportion of the total sum impleaded - 97% in 1600, for example - but there is no possibility of taking these crude abstracts

and linking them to price indices for the period since, firstly, the exact number of loans made to and by outsiders is not known exactly and, secondly, the purpose of the debts is also unknown. A great many of the non-residents were yeomen and husbandmen and, although it is a clear possibility that their bargains one with another were concerned mostly with cattle dealing (more likely than grain in the eastern, marshland villages of Essex) there is no correlation between the annual percentages of outsiders' debts and price indices for livestock between 1597 and 1628.¹ The debts cannot solely have concerned cattle sales but must also have included deals in dairy produce, wood, cloth or made-up clothing and (possibly) building materials. Other factors, too, such as the plagues of 1603-1604 and 1625-1626, when travel in and out of the borough was restricted and when the courts were adjourned session after session, interfered with the normal flow of business but neither they, nor the known years of dearth or of good harvests appear to have had an influence which is reflected in the changes of debts impleaded, or the sizes of sums involved, because all is obscured by the composite nature of the available information.

For the borough itself the function of the Court of Record must have been invaluable as a means of attracting to the market commerce which would otherwise have gone elsewhere because of the amount of coastal shipping which used the wharves and creeks of the Port of Maldon or would have been drained off by the other markets at Chelmsford, Braintree, Colchester and Witham. Certainly textiles went to Colchester and Ipswich, whilst Maldon had no significant share in the export of cloth, but also the specialist marketing activity of Essex was in provisioning London with meat "on the hoof", dairy produce, firewood and building timber

1. Price indices in AgHEW pp. 858-860.

and for that Witham and Chelmsford had far better locations. Both those markets straddled the main road alongside the centre of Essex, in grain producing areas and on the route of the great herds of cattle driven from pasture to pasture down from East Anglia and in from the Essex marshes through them and on through Brentwood, Billericay and Romford to Smithfield. Maldon, however, was barred off from that main road by the gravelly hills to its west but it had the capacity to ensure, by a simple process of litigation, the security of bargains made both publicly in its market and privately in its inn yards. It is surely no coincidence that the amplification of the powers of its Court of Record by the 1555 charter was accompanied by the increasing size and diversification of its market place and by the increase in its services during the second half of the sixteenth century. The increase, too, of the number of litigants using the court by about 1600 and throughout a period of dearth and of a slump in the New Draperies during the 1620's has a corresponding topographical effect in the re-organisation and improvement of the market place facilities in 1620 and 1621.

Security was an essential asset of a viable Tudor or Stuart market place, where bargains had to be made in good faith and with a certainty that they would be honoured. Maldon especially traded in security. Besides its redoubtable array of the statutory instruments of justice - its officials and searchers, its courts of pie powder, petty sessions and admiralty courts, its customs, pillory, stocks, whipping post, ducking stool, cage, gaol and gallows - the borough had the less dramatic but more useful Court of Record, where creditor and debtor could fictitiously implead and appeal until their transaction was complete, then withdraw their action on payment of the mere fee of sixpence. By contrast, those who relied on the good faith of a travelling chapman or the bond drawn up by a scrivener might find themselves

defrauded, as happened to a Maldon clothier, Thomas Clark of Maldon in 1572, whose son went outside the borough courts and pawned 150 pieces of kersey cloth worth £300 to "one Ferrant, citezen and merchaunt scrivener of London" for an immediate loan of £150. The cloths were to be redeemed at twenty per cent interest within three months but when Clark's son made the deal he allowed the scrivener to draw up

"an absolute bill of sale and without anny condicions, for that the said Ferrant said yt he durst not medle uppon a condycionall bylle because of the Statute of usurye..."

and, of course, the cloth was lost, at half its market value.^{1.}

Within the framework of the Maldon Court of Record such fraud was less likely, the merchant that much more secure. Yet it will be appreciated that there were very strict limits to the practicable use of that Court. It could indeed assure a bargain but - as in the case of Thomas Clark - it could not necessarily provide the facilities of a pawn broker or of a modern bank. The availability of large sums of cash or of large and long term credit was uncertain. The case of the loans raised by the Harris family for the rebuilding of the Friars' has already been mentioned but the absence of similar cases of large-scale borrowing for house purchase or construction has also been noted and whereas the Harrises were able to provide sufficient security, the position of a speculator who tried to acquire capital for an uncertain venture was in danger. Thus, Thomas Petchie, a brewer and innkeeper and a head burgess of the corporation, overreached himself in January 1569, when he planned a brewing venture large enough to require the purchase of a hundred quarters of malt barley from a yeoman of Chafford Hundred on Thames-side. He persuaded an alderman to stand surety for him for the cost of the malt

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/33 f.58.

barley (100 marks).¹ But then he acquired the hops necessary for his venture by pre-empting a chance cargo brought in to the Hythe by a Flemish coaster, the Black George of Ostend. By pure bad luck his schemes went awry: he was negotiating his purchase of malt when a Spanish ship laden with bullion for the pay of the Duke of Alva's army in the Netherlands was seized at Plymouth - a famous international incident - early in December 1568. The Spanish governor of the Netherlands reciprocated by seizing English merchant goods in Flanders and then the English government replied by ordering the seizure of the goods of all King Philip of Spain's subjects in England. Just as the order for that was leaving Hampton Court by pursuivant for Maldon and other ports, Thomas Petchie engaged himself in the illicit pre-emption of hops but before he could get them off the Black George, it and its cargo were impounded by the bailiffs of the borough, pursuant to the order they had just received. His crime was revealed by his own protests to the common council.² The event ruined his career: just before January 1569 he had become a member of the corporation, his sons and his son-in-law were admitted as freemen, he owned property in the town and he had prospects of a lucrative brewing operation. Three months later he had been expelled from the corporation for his breach of customary law, he was unable to repay his surety, the hundred marks loaned for purchase of the barley malt and so, prosecuted for real debt when the fictitious plea in the Court of Record became a real plea of debt, he was forced to sell his four houses (including his own dwelling). A further debt in April 1569 to a wheelwright of Feering suggests that thereafter his career followed a long downward spiral of debts to outsiders, one set off against another in unending succession. The last reference to him is a prosecution for organising tennis games

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/6 f.68r.

2. Ibid. ff. 58 and 70r.

behind his inn during Sunday morning service time.^{1.}

Essentially the Maldon system of impleading debts only protected the creditor against bad faith - and did so by giving him a simply worded plea at the very commencement of his term of credit - but it was incapable of the sophistications of a banking system and it operated on the chance, short-term availability of credit, not on a fund of money under borough management. There was thus no possibility that it could counteract the serious dangers and difficulties encountered by any merchant or tradesmen in the Maldon market and port area, "land rats and water rats, I mean pirates," who, as in Antonio's case in the Merchant of Venice, brought about the downfall of one of the leading men of Maldon in the early 1530's: John Dawes, who died in Beeleigh Abbey in 1533. A merchant adventurer of London and of Maldon, a purveyor to the English armies in France in 1524, a bailiff of the borough, it was related of him by his son-in-law, thirty-nine years later, that this John Dawes

"made no testament nor executors &c for that he had no goodes or cattells wherof he might declare his last will, by reason they were peryshed and lost before his deathe, as well by shipwrackes on the sea as by many other his greate losses and casualties and mysadventures, very well knowne

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1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/6 f.64r (21st Jan. 1569): memorandum of his deposition. Ibid. f.66r for his sale of four houses, March 12th, 1569. Ibid. f.65v for action of Thomas Coker against Thomas Petchie for a debt of 100 marks, March 15th 1569. Ibid. f.73v. for John Wright of Feering, wheelwright, v. Petchie for £40 - 10s - 0d. Ibid. f.203v: presentment of Thomas Petchie 1577 who "had maintained and kept the game ad pilam palinac'am vulgarly called 'Tennyce plaie.'"

and approved by dyvers auntyent and credyble personnes yet lyving in Mauldon. By force of which lossys the said John Dawes, being greatly indebted, was dreven by meare necessitye for the advoyding of imprysonment of his person for the execucion of his debts so farre as his goodes extended (sic). And then he became a pryveleged person and sanctuarie man in the sanctuarie of the late monasterie of Beelye Abbey at Mauldon and so dyed the day and year above mencyoned." ^{1.}

Piracy was a hindrance to the coastal communications on which Maldon particularly relied and throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries warfare was also endemic in the waters off the Essex coast. Like Chaucer's Merchant, John Dawes and many other Maldon traders

"wolde the see were kept for anything

Betwixte Middleburgh and Orewell"

for the waters off the Thames Estuary were rarely free of danger from pirates or enemy. There recur in the records reminders of the front-line position of Maldon and the Essex coast: the orders for soldiers to embark there for France or the Low Countries in 1543, 1544 and 1551; an Imperial ship lying off Maldon in 1550 on the pretext of searching for pirates whilst agents from it came into the town to prepare an escape route for Princess Mary Tudor, who was in exile from her brother's court at Woodham Walter Hall; a Fleming ("Direc' Vansior") captured at Maldon bearing letters addressed to the Duke of Alva in 1569; the preparations for the Armada; Goodman Rayner sent to Tollesbury in 1626

"to enquire towching the Rumor of a fleete uppon our coastes,"

1. E.R.O. D/B 3/1/33 ff.62v-63r : deposition of a jury on behalf of the Exchequer. Other biographical details from Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII, vol. IV, edited by J.S. Brewer (1867), number 293; and from E.R.O. D/B 3/1/2, passim.

a Dutch pinnace loaded with armaments brought into the Hythe "upon suspicion to be a Dunkirker" in 1629; the beacons which were lit whilst the population of Rochford Hundred fled inland and the county militia stood to arms when a peaceful fisherman anchored his vessel off Wakering and was mistaken for a Dunkirk pirate in 1628; the battles against the Dutch off the North Foreland, in the Medway, off the Naze and at Southwold. ^{1.}

These events and scares could do worse than cause the loss of a ship. They could delay sailings, wreck covenanted arrangements, clear the seas of coasters for indefinite periods. Hazards of that sort were as dangerous to the farmer who proposed to sell his corn and butter or cheese in London, and to the merchant freeman who had assumed a delivery date for the arrival of a cargo at the Hythe, as were the Goodwin Sands and the other shoals upon which ships could run aground in storms at sea. As Colchester merchants told the Privy Council when Dunkirk pirates were at large in 1628,

"none dare adventure to see with any merchandizes either into foreigne parts or from Port to Port within this kingdome to the great ympoverishing both of this Town and the country adjoining" ^{2.}

and a London committee reported that the menace of these pirates led to the current high prices of corn and dairy produce, because of the lack of shipping.

1. For 1543 and 1544: Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the
Reign of Henry VIII, ed. J.S. Brewer (1862-1910) vols. XVIII and XIX.
 For 1550 and 1551: H.F.M. Prescott, Mary Tudor (1939) pp.130-143; and
Acts of the Privy Council of England, ed. J.R. Dasent (1890-1907),
 vol. III p.227. For 1569: E.R.O., D/B 3/1/6. M.C.A. 1626. For 1629:
 D/B 3/1/19 f.269v. For 1628: CSPD, Sept. 7th 1628.
2. Felix Hull, op. cit. p.201. T.S. Willan, English Coasting Trade,
1600-1750 (Manchester University Press, 1938), pp.25-26.

The facilities for short-term credit at Maldon were incapable of coping with factors as destructive as these. The Hythe handled regular shipments of bulk commodities such as iron ore and (in particular) coal from Tynemouth and some of the pleas of debt may refer to deals by Maldon merchants with countrymen for cartloads of those commodities, or for chalk and fuller's earth and lime which were stocked in heaps beside the quays. But essentially they were short-term credits for simple transactions which took no account of the orders placed for fresh consignments from Northumberland or Kent; they were not parts of an elaborate marketing organisation operating on the long-term transfer of assets and credits. Thus Maldon lacked the capacity for growth through economic change. It had no core of capitalist merchant families and it could not provide the resources of capital necessary for long-term ventures or for overcoming the hindrances to commerce posed by warfare, wreck and piracy. And whilst a newcomer could find there the short-term credit which would tide him over the initial difficulties of setting up his own trade, he could not find the kind of capital necessary to project and establish that trade on a large scale.

* * * *

What the ascertainable facts about the pleas for debts have to say about Maldon trade and occupations confirms the instability of its economy and the predominant influence of the surrounding area. Marketing was the essential function of the place; marketing by middlemen from the villages within a wide circuit of the town as well as by resident merchants, yeomen and tradesmen. The borough had no single speciality (although wild fowl was obviously more readily obtainable there than in other Essex markets ^{1.}), it had no staple commodity with which to maintain

1. Wild fowl were its speciality among southern markets in the list provided by Professor A. Everitt, *AgHEW* p. 591.

its market. Instead it relied on a multiplicity of bargains and agreements made there by men of all kinds of occupations, who came in from a wide area because there they could make reasonably safe transactions. One of the declared objects of the charter of incorporation granted in 1554 was to aid an ancient borough which was in decay and of all the grants made in that and the improved charter of 1555, the provision that its Court of Record might hear pleas involving money transactions with no limit on the amounts involved was the most valuable for sustaining the commercial place of Maldon among the markets of Essex. Thereafter, as has been shown, marketing flourished - haphazardly, informally, limited to short-term ventures, heavily reliant on the participation of outsiders both as creditors and as debtors, but nevertheless constant - even in times of commercial depression outside Maldon. The town had no craft guilds to control its trade; in the custumal (through which the freeburgesses might control marketing and secure their own advantage) most of the entries about trading were only a local codification of statutory regulations. The absence of controls was to the advantage of the borough for, just as the invertebrate is better equipped for mere survival than the crustacean, so the economy of Maldon could ride successive economic changes. It had no sizeable and permanent proletariat; it did not admit as residents men or women who had no occupations; it consequently had no noticeable problem of poverty. Its inhabitants were not even bound to keep to one trade and some of them did not even stick to one market. So long as they kept to modest ventures they could ride out depressions and take immediate advantage of rising markets, secured by their borough's facility to guarantee their bargaining.

In 1554, the year when Maldon became a corporate borough by royal charter, an act was made by parliament to remedy the decay of corporate

towns.¹ It sought to halt the "utter destruccion ruine and decaye" which contemporaries supposed was happening to urban communities and which they attributed to the dispersal of crafts - particularly linen and woollen drapery, haberdashery, mercery and grocery - in the countryside. It is evident that this general analysis of the problem applied with particular force at Maldon and it seems probable that the amplification of the ancient Court of Record, to hear pleas of any amount, was due to the initiative of the freeburgesses who, in 1555, negotiated the revision of their first charter of incorporation. If that is the case, the function of the court as a registry for short-term credits can be seen as a very successful local measure to secure the commercial status of the borough and the result of an acute appraisal of the role which Maldon was best able to fill in the economy of the county of Essex.

Above all, the modes of tenure of property, the prevalence of leaseholding, the short-term activities of families in the town, the tendency for dispersal of shipping trade, of educational facilities, of title to housing, the reliance on participation by outsiders in marketing and in the supply of capital, the rapid passage of persons, goods and cash through Maldon in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, all demonstrate the dominant influence of the social structure of east, central and north-central Essex on both the economic organisation and the population of Tudor and Stuart Maldon.

1. Statutes of the Realm, 1 and 2 Philip and Mary, c.7.

Chapter 5

THE GOVERNMENT OF MALDON

Two authorities successively governed the borough during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the transfer taking place in 1554 and 1555 by two charters of incorporation (the second revising and amplifying the first).

The earlier, un-incorporate government, was by an assembly of eighteen Wardmen annually elected by and from the freeburgesses. Two Bailiffs were at the same time annually chosen to preside over the borough and its common council of Wardmen. Before 1403 there was only one such Bailiff, the second being added after a charter of the Bishop of London demised to the freeburgesses all his demesne perquisites and jurisdiction in Maldon for an annual farm rent.

As the Bishops of London were lords of one half of the borough, the Darcy family lords of the other half, and as the second Bailiff was added to the common council after 1403, it is clear that the two joint presidents of the common council represented the lordship which the Bishop and the Darcies possessed. The borough had also obtained, however, charters from the kings of England, confirmations of the rights of the freeburgesses of the Crown which appear to have been granted first by King Henry I. The Bailiffs also possessed Admiralty jurisdiction in the borough and the River Blackwater which was confirmed to them in 1525. The position of the borough was thus obscured by the divided lordship, as well as by the existence of other manorial jurisdictions within the same area.¹

1. See Appendix 2 for a discussion of the manorial descent of Maldon.

Over the first half of the sixteenth century those complexities resolved themselves by chance, so that by 1560 the Crown had regained the lordship of both parts of the old Manor of Great Maldon (in which the borough was technically sited) from the Darcy family and the Bishop of London.¹ From at least 1560 the burgesses were all tenants of the Crown so far as their franchise was concerned. That change was appropriately signalled by the charters of incorporation in 1554 and 1555, by which the borough became the sole civil authority except for the Lord lieutenant and the Privy Council. Annually this was commemorated in the payment to the Crown of both the old ferm rents which had previously gone to the Darcies and the bishops of London.

Continuity of government, 1500-1688

In practice the old form of borough administration which Maldon inherited from the early fifteenth century was an effective institution with, apparently, a comprehensive jurisdiction over all the inhabitants, even if it did act by the assertion of rights for which it had no specific grant by charters. The outward change which occurred in 1554 was that the old common council was replaced by a corporation composed of the two Bailiffs, six Aldermen (from whose number the Bailiffs were chosen) and eighteen Head Burgesses or headboroughs. In fact there was only a formal difference between the methods of administration and the scope of government before and after incorporation.

Continuity can be traced first by the composition of the charters of 1554 and 1555. Much of their material was taken from the instruments of government granted to the freeburgesses between c.1134 and 1525. That was the case with most Tudor corporations. Nine other English boroughs

1. See Appendix 2 for a discussion of the manorial descent of Maldon.

received charters of incorporation in 1554 and 1555^{1.} and each was a special case, composed after individual negotiations and including privileges or exemptions which each borough had acquired during the preceding four centuries. Hence the "extravagant diversity ... bewildering variety" which has been observed in Thomas Madox' great survey, Firma Burgi, of English boroughs in 1726.^{2.} At Maldon the 1555 charter pulled in privileges and duties from three distinct sources. The first was a confirmation in 1171 by Henry II of a charter granted to the royal burghage tenants by Henry I, from which came a stipulation in 1554 and 1555 that the borough should provide a ship for the royal service (if required) for forty days in any year. The boundaries of the borough laid down in the 1171 charter were also repeated in the incorporation. The second source was the grant and confirmation of Admiralty jurisdiction of 1525.^{3.}

The third source was the custumal of the borough, which had been codified in 1444^{4.} and which the new corporation took the opportunity to revise in 1555.^{5.} Several of the grants specifically made by the 1555 charter were in fact confirmations of existing practice: the gaol,

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1. Aylesbury, Buckingham, Banbury, Hertford, Leominster, Lichfield, Sudbury, Tavistock, Warwick. (Grants to Sheffield and Worcester were also made but of a different type.)
 2. J.H. Plumb, Sir Robert Walpole (1956) I, p.50.
 3. 1554 and 1555 charters, E.R.O., D/B 3/13/10 and 11. The 1171 charter has long been lost but its text is copied into the White Book of Maldon (E.R.O., D/B 3/1/3) and is in Calendar of Charter Rolls, II, pp.352-353. The 1525 confirmation of Admiralty jurisdiction is E.R.O., D/B 3/13/9, with a copy in D/B 3/1/3.
 4. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/1 f.32 onwards.
 5. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/3 f.33 onwards.

gallows, pillory and tumbril which it granted were already possessed by the borough, for the chamberlains had paid for the construction of a "jebitt" and a pillory in 1551¹. and the leases of butchers' shops on the ground floor of the Moot Hall in the 1540's refer to the Lobhole Prison which was situated there.² The two bailiffs and two aldermen of the incorporation (in practice the two retiring bailiffs) were constituted Justices of the Peace during their year of office but that was only a formalisation of the Securitas Pacis claimed in the 1444 custumal, which declared that the bailiffs had powers of gaol delivery and the right to imprison or amerce all brawlers, vagabonds ("byboures"), sturdy rogues ("stastrykeres"), night-walkers and eaves-droppers. By establishing four senior members of the corporation as Justices, the 1555 charter amplified previous practice and set it within the normal framework of the Commission of the Peace but in practice the scope and function of the ruling group was not substantially altered.

Another clause in the 1555 charter granted that the bailiffs might hear and determine all manner of pleas in their court,

"as well reall and mixt, of what manner of landes or tenementes soever, being within the Bourrough, libertye and precinote...
... as personall, of what summes soever, or of what kinde or sort soever they be...
... (and) to hold all such pleas ... in the court aforesaide by pleyntes before the same Baylieffes to be leavied and affirmed in the same corte ..." ³.

1. MCA 1550/51.

2. See above, figure 7.

3. 1555 translation of the charter in the White Book, E.R.O., D/B 3/1/3 ff.17r - 25v.

Only pleas which involved the Crown or its ministers, or cases purely between non-freemen were excepted. Otherwise this was a sweeping grant of competence to the borough courts. Yet in practice they had been dealing with all manner of pleas throughout the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries: the series of court rolls which extend into the first few years of the sixteenth century show that the bailiffs had fully exercised these powers to keep the peace, to discipline their freemen and to organise the affairs of their townsmen. They heard pleas of debt in their court and they provided a full range of officials to administer their market, which argues an extensive jurisdiction over trade.¹

What the 1555 charter did was to strengthen the authority of the bailiffs, to replace assertion by specific grant. It also amplified their powers at the same time. Thus, the early court rolls provide examples of pleas of debt being prosecuted at Maldon: the new charter specified that there was no ceiling to the amount of debt in any plea which the borough court might hear. Similarly it only certified the claim of the 1444 custumal that no freeman might sue another outside the borough's courts until he had proceeded there "to the ende of his ple" and had received licence from the bailiffs to appeal further. Any defaulter was liable to twelve days imprisonment or "a grete fyne" or loss of his freedom.

Administratively the continuity of government from one authority to another in Maldon was signified by the continued use of the pre-1554 seals. It was a mark of incorporation that the seal represented the action

1. Andrew Clark, 'Maldon Civil Courts, 1402' Essex Review XVI (1907), pp.126-133. He remarks how the rolls of 1402-1504 show "Maldon court exercising to the full the powers which were confirmed to it in 1555."

of all members as a single corporate body: at Maldon they continued to use the old seal, whose earliest known impression is attached to a 1370 transcript of a royal charter ¹. and a new seal was not made until 1682. The bailiffs also preserved their splendid early sixteenth century admiralty seal. ².

The Borough Comes of Age

Yet despite the continuity and although the old borough had clearly been a very competent and powerful organisation, the act of incorporation represented the final acquisition by the governing body of real stability and security. It guaranteed a perpetual succession to the grants made by earlier lords to less clearly identifiable groups of men. Corporate responsibility replaced individual liability before the law. The reputation of the borough courts was strengthened by the formal delegation of judicial and coercive powers to the bailiffs and aldermen, especially by their automatic inclusion in the Commission of the Peace. They were also enabled, by an exemption from mortmain, to acquire lands and corporate revenues from rents to a greater extent than before.

A certain ebullience can also be detected in the attitude of the burgesses and aldermen in the years immediately following their incorporation. They acquired from the heralds a coat of arms. ³. A register of chartulary called the White Book was begun and, when the new charter of 1555 was enrolled therein, the Town Clerk wrote above the text the title

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/13/5. See also W. Gurney Benham, 'Essex Borough Arms' (Colchester, 1916) pp.13-14 for a description of the seals.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

Magna Charta de Maldon.

It is followed by a translation to which marginal notes were added as an index to the privileges and powers with which Queen Mary and King Philip had endowed their borough. ^{1.}

But the most ambitious project of the corporation at that time was the acquisition of the home of the noble Darcy family in Maldon for the new Moot Hall in 1576. It was a significant action which still perpetuates in bricks and mortar the organic changes in the jurisdictional structure of Maldon over the years 1540 to 1576, and the final ascendancy of the free burgesses in their own town. This building, which is still in use as the Moot Hall, is a large brick tower standing at one end of the Tudor market place. It was probably the only part completed of a mansion house which the Darcy family planned to build in the late fifteenth century close to their great family chantry in All Saints' church, one three-storeyed and turretted angle-tower of an East Anglian style house of the later Middle Ages. It was (and is) very inconvenient for the uses to which the corporation intended to put it: its principal chambers were too small for an assembly of more than fifty persons; the only access to the upper floors was by a narrow spiral stair. But the Darcies had been lords of one part of the borough until 1550 and the ferm rent of 53s 4d which the incorporate borough paid to the Crown had once been payable to them. Darcy's Tower was the visible part of their manor in Maldon and of it John Norden wrote in 1594 that

"the town did belong to the Darcies, who in the middle of
the town had a fair house, whereof there remaineth at this

1. MCA 1555: 3s 4d paid to Cockrell for writing the copy of the charter. This may refer to the copy and the translation in the White Book (E.R.O., D/B 3/1/3.)

day a tower of brick called Darcy's Tower..."¹.

Sir Thomas Darcy of Chiche abandoned it in 1550, when it was included in an exchange of lands with the Crown as a preliminary move in his acquisition of St Osyth's Abbey on the north-east Essex coast for a mansion². and then the tower passed from hand to hand, apparently unused, until in 1575 it was acquired by Alderman Thomas Eve of Maldon, who sold it in 1576 to his fellow burgesses for £55. (Alderman Eve had paid only £24 the year before!)³.

So, when the corporation converted the Darcy Tower into its new Moot Hall it was celebrating its newly acquired power. In many other towns in England new guild halls or market houses were being constructed around this time but the corporation chose to convert the derelict tower of an unfinished mansion rather than rebuild their existing premises. Their action was appropriate to their own conception of their power and authority as the direct local representatives of the Crown who now entered into the room of Sir Thomas Darcy of Chiche, Baron Darcy and sometime Lord Chamberlain of England.

Recruitment of the Common Council

Despite changes in their title and in the form of their composition, the members of the common council of the borough can be regarded as a continuous body, wielding effectively the same powers in 1500 as in 1688. Both before and after incorporation the elections of officials and of the council were held at a general assembly of all the freemen (including

1. John Norden, Description of Essex (1594), p.22.

2. See Appendix II, Manors in Maldon.

3. MCA 1575: landcheap of 30s. for a tower called Darcy's which Thomas Eve bought of Henry Baker of Gt Warley. MCA 1576, payment of £25 and £30 to Thomas Eve for the tower by the corporation.

non-resident ones) on the first Monday following January 6th (the Feast of the Epiphany) and it is noteworthy that every place and every office was subject to election at that court; and that the occasion was the major assembly of the year for the freeburgesses. Even though some places might be filled by the previous occupants, they were nevertheless technically open to contest.

The elections are recorded for most years - for all but seventeen between 1500 and 1688 - so that a close study of the composition of the common council is possible. Very often they referred to themselves as The Company, by which short title both the Bailiffs and Wardmen of 1500 to 1554 and the Bailiffs, Aldermen and Head Burgesses of the corporation may conveniently be called here. It will be obvious what is the point of studying the composition of The Company of Maldon: here is a continuous body, possessed of practically identical authority over two hundred years, presiding over a community whose transiency means that in the continuity of borough powers there can be found the only unchanging feature of the community. Either The Company represents a kernel of permanent personnel, or else its members, too, were so transient that the government of the borough escaped that oligarchic pattern which characterised almost every town in England.

At first the evidence of the annual elections of The Company appears to suggest that it was not at all an oligarchic body. It is apparent that few men remained long in the governing body of the town: the average sixteenth century member spent only seven years or seven and a half years in the common council; the average member between 1600 and 1688 only occupied a place for eleven years. (See Table 17, Composition of The Company, part 2 (a) Number of Places and Duration of Membership.) Moreover, membership was not necessarily for a continuous period; in many cases wardmen (of the pre-1554 borough), head burgesses

and aldermen of the corporation) held their places for brief but recurrent sessions, so it was more usual for men to be recruited to make up vacancies caused by temporary retirement than to replace deceased members. The position will appear more clearly from the following break-down of the elections of the decade 1560-1569:

48 men occupied corporation places in those 10 years,
of whom ...

- 5 filled vacancies caused by death;
- 8 held office throughout the ten years;
- 11 held office for 6, 7, 8 or 9 years;
- 21 were members for less than 6 years; and
- 3 held office sporadically.

It was usual for aldermen to take a year off occasionally and the customary sequence of the official life ran thus: alderman, bailiff, justice of the peace, alderman, year off, alderman ... and so on. Thus nine aldermen, at least, were required to maintain the necessary yearly establishment of two bailiffs, two J.P.'s, 4 aldermen and one "off duty" alderman. Among the 18 head burgesses (who formed the rank and file of the corporation) there was considerable movement in and out of The Company, reflecting the pattern of migration among the town's population at large. Thus, Humphrey Hastler was a head burgess in 1568 and again in 1570; the next year he was reported at the Court of Election to have left the town (decessit extra ville) but he had returned by 1575 when he again took office. For a second example, take the career of Richard Josua, comprising 16 years in office - an above-average amount - which was split into a first spell of 12 years (1557-1568 inclusive); then, after 18 years out of The Company, he returned for two more years (1586 and 1587); and a last pair of years, 1590 and 1591. Thomas Bowden was permitted to stand down for one year in 1565 (disoneratur pro hoc anno);

Richard Welles served two years, was "pardoned" the next, then served for another six years. Sometimes those years "out of office" would have been granted to suit the requirements of the men's business affairs, as when William Poulter, mariner, was elected bailiff in 1557 but excused since he was engaged in his affairs overseas.^{1.}

It follows that in any given year the common council of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was based on far more than twenty four contributory families. A little exercise in political arithmetic can show how broadly based the "ruling group" (if that be allowed as a true description of it) really was. As in the example of the 1560's, about 40 to 50 families were involved in the composition of the common council in any decade. In a population of 1,100, and assuming an average of $4\frac{1}{2}$ persons per household, there was a ratio of 50 common councillors to 250 householders. That is, about one householder in every five had a place in the corporation for at least one year in any decade.^{2.}

The same calculation must also be made using figures for freemen only, since they alone were eligible for membership. Usually there were about 100 freemen resident in any years from c.1560 (though there were only 68 in 1523^{3.}) so that, given a requirement of 50 members of the ruling group in a decade, about one half of the freemen in every ten-year period were for a while members of the common council.

In fact recruitment for the council of the borough spread so wide a net over the borough's male population that the wardmen of the early

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/5 f.1v.

2. For assumptions on the population size, see Appendix 1 below.

3. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/2. A list of freemen owing suit of court in 1523 is written on the last folio of that volume.

sixteenth century or the corporation of the late sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries cannot justifiably be regarded as the ruling group. Maldon would have held a unique position indeed among the towns of Tudor and Stuart England had the reality of power within that community rested with so great a proportion of the townsmen as one fifth of all males or one in every two freemen. It is certain that an Assembly of the House (as the corporation memoranda sometimes styled formal deliberations) was a gathering more truly representative of the freeman body than might have been expected for a borough of those times. Yet whereas membership of the common council was widely recruited, so were the occasions for an individual's participation in the actual process of making decisions thinly spread. In fact the ruling group was tucked away within that common council, and far more restrictive in membership.

Usually the rate of changeover of places among the existing members of the council was such that only one or two new men had to be recruited in any year. That is to be seen in Table 17.1 (listing the number of new members in each year for which Courts of Election results have survived). There were certainly a few years of crisis, notably 1586, when nine new members were required, and two years when there were great changes, 1662 and 1687-1688,¹ but for most years a placid recruitment rate of 1 or 2 men was maintained. Once in, they only occupied places for 7 to 11 years and most of them could expect to remain a wardman (before 1554) or a head burgess (after incorporation). At all times

1. In 1662 there were 17 new members needed to replace dissenters and commonwealth men ousted after the Corporation Act. (E.R.O., D/B 3/1/20 f.283.) In 1687-1688 the composition of the corporation was altered four times by royal proclamations. (E.R.O., D/B 3/1/21 ff. 251v - 282.)

there existed in the borough a reserve or "pool" of temporarily dis-burdened members of the common council, from which replacements could be drawn for deceased or emigrant councilmen. Hence the low normal rate of annual recruitment. Hence too the existence of an inner ruling group, for the existence of a pool of council members meant a lack of continuity in the service of many head burgesses and consequently their inexperience.

An inspection of the corporation lists reveals, however, the existence of inner groups of men who had kept their places and occupied places in the corporation for much longer periods. Thirty seven can be picked out who were especially distinguished by their length of service, like Thomas Plume who had one year as a head burgess and 27 as an alderman between 1624 and 1653, finally asking his Company for permission to retire on the grounds of extreme age and ill-health. The careers of these long-serving members (each occupying places for more than 20 years) are listed in Table 17.2 (c) below. The impact of those same men on the structure of government is further shown by Table 17.2 (b), for they formed no more than 9% of the total personnel of the corporation between 1567 and 1692, yet they occupied 977 of all the places available at that time, which means that they, a tiny section of the members indeed, occupied exactly one third of all the places within the years which it has been possible to survey.

They were the men on whom the effective government of the borough really depended, for they had the experience necessary for making decisions, the knowledge of precedents, a familiarity with court procedures, an awareness of probable future contingencies of the borough administration. Power was concentrated in their places because they were the longest-serving members, not necessarily because they were the oldest, nor

necessarily because they were the most discreet and able men, prescribed by the 1444 custumal, (although long-service would normally mean that the bailiffs possessed all of those qualities).

But their initiative in the government of the borough was not acquired and kept only by long service. Custom and procedure ensured that they had that initiative, so long as they were members of, or associated closely with the aldermanic group. For effectively the government of the borough was at the will of the two annual bailiffs. Of course that was never specifically stated, for in theory it was not so. It was a principle that the whole assembly acted in concert. They called themselves, especially after 1555, The Company. It was a matter of common belief, an accepted ideal, that they should be at all times a fellowship acting in a spirit of brotherly accord. There were no opposition parties within borough governing assemblies, there was no concept of minority dissent. A fifteenth century ordinance which the corporation inherited from the older borough forbade any member of the common council to

"make stryffe or debate among his felawshippe in tyme
of counsell of comounyng for the commone well (ie. weal)"

and ordered the ejection of any wardman who was "contrary to the common will."¹ There were, in fact, serious differences of opinion among The Company in the 1590's (which are described later in this study) and when the bailiffs of 1598 attempted to compose those differences one of their measures was to re-establish the feasts which customarily concluded the Quarter Sessions of the borough and which they ordered all the corporation to attend

1. 1444 custumal, para. 17.

"for a means of the better enjoyinge and contynuyinge of commone Amytie and brotherlie kyndnes and unytie in and with the whole Compaynie, societie, bodey of this house, one membre with another." ^{1.}

So, although a tiny but long-serving aldermanic group held the whip hand in practice, and although real authority stemmed from the commission of the peace which was vested in the bailiffs and the two aldermen who had been bailiffs in the preceding year, it is still convenient to refer to the whole assembly as the government, just as contemporaries did. But when it is remembered that the power of The Company was actually wielded by a very few men, the extent of the bailiffs' authority will be seen to have been very considerable.

The Discipline of The Company

An examination of the custumals of the borough, the memoranda of its assemblies and the oaths prescribed for its various grades of officers and inhabitants provide administrative evidence of the control exercised by the two annual bailiffs of Maldon. Already one of the oaths has been cited - that for new decenners ^{2.} - in which each new adult male inhabitant swore obedience to the bailiffs: not to the common council or to the justices but to the bailiffs alone. Within the common council, before and after incorporation, the same subjection to the bailiffs applied. In some corporations the common council men were termed Assistants and that is exactly what the head burgesses of Maldon were. In the French meaning of the word they did "assist" at assemblies of The Company simply by being present. When the corporation was created a

1. E.R.O., D/DQs 133/1.

2. Above, Chapter 2.

regulation was introduced (in the 1555 custumal) for its internal discipline by which the initiation of policy and discussion was reserved entirely to the bailiffs, who were always "to show first their opinion", to speak first. Hence it was out of order for anyone else to propose a motion for discussion.¹ Furthermore, the promulgation of decisions was entirely the business of the bailiffs, since it was customary for the ordinances of the common council to be given as orders of the Justices of the Peace at the Quarter Sessions of the borough. There the subordinate position of the head burgesses was formally demonstrated when, in their capacity as the jury of the Sessions, they presented the decisions of the council to the Bench in the form of a petition. Then, in their capacity as justices, the bailiffs and aldermen issued an order that the request be observed and allowed. From at least 1555 every ordinance which was formally declared to have emanated from the common council was first moved by the bailiffs, then accepted by the bailiffs in the Quarter Sessions and finally made lawful by a declaration from the mouths of the bailiffs.

Any notion of taking the initiative and making policy which a new member of The Company might have entertained when he first donned his gown and made his way along the High Street to the Moot Hall would have been squashed when he took his oath of office. In fact it was not even a real oath. He was merely required to assent to a charge delivered to him orally by the Town Clerk, which instructed him in each point of his duties. He did not even make his assent as an individual, for the text of the charge is clearly written for group delivery:

"Ye shall well and truly occupy the office of hed burgess
of this Boroughe for the yere followynge and truly and duly

1. 1555 custumal, para. 18.

be here at every quarter corte and ther and then trew and due Inquisicion make with youre Companye of all suche poynts and articles as shall be shewed unto you on the Quenes behalve and for the gode rule of the Boroughe; and a gode and trew verdyte thereof make and present, accordynge to the Custome of the Boroughe. So god help yew."

That is all. No reference to participation in council, only of attendance at courts. The creation of head burgesses amounted to little more than the empanelling of a jury to serve for a year.

Aldermen fared better but even for them the charge made plain their subordination to the bailiffs:

"Yew shall well and trewlie exercise and execute thoffice and rome of one of the Aldermen ... and be allwayes present and redy to ayde and assiste the baylieffes and your bretherne Aldermen and Common Councell to the best of your wytt, coonyng and powre for the better mayntenance and execucion of her majesties Lawes, statutes and customes within the said Towne and Free Boorowe ... And shall be present at all the generall and quarter sesseons of her majesties peace within the same ... and at all other tyme and tymes when yew shalbe called and summoned Lawfullie unto the Mootehall of the said Burrow, then and there to conferre with the Baylieffes and Common Councell for and about the Common Welthe of the towne, yf yew be not letted or hyndered to come to the Sesseon or Cowncell by sicknes, impotencye or other such reasonable cause. So god help yewe."

Two texts of the Oaths of Officers exist - c.1555 and c.1604- and only in the earlier one are there any worded personally, as true

oaths, except that the bailiffs' oath was always personal. In 1555 personal oaths were provided for decenners and freemen but even they became charges in the 1604 text. The head burgesses and the aldermen received group charges in both texts. But when the bailiffs, the consuls of the borough for the year, took office, each swore a personal oath which proclaimed him the advocatus of the sovereign:

"I shall well and truly governe and mayntene the towne,
the Franchise, the Right, the profitez and the welfare
of the same ... I shall well and truly keepe the pease of
our soveraigne Lady the Quene ..."¹.

Nowhere is the authority of the bailiffs more clearly expressed than in an Exhortation which was to be delivered by the Serjeant at the commencement of every Court of Admiralty of the borough. (The bailiffs exercised admiralty jurisdiction over the Blackwater and the haven of Maldon and their authority had been confirmed in 1528 and was specified in the 1555 charter of incorporation.) At first they held court on the Town Quay but from 1576, when the new Moot Hall was opened, they moved the court indoors and it was apparently then that this homily was composed, in which the bailiffs are plainly equated with the Lord Chief Justice and the Lord High Admiral of England. In their alternative role as Admiral the two Bailiffs entered their court in procession, preceded by their Sergeant, who bore an oar before them instead of the mace, and when they had taken their place he summoned with three "Oyes" all who

"had to do before her Majesties Bayliffes and Admyrallies
within the liberties" of the borough of Maldon.

1. Texts of the oaths of head burgesses, aldermen and bailiffs from the White Book, E.R.O., D/B 3/1/3.

Then the Order for Keeping the Court required him to address the jury with a homily which was to be based on this argument:

"That the Queenes Majestie, the hedde of the Common Welthe and from whom all Justice as from the Originall fountayne flowethe and procedethe, hath noe lesse care to provyde by thexecucion of her Lawes and Justice for the peace of her Subjectes and for the defense and safftie of their lyves and goodes upon the Seas within her domynions and territoryes then as upon the Lande.

"And be that her Majestie hath as well a Lord Cheffe Justice (to wette the L. Admyrallie of England) for thexecucion of her Lawes upon the seas as upon the Land; and within thes Libertie her highnes Bayliffes are the Admiralles and have the power of the Admiraltie within the libertye, as by the expresse wordes of the Charter, in as ample and large Mannor and to all intentes and purposes as hath the high Admirall of England.

"And even as the L. Admyrall, the L. Chieff Justice or any other Justices or Comyssioners in Causes Marytime or Cyvell, or upon the Lande, cannott execute Justice without a Judiciall scyence - I meane, without Informacion of good and vertuous Men of the Venewes and nere places where thinquisicion is to be taken - so also the Admiralles here cannot doe or Reforme as they shold and oughte without your Informations and presentmentes, which are the speciall Chosen men selected ..." ^{1.}

1. "Thordre of keeping of the Court of thadmiraltie", E.R.O., D/B
3/1/4 ff. 8r - 9v.

Borough finance: a mirror of magistracy

The concentration of power and decision-making in the aldermanic group and especially in the office of the bailiffs is also clearly to be seen in the financial system of the borough, for where charters set out the theory of government the finances record meticulously the practical limits and actual practice of the local authority. Professor Mac Caffrey has remarked that "nowhere else are the purposes of the civic oligarchy more succinctly summed up than in the dry columns of pounds, shillings and pence of the receivers' rolls"¹. and that applies as much to the accounts of the two chamberlains who superintended the money of the borough of Maldon as to the receiver of the city of Exeter.

Their comprehensiveness is an immediate recommendation for examining the structure of Maldon government through them. All the borough income and all its expenditure - in every year between 1500 and 1688 - is included in the chamberlains' accounts. This is itself an important feature of the financial system, for not every borough had so straightforward and comprehensive a system. At Cambridge separate accounts were prepared for audit by the Treasurer and the Mayor: each had his own funds to administer.² The earliest compotus of the Holy Trinity Guild of Saffron Walden (which in fact governed that town and was later recreated as its corporation) is a composite affair which includes the accounts rendered by a bailiff of the market and a treasurer of the guild but presented by the two chamberlains of the fraternity and incorporating a receipt for the plate and "stock" as well as for current sums of money.³ Some towns had only the simplest financial structure.

1. W.T. MacCaffrey, Exeter, 1540-1640 (Harvard, 1958) p.54.

2. W.M. Palmer, Cambridge Borough Documents, I, p.xxx.

3. E.R.O., T/A 401/2 (Saffron Walden accounts, 1545-1546).

At Chippenham the accounts are reported to survive for 1559-1604 merely "on scraps of paper, usually indented" and the revenues of Calne consisted only of rents for the grazing of beasts and occasional sales of timber from the commonlands, unsystematically recorded. (But then, Calne was not incorporated until 1689; it was only a tithing of a rural hundred, in whose court its officials were elected and its leet business was done; and similarly Chippenham had no jurisdiction of its own.)¹.

Like the charters the various accounting systems of boroughs reflect the peculiarities which were a result of their organic growth. At Maldon by 1500 all payments from the borough chest were made through the two annual chamberlains. They also received and accounted for all the receipts of the borough: all fines, amercements, rents, customary dues and all the receipts of the other officers of the borough.

Yet the chamberlains had no initiative in the financial policies of Maldon. The income was from sources authorised by custom and the payments they made were at the command of the bailiffs. That is explicit in every line of the expenditure section of every account. Payments (other than minor, recurrent items like the annual ferm rents and the fees of officials) were all warranted for the purposes of audit with the standard phrase, "At Mr Bailiffs' commandment."

Moreover, the chamberlains were normally excluded from the inner ring of The Company. Whereas the aldermen, J.P.'s and bailiffs normally officiated in a frequently recurring rota, the chamberlains were chosen annually from among the body of the head burgesses, along with the ale tasters, the market searchers and other minor officers. There was also

1. A.W. Mabbes (ed.), Guild Stewards' Book of Calne, Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society, Records Series, VII (Devizes 1953); and List of Wiltshire Borough Records, *ibid.*, V, (1951).

an apparent disregard of previous experience. Perhaps the job was so onerous and time-consuming that nobody wanted it. At any rate few of the chamberlains held the office sufficiently frequently to develop any expertise in financial administration. (An exception must be made for 1626-1631, when Nicholas Moore and Ruben Robinson were elected each year as chamberlains.) On the other hand, the bailiffs' office rotated among a very small circle of men who acquired far more insight concerning the management of local affairs than the ordinary members of the common council ever did.

The Maldon financial arrangements can be contrasted with the systems operating in some other places. At Bristol there was only one chamberlain and he was a permanent, salaried official, working full-time for the city council. He had his own seal and he managed all the financial business of Bristol corporation in his own way, not only within the boundaries of the city but also at London, in the shire courts and at the courts of Westminster. Another great city, Exeter, had a receiver who only served for one year at a time and was a member of the common council (the chamberlain of Bristol was not) and he was personally responsible for all the charges against the corporation.¹ These being two of the greater communities of England, with expenditures from four to seven times greater than the "discharge" of Maldon, a more bureaucratic system would be expected. Suitably for its rank among urban communities, Maldon had a simpler system: the bailiffs gave the orders, The Company assented and the chamberlains paid out, "at Mr. Bailiffs' commandment."

Two other aspects of the financial system indicate the hold of

1. D.M. Liveck, City Chamberlains' Accounts, (Bristol Record Society, XXIV, 1966) pp.xii-xiv. MacCaffrey, op. cit., p.63.

the bailiffs over the government of the borough. One is the absence of separate accounts for special officers of the corporation; the other is that officials were not held responsible for the receipts or the "discharges" of their offices. The chamberlains were presenting a single account which absorbed all finances of, for example, the water bailiff or the sergeant-at-mace. That was so by 1500, though not long before that separate accounts had been rendered by some fifteenth century officials. The chamberlains were in existence by 1461, though there were none in 1384 (when the extant borough records begin) and the account had been rendered in 1422 by the two bailiffs. A separate comptus for the Collector of the Assize and Fenn Rents exists for 1413 but from 1461 at the latest that task was incorporated in the accounts of the chamberlains. By 1500 one other anomaly, an account which a decree of 1484 ordered to be presented at the Court of Election by the two Wardens of the Alms-houses, had been absorbed into the duties of the chamberlains. The wardens' posts also disappeared.) No official at Maldon in the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries was ever personally accountable for the perquisites of his office. When extensive repairs to the Fullbridge were undertaken in 1535 one of the chamberlains had oversight of the work but, though he personally managed the finances, collected the extra funds and paid the workmen, at the Michaelmas audit of 1535 both chamberlains were set down as jointly responsible. There is an account of 1516 rendered by only one chamberlain - "expenses done upon the bridge called Fullbridge by Andrew Ellyott"¹ - but it resembles the 1535 repair account just mentioned and it is not a full statement of the borough's complete income and expenditure for that year. Clearly it too was intended to be incorporated in a jointly-presented annual account.

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/2 f.84v.

Since an ordinance of 1423 not only required that each bailiff should make a separate account for his time in office but also that they should settle any debts owing to the borough from their own pockets (or be distrained for settlement of the account),¹ the system in operation by and after 1500 represents a fifteenth century re-arrangement of the accounting system of Maldon. The chamberlains had taken over all the administration of money but responsibility for financial policy remained the business of the bailiffs. In many towns, too, it was customary for officials to be accountable for their term of office, as in the case of the bailiffs of Maldon according to the 1423 ordinance, so that chamberlains had to make good any deficit shown in the audit of their annual accounts. For that reason, as has often been remarked by historians of late medieval urban life, the chamberlains or treasurers of towns were chosen from the wealthier freemen. At Maldon they were taken from the rank-and-file of the common council. Nor were they required to make good any deficits at the end of their year in office. That is not laid down in the custumals and in none of the account rolls is there anything to show that the auditors sought to make a balance by distraining from the outgoing chamberlains. In 1591 they did pay out £2-11s-4¹/₂d "more than they hadd rece^eved" but it was quickly paid back to them by their successors.² When there was a deficit at the end of the year the

1. Order of January 11th 1423: "quod singuli ballivi facient finalem compotum pro tempore suo terminari cum anno, et videant quod omnia debita in fine compoti sunt soluta singulis annis aut in denariis aut in districtionibus ... ut in libro anno regis Henrici IV sexti 1404/05) quod computantes non recedunt a curia ... donec predictum debitum et ejus arreragia in forma predicta pleneri' sunt solut' vel distringant' ..."

(E.R.O., D/B 3/1/2 f.2)

2. MCA 1592.

accountants simply declared that such was the state of their account, wrote it on the foot of their roll and presented it for audit, where it was apparently always accepted. At the beginning of the sixteenth century it had been customary for the outgoing chamberlains to be given a formal note of quittance at the Court of Election, clearing them of any responsibility. Even then it was a single quittance for both men and after 1521 the practice ceased, so that for most of the period under review the chamberlains, both jointly and individually, were not held responsible for the management of borough finance.

The Aldermen and Bailiffs

There is an even more curious feature of Maldon finance. One of the essential qualifications of a Tudor or Stuart magistrate was, assuredly, his wealth, his capacity to bear the "port" of high office and authority in his community. It was consequently expected of mayors, bailiffs or aldermen that they should dip into their own pockets and supplement corporate funds to cover the costs of events during their terms of office; munificent gifts for public benefit were also expected of them; and charitable donations, feasts and entertainments. In terms of hours spent in courts and meetings, in terms of expense, only the rich could afford to take office in a borough. Yet the chamberlains' accounts show that the bailiffs and aldermen of Maldon paid all the expense of their terms of office from the borough chest. Apart from buying a gown to wear at their assemblies "for the honour of the town" as the custumal ordered (a once - or twice-only expense) and a contribution towards the Quarter Sessions dinners at a scale graduated according to rank,¹ no official of The Company had any need to spend his own money on the borough's

1. Bailiffs, 12d each; Aldermen, 12d each; Head Burgesses, 8d each.

(1555 custumal, para. 85.)

behalf. Admittedly they were a little sparing on some costs: where other towns gave "rewards" of 20s to 30s to companies of touring actors the bailiffs of Maldon ordered their chamberlains to pay only about 5 shillings in the reign of Queen Elizabeth I and from 10 to 15 shillings after 1600; but in 1635 they cut down their reward to 10 shillings "to players that called themselves children of his majesty's Revellers," gave them a final 6s 8d "not to shewe their playes in this towne" and thereafter forbade actors to play in the town.¹ But when the borough had its own "native" play (which appears to have been about the life of John the Baptist) in the 1540's they had paid out lavishly for the productions (from the borough funds). In 1540 they had provided spectators of two performances with "mete, drynke and brede on the Saterdaye ... fleshe, drynke and brede on the Sondag", 144 gallons of beer and 1500 badges or "lyveries" with a "thousand pynnes."²

Similarly the borough chest paid for the wine and sugar, meals, lodging and "horsemeat" with which the bailiffs entertained visiting preachers and for the gatherings of local clergy at Combinations during the 1570's and the 1630's.³ Commissioners who came either to collect the lay subsidy or to sit on enquiries for the Privy Council were entertained also, at the borough expense, by the bailiffs and the town

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1. F.E. Halliday, A Shakespearean Companion (1964) under Provincial Companies and Towns, and MCA, especially 1635.
 2. MCA 1539/40, "Receyts of the gatherynge at the playe ther on Relyke Sondag" of which a description and transcript is printed in W.A. Mepham, 'Municipal Drama at Maldon,' Essex Review LV (1946) pp.169-175 and LVI (1947) pp.34-41. (He also prints and considers other references to the drama in the town.)
 3. MCA 1570 and 1573; MCA 1633-1638.

clerks. Charitable gifts came from the same source, as did the bailiffs' New Year and other gifts for local gentry and magnates such as Lord Rich at Rochford Hall, Lord D'Arcy at St Osyth's, the Mildmays of Graces, the Sammes of Langford and the Harrises of the Friars' at Maldon. When the Earl of Sussex sent a buck from his park at Woodham Walter, the bailiffs' tip was paid by the chamberlains to the earl's servant who brought it. So did they pay even for boxing up and sending Blackwater sturgeon to the royal court.

Yet it is certain the bailiffs of Maldon always came from the wealthiest men of the town. During the early sixteenth century that can be checked from the lay subsidy returns of 1524 and 1525. The three bailiffs to be found in the 1524 assessment - Thomas Wyberough, John Dawes and Richard Beynham - were in the top 6% of the borough's taxpayers and the first two of them had the exceptionally high assessments of £260 and £215 per annum in goods. Six bailiffs of the period 1540-1550 are to be found in the 1544 subsidy and five of them were in the top 12% of the borough taxpayers. Later subsidy assessments provide no trustworthy guide to the fortunes of the corporation's members but three assessments for local rates are of some use. One of 1566, to raise a fund for repairing bridges, ¹ gives by far the highest assessments to the two bailiffs and one of the aldermen. (Of £5, against the next highest assessments of £3-10s-0d and £3-7s-0d for, respectively, head burgess and an alderman.) Another assessment of 1569, to buy armour for the borough, ² also rates the bailiffs and aldermen most highly. The best rate (or scot-and-lot) for indicating the wealth of the aldermen is of

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/33 ff.1-2.

2. Ibid., f.68r.

1619, for the repair of the Fullbridge, causeway and wharves, ^{1.} an analysis of which is provided in Table 18. The rate was levied on as many people in the town, freemen or not, as possible and consequently the assessments were not levelled down as much as in more selective scots-and-lots; the amounts charged run in much finer gradations. All the aldermen were in the top 13% of the ratable population and they formed the richer part, too, of that top section. Though there was overlapping (since some wealthy resident gentry and yeomen were not in the corporation) the assessments for rates indicate this general pattern: the aldermen formed the wealthiest section of the town's inhabitants, with a per capita rating of £9.06; then the generality of the head burgesses, with a rating of £3.07 a head; and thirdly the rest, freemen, commonalty and some "foreigners", who formed 81% of the assessed inhabitants but had a per capita rating of only £0.8.

It is obvious too, from other sources that many of the aldermen were rich - Ralph Breeder, for example, Thomas Furnes and Thomas Plume (whose careers have already been mentioned) or Michael Cooper, glazier, an alderman from 1685 to 1687, who left £400 in cash bequests, eight houses, two pastures and silverware at his death in 1688.^{2.} It was also the practice of the corporation to co-opt gentlemen such as the Vernons who were members of the corporation between 1556 and 1687 thus:

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| (a) Richard Vernon, | J.P. 1556 and 1557; |
| (b) William Vernon Esq., | Alderman 1567-1611; |
| (c) William Vernon Esq., | Alderman, 1676-1684, and 1688-90 |

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/19 ff. 85v-87v.

2. E.R.O., D/ABR 12/207 (1688). The silverware consisted of a bowl, a porringer, two spoons, a "right up silver cup" and a silver-footed cup.

none of them ever being a mere head burgess. Other gentry, co-opted in the late sixteenth century to fill aldermen's places have already been listed (p.113) and there were others, particularly after 1660. One of them was Anthony Gratiano, "a strainger borne (a Gretian)",¹ and a cousin and close acquaintance of the third William Vernon of Little Beeleigh, to whom Gratiano bequeathed a silver tankard engraved with the Vernon coat of arms. Possibly the Vernons' apparent involvement with the Levant trade (suggested by the tombstone one of them brought back to All Saints' church from the ruins of ancient Smyrna) may be a reason for this strange name among the corporation lists, where he was a head burgess 1666-1670, an alderman from 1671 until his death in 1675 and twice a bailiff (1672 and part of 1674 to replace a deceased bailiff). His will indicates that he too was a wealthy man by the standard of a country market town; it includes bequests totalling £607 cash and 25 broad gold pieces. He was also a man of cultivated leisure, possessing books both foreign and English, music books and an organ.² Between 1675 and 1688 the aldermen of the corporation also included Anthony Bramston (second son of the High Steward, Sir John Bramston) and a baronet, Sir William Wiseman. Both were offered immediate places as aldermen but their presence on the corporation at that date indicates the intrusion of county and national political movements, whereas the earlier gentry appear to represent local opinion that the aldermen's places on the corporation were best filled by real gentry.

So the arrangement, current from 1500 right through the period of this study, of paying the running expenses of office from corporate funds is a very curious feature of the Maldon system. The man who became

1. Sir John Bramston, Autobiography, p.376.

2. PCC 75 Dycer (Anthony Gratiano, gentleman, 1675).

a bailiff can be assumed to have been well able to bear the cost from his own pocket, as much as did the magistrates of neighbouring boroughs. Possibly, however, it is a reminder that even this tiny ruling group at Maldon was impermanent and expected to be so. For although they held office longer than the ordinary head burgesses, the aldermen did not form a permanent group and their length of experience only appears considerable in comparison with the short, broken-up service of the majority of the corporation. Moreover, just as the longevity of the Moore, Welles and Maldon family businesses has been shown to be a result of the early start made by their founder members in the town, so was the length of an aldermanic term of office dependent on an early start: John Maldon as a head burgess at 26 (1590) and as a bailiff at 38 (1602); Ralph Breeder as a head burgess at 33 (1586) and as an alderman at 39.

Now it is also true that only a few of the aldermen in any decade could claim very long experience, so that some were young and others were new to their duties and responsibilities. This provides an explanation for the apparent paradox that they were able to pay for the costs of office but were not expected to do so. For in any year the experienced aldermen were few in number (and some of them were likely to be "resting") and, since the initiative lay with the two annual bailiffs and, to some extent perhaps, with their assistant J.P.'s, bailiffs of the previous year, there must frequently have been situations in which one bailiff had considerable experience and the other very little. But their authority was exercised jointly and so it is likely that the older men would always be the true makers of decisions and would have the final word in any discussion. Sometimes both bailiffs were new to their work, so the advice, warnings, predictions of a senior alderman would again carry great weight. Table 17.4 shows how few the experienced aldermen were (by counts of their lengths of service taken at five-yearly intervals) so that in

1585, for example, only one of the aldermen, Mr William Vernon, had been in office for more than ten years and only two had been in office for five years; the rest of them - five out of eight - were young in office, three of them being elected that year. In such a case Mr Vernon's authority, his opportunities to direct the incumbent bailiffs and justices when he was not actually exercising their office himself, was clearly considerable. Of course, the situation varied from year to year: five aldermen had at least ten years' experience each in the 1575 and in the 1630 corporations; none had more than nine years in that of 1670. Generally, however, the table shows that there were usually only two or three aldermen who could claim any special length of service.

From the 37 long-serving members listed in Table 17.2 (c) it is possible to work down to an essential handful of men who can be claimed to be the real rulers of Maldon, the power within the ruling, aldermanic group. The existence of such a minority is necessary to explain why the bailiffs' expenses were all paid by the borough chest, because their authority, over and above what was theirs' by right when they were bailiffs, came from the inexperience and the youthfulness of their colleagues. Ralph Breeder was well-off when he died in 1609 but possibly he was less able to bear the costs of magistracy when he was first a bailiff in his 39th year. Similarly with other aldermen. The town's population made young or early middle-aged magistrates always a likelihood; it also increased the influence of the few elderly aldermen but they were likely to find their advice on borough government opposed if it brought financial difficulty to the actual bailiffs. Moreover, since their authority was jointly exercised, an expenditure of public money was much more practicable for the bailiffs than attempting to spend private money at equal rates.

Who, then, were the aldermen who may have been the really powerful

men in the borough? One criterion must be length of service but that on its own is insufficient, firstly because there would still be too many if a selection were made on that basis alone, and secondly there were some men who remained in the common council for great lengths of time but appear to have avoided becoming bailiffs or aldermen. A second criterion must be that they were men of some form of social pre-eminence, whose opinion would be respected at any time. Altogether six can be chosen but there were periods, in the 1590's and from about 1648 until some five or six years after the Restoration, when the corporation does not seem to have had any clear leaders. All six were accounted gentlemen (two were also armigerous); all were certainly wealthy; two were additionally members of Parliament for the borough; and five of them gave more than twenty-three years of service, each, to the borough. They were:

Thomas Wyborough (c.1500-c.1530)

John Church (c.1533-1558) and Robert Gaywood (1543-58)

William Vernon (c.1565-1611)

John Soan (1605-1630)

and Thomas Plume (c.1630-1653).

From 1500 to 1530 Wyborough was the outstanding personality, though possibly matched by the merchant adventurer, vintner, haberdasher and military purveyor John Dawes. Wyborough, however, was bailiff 14 out of a possible 28 times (three years' elections of that period are unknown), whereas Dawes only held office five times. Wyborough was also M.P. for the borough in 1531 and 1532 and the wealthiest man in the 1524 lay subsidy return, assessed at £260 in goods against Dawes' £215. Towards the end of Wyborough's life, when Dawes went bankrupt, one more man might be considered an especially influential person in the common council - the Cornishman Richard Beynham who was a bailiff six times between 1522 and 1529. He was not, however, so wealthy as Wyborough

(being assessed at £40 in goods in 1524 and 1525) and by the time he died in 1537¹ the leadership of the borough clearly belonged to an immigrant from Braintree, Mr John Church of the Blue Boar, farmer of the Earl of Oxford's lands in Maldon and a manager of the temporalities of Beeleigh Abbey before and after its dissolution. He was bailiff at least eight times between 1533 and 1558 and it was during his time in the common council that the incorporation of the borough and the subsequent revision of its charter (1554 and 1555) was achieved. Robert Gaywood, the farmer of Little Maldon, was closely associated with him from 1543 to 1558 and the pair were nominated as the first bailiffs of the incorporation in 1555. They also appear to have been closely associated in their family lives: Gaywood's will of 1559 has an obscure clause stating that £10 was to be paid to Thomasin Tirrell, daughter of Edmund Tirrell, on the day of her marriage if Gaywood's son "may obtaine to marry one of the daughters of Edmund Tirrell esquier and will not so doe"; and it turns out that Gaywood's son John did not marry any of the three daughters and co-heiresses of Edmund Tyrell of Beeches in Rawreth (Essex) but that John Church's son did.²

Between 1557 and 1566 the founding fathers of the incorporation died out. Two men stand out clearly as their successors, Thomas Eve and William Vernon, who dominated the corporation over the decade 1570-1580 and with whom the new sense of the dignity of the borough is to be specially associated. Eve negotiated the purchase of Darcy's Tower to be the new Moot Hall, 1575-1576 and there were only two years in the

1. Will proved April 1537, E.R.O., D/AER 43/6.

2. Will of Robert Gaywood, gentleman, one of the bailiffs of Maldon, proved December 1559, PCC 2 Mellershe; and, sub Tyrell 1558, in W. Metcalfe (ed.), Visitations of Essex.

decade when neither of them was a bailiff or a J.P. Curiously enough both men were the subjects of elaborate court cases in 1568 which were precedent prosecutions on matters concerning the election of bailiffs and the duty of freemen to implead each other first in their own borough court. On a first reading Eve and Vernon appear to be the victims but their subsequent careers suggest that they were willing victims. Thomas Eve was chosen as a bailiff at the 1568 Court of Election. He refused to take office and the full range of penalties for the offence of such refusal was visited upon him: he was imprisoned in the borough Lob Hole; he was fined £10 - a huge sum - and he was deprived of his freedom of the borough. Soon after that William Vernon impleaded a fellow freeman in the court of the Bailiff of Dengie Hundred (by driving the freeman's cattle off his own land, onto which they had strayed, into a pound which lay within the jurisdiction of the Hundred Bailiff) and again the drama of the borough court was played out in full: Vernon was degraded from his place on the aldermanic bench; then he was expelled from the Commission of the Peace; then from his place as a head burgess; then from the body of the freemen. The process was as solemn and systematic as the degradation of a clerk from holy orders and when it was complete the court further ordered that he should be imprisoned four days in the Lob Hole gaol under the old Moot Hall. None of this actually came to pass but Vernon only escaped these punishments when The Company had been presented with pleas on his behalf from the Recorder and from two peers of the realm (no less) - Lord Darcy of Chiche and Lord Rich - and only after a third peer, the Earl of Sussex, had offered arbitration. The case was over in one day and he was still an alderman at the end of it.¹ Similarly, Eve did not really lose his freedom for a year and he was chosen

1. Eve's case: and Vernon's are in E.R.O., D/B 3/1/6 ff. 41v and 50r.

as a bailiff the following year (1569) but replaced by Vernon. Both cases have an element of charade about them; they were full-dress enactments for the sake of precedent and as a warning to other freemen and, perhaps, also as a demonstration of the dignity, liberty and power of the new corporate borough.

For the next ten years the two victims (or self-immolators?) had their finger in every borough pie but of the two William Vernon seems to have been the more powerful. He was a gentleman, descended from a Derbyshire knight of the fourteenth century (as he claimed and his children claimed in the heralds' Visitations of 1612 and 1634) and he was certainly very wealthy. Moreover his influence lasted far longer than Eve's, for he was an alderman of the borough until his death in 1611. In 1588 he was also elected one of the members of parliament for the borough, for the session which lasted from November 1588 until March 1589. His election is one of the few of which any correspondence has survived, although only in the shape of one rough, draft reply to an unnamed nobleman who had written to the bailiffs requesting that they should elect Mr John Butler and Mr Edward Lewkenor as M.P.'s. In reply the bailiffs said that,

"haveinge some consultacion amongst our selves, yt was then thought verie requysite that for some necessarie causes for the good of our poore towne (to longe now by letter to truble your L. withall to declare) that some fytt person of thenhabitantes within the said Borrowe (and to be taken out of the socyetie of our Company) should be elected to supplie the place of one of the said Burgesses ..." ¹.

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/205/33: draft letter dated 7th October, 1588.

Neither the identity of the nobleman nor the "necessarie causes" are known but both the man and the event are almost certainly puritan affairs. Both Mr Butler and Mr Lewkenor had served for Maldon in the previous parliament (1586-1587) and Lewkenor had been one of its M.P.'s the previous time (1584-1585); they had supported the cause of the vicar of All Saints' in Maldon, George Gifford, and possibly William Vernon was chosen to go with John Butler to Westminster in order to champion Gifford's cause since he had been deprived of his benefice and, despite re-nomination by the patron of the living, the bishop of London had inducted a man loyal to the existing laws ecclesiastical.¹ At any rate Vernon's election indicates his authoritative position among the aldermen of the borough in the 1580's.

Towards the end of his life, in the 1590's and the first ten years of the seventeenth century, it is possible that Vernon's influence remained predominant. No other clear leader can be detected by the limited means at our disposal, for although five vigorous bailiffs appear - Ralph Breeder, John Pratt and his son Jeremy, Thomas Hutt (who had been a member of The Company since 1582 as a head burgess and was ten years an alderman) and John Soan - they were young men in the 1590's and Soan was only 31 when he was elected an alderman in 1605.² However, in the 1620's the guiding voice in the corporation would seem to have been Soan's, for he had altogether 27 years as an alderman between 1605 and 1636, including seven years as a bailiff. This "pious and religious service to his generation" is inscribed on his monument in All Saints' church.

1. Gifford's case is discussed below, Chapter 6.

2. Calculated from evidence on his monument's inscription, All Saints' church, Maldon.

One man stands out clearly in the period 1625 to 1653 as the "Father" of the ever-changing corporation. He is Thomas Plume, immigrant from Great Yeldham and Christ's College, Cambridge, two years a head burgess, 27 years an alderman through the 1630's, the Civil War and the early years of the Commonwealth. In 1627 he became a bailiff and held that office altogether six times until old age and infirmity led him to resign in 1653. After that the position is obscured by political disturbances. Possibly John Steevens, a gentleman of coat armour and 20 years an alderman (1642-1662) should be considered. Two others who had been closely associated in office with Plume, the apothecary Ruben Robinson and a yeoman, Samuel Bedell, did not outlive him: Robinson was removed from Office at his own request in 1648 and Bedell died in 1652. John Steevens lasted throughout the Commonwealth period and was the Maldon member of the county committees for the militia but in 1662 he refused to subscribe to the declaration prescribed by the Corporation Act (along with thirteen other members of The Company) and was removed from office.^{1.}

The same lack of clear leadership marks the last years of the corporation during the period of this study. Two apothecaries, Samuel Pond and Philip Ralling, respectively aldermen for 25 and 26 years, might have been the most authoritative: their years in office ran jointly throughout the 1680's until James II began to make alterations to the charter and to the membership of the corporation. Pond held on to his aldermanship throughout those reshuffles and changes of 1687-1688 (the only alderman who did) but Ralling, after eight months in office and one

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/20 f.283r (August 15th 1662). Steevens' position on the militia committee is in Acts and Ordinances of the Inter-regnum, III, sub "Militia".

month (December 1687) as Mayor of a new corporate body created by royal proclamation, was removed by royal order. When the old corporation was restored in October 1688, Ralling and Pond were declared its bailiffs but it is clear that by their time political interest in the borough, its corporate places, its representation in parliament, its control of the locality, was too strong for townsmen like them to exercise any extensive influence over The Company.

Along with the five or six "fathers of the house" it is right to count the town clerks who could also be repositories of practical advice and were able to influence the decisions of the bailiffs in court as in the council chamber. They were necessarily the bailiffs' right-hand men, stewards of their leet courts, registrars of their Quarter Sessions, Record and Admiralty sessions, writers of the chamberlains' accounts, composers of letters from the bailiffs to commissioners, gentry, nobility, the Privy Council. It was their task, too, to know the location of the precedents in the borough muniments and grants by charter which legal counsel needed to consult in legal actions for and against the borough. They themselves had to have some skill in the law and they were naturally the precursors of those market-town solicitors who became the clerks of eighteenth and nineteenth century towns and (often with disastrous results) the custodians of borough muniments.

It is noticeable that specially industrious clerks occur in conjunction with the "fathers of the corporation." During the time of William Vernon and Thomas Eve the borough was ably served by that John Barnardiston who compiled so industriously the lists of decenners used in this study of the borough population, who began the register of enrolled deeds and established the ceremonial and the proper registration of the admiralty courts. A touch of the civic splendour which Eve

and Vernon tried to bring to their corporation was also accorded to him, for at the formal occupation of the new Moot Hall in 1576 £2-10s-0d was paid "to Mr Towneclerk towards the making of his violet gown." ¹ In the times of John Soan and Thomas Plume there were again good town clerks, Thomas Chese and Nowell Hammond, whose work is preserved in numerous bundles of files for the mid-seventeenth century, as well as their beautifully written, handsome registers of the borough courts. At the end, in the 1680's, William Carr stands for the new type of solicitor - cum - town clerk, with a legal practice and with a private fortune. At his death in 1702 he bequeathed his law books, both printed and manuscript, to his godson, with the request that his clerk should have leave to peruse them. He also bequeathed £700 in cash gifts, £473 in mortgages, four houses (one at Bishopsgate in London) and lands in Cambridgeshire (Chesterton), Bradwell - juxta - Mare, Heybridge and Maldon. ²

The power of the town clerk within the sixteenth and seventeenth century corporation was not unlike the influence of a modern, permanent civil service upon changing governments but their association with aldermen was closer, daily and involved with the whole life of the borough. Some of them were also members of the corporation and some even became bailiffs. The first to do so was Philip Goldborne, an associate of Thomas Wyborough and John Church. His years in office were 1543 and 1545, 1546 and 1547 and he was thus an associate of John Church immediately before Robert Gaywood joined the council. Barnardiston was never a member of the corporation but his successor as town clerk, Blaise Salter, was elected a bailiff in 1583. After that the process was twice reversed.

1. MCA 1576.

2. E.R.O., D/ABR 14/308 (will of William Carr of Maldon, Esq., 1702).

John Nashe and Thomas Chese were residents of Maldon and head burgesses before they were appointed town clerks.

Town clerks were thus far more than scribes to a corporate body which made decisions in common council. They were of necessity, the close associates of a small group of aldermen who were often led or controlled in their policies by the older and most socially eminent men of the corporation. The clerks' involvement with government was necessary on several levels, of which the book-keeping and enrollment of deeds and indentures were the least important or skilled. For the authority of the bailiffs and corporation stemmed from two quite distinct sources: one was the statute law which conferred on them civil powers as justices of the peace; the other was the body of customary law and grants by charter. Statute law compelled them to act, borough custom and privilege had to be asserted. The town clerks had to be guides to both forms of activity.

The Paramountcy of The Company

Local government proceeded by the assertion of rights and, if necessary, by the prosecution of such claims in lawcourts. Town charters were not blue-prints of routine urban administration, nor were they detailed constitutional instruments. Their value lay in the development of their clauses to rebut attacks on corporate decisions or to argue the validity of particular courses of action. Consequently the text of the charters and of the customals were kept closely guarded. They were produced in court for examination by counsel ^{1.} and they were

1. Thus, MCA 1625: 5s 2d "to the carrier and a porter for bringing downe a hamper of the Towne writings from London and bringing the same into the Hall."

available for consultation by officers of the borough but care was taken that no unauthorised "foreigner" might see them (unless they went to the extraordinary trouble of searching out the texts among the Charter Rolls and Patent Rolls at Westminster and the Tower of London). All the charters of Maldon were stored in a locked chest in a locked room of the Moot Hall called the Charterhouse.¹ Freemen swore to keep "the secrets of the borough" and when one of them in 1673 took the White Book (in which were copies of all the charters and also the customs) from one of the chamberlains and then left it for several hours in the house of a non-freeman, he was disenfranchised "for breach of his oath, thereby discovering the secrets of the said Borough."² The impediment thus thrown in the path of those who opposed the corporation is indicated by the request of Heybridge and county petitioners of 1641 who, in the course of their village's age-old struggle to obtain free passage for vessels up to their wharves past the Hythe, desired the House of Lords to obtain for them the right to examine the charter of the borough of Maldon.³

The area of uncertainty which The Company preserved as to the extent of their franchise was filled by precedent cases, designed in some instances to demonstrate the reality of their claims; and by activities and declarations wherein the corporation arrogated to itself a wide range of powers over the lives of the town's inhabitants, free and foreign, albeit powers which were not specifically laid out in their charters. The borough of Maldon was, they said, from 1555 a liberty, immune from any external authority lower than the Lord Lieutenant and

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1. MCA 1665: "mending the lock of the Charterhouse doore." MCA 1558: 3d for "a keye for the charter case."
 2. D/B 3/1/3, custumal para. 90.
 3. Historical Manuscripts Commission, 4th report, p.197.

the Privy Council. To uphold this they could cite the Ne Intromittent clause of the 1555 charter:

"so that our Shyriff ... Escheator ... Clerk of the Market of our house ... Admirall ... Steward and Marshall ... nor any of them may enter nor may sitt within the Bouroughe, libertie and precinct to inquire of any thinges or matters that to theire office apperteineth or belongeth ... and it is lawful for the Bailiffs, Aldermen and Headburgesses to resist any invasion of their rights, without our impeachment or of our heires, or of any person whatsoever ..." ^{1.}

This was a clause also of the 1554 charter and immediately after its grant the Bailiffs fought and won a test case when one of them and two of their constables were prosecuted by the Royal Clerk of the Market.^{2.} This clause and another which confirmed the admiralty jurisdiction of the bailiffs, were the basis of The Company's protest against an infringement of their franchise by the deputy of the Earl of Warwick, the Vice-Admiral of England, who proposed to hold his own court in the borough in 1635:

"Admirall jurisdiction within the liberties of the incorporacion of Maldon" they pointed out to the Earl, "hath bein alwaies exercised by the bayliffes ... beyond all memorie and the late kinge and Queene Phillipp and Marie by their Charter did Grannt and confirme admirall Jurisdicion to the Bayliffes... with a prohibicion and Restraint to any their Admirall or any of his mynisters to intermeddle within the same liberties ... all which rightes they had long before, beyond memorie and

1. Translation c.1555 of the 1555 charter, E.R.O., D/B 3/1/3.

2. Thomas Madox, Firma Burgi ⁽¹⁷²⁶⁾ pp. 112-114.

alwaies exercised without interruption." ^{1.}

This protest was forwarded to the deputy (William Pulley) by the Earl of Warwick with this endorsement:

"Pulley: I am very unwilling any liberty within their corporation should be infringed and therefore I would have you deferre to keepe the admirall court for that corporation till I be further satisfied in that point"

for he was himself a freeman of the borough, as the bailiffs reminded him, by virtue of having been once one of its M.P.'s. ^{2.} Even so the matter went before the High Court of Admiralty in 1636, just when the corporations of Harwich and Colchester were defending their own admiralty jurisdictions on writs of Quo Warranto, and in 1637 another summons came for the bailiffs to attend the vice-admiral's court in the King's Head Inn within their own borough. ^{3.}

As a counterpart to their assertion of independence the corporation had to ensure that their courts were as competent as possible and that the freemen did not seek justice outside the borough. The first article in the charge delivered to the jurors of the Admiralty Court was:

"If any Burgess or Resident of Maldon hath impleaded or sued any other Burgess or Resident before the Lord Admiral or any other judge for offences on the sea." ^{4.}

Similarly the competence of the borough courts on the land was carefully guarded and the case of William Vernon impleading a fellow - freeman

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/149/5.

2. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/149/5.

3. MCA 1636; VCH Essex II and D/B 3/3/149/5.

4. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/4 f.8v.

outside the borough, which has already been described above, was designed to create a precedent for the punishment of offenders. Equally, if freemen were to have recourse to the courts of their own borough "to the end of their plea" they were not to assist at courts outside its liberty. The year before Vernon's case, in 1567, Humphrey Hastler was presented at the Quarter Sessions because he

"did offer and putt himselfe upon a iurye or queste at the last sysses or sessyons holden at Brundwood (Brentwood) contrarye to his oathe made by him when he was sworne a freeman and hed burges for to maynteyne the liberties of the borrowghe, so that beinge theire demanded he shoold be have prayed to be discharged for that he ought not to be put in enquest oute of the towne of Maldon." ¹.

Within the liberty which it claimed that The Company took upon itself the regulation of as many aspects of the townsmen's lives as possible. Among the chief occasions for the assertion of its authority were the Quarter Sessions, where the business of the court leet of the borough was combined with the commission of the peace. The Sessions, as has been shown, were simply meetings of the Common Council of the borough, presided over by the bailiffs and two aldermen as J.P.'s, by the Recorder appointed by the corporation and by the town clerk, with the head burgesses as jurors. At the end of the Sessions orders were issued, which had been agreed on by The Company, and then the corporate body enjoyed a good dinner to demonstrate their solidarity of purpose. Judging from the earlier custom of the borough the bailiffs and common council before 1554 had exercised considerable authority generally in the town but the details are clearest in the presentments and orders of

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/6 f.18.

the incorporated borough Sessions.

At each court whose presentments have been preserved there was a wide range of business, from trading offences to matters of public health and public amenities, from vagabondage to purely borough affairs such as the decenners who defaulted from the View of Frank-pledge, or the defamation of the corporation officers during the execution of their routine duties. Breaches of the peace formed a curiously small part of the Quarter Sessions business, apart from the perennial cases of card players on the sabbath, scolds and other "brethelde brawlers" (as the 1444 custumal called worthless persons) who, in the words of a 1453 addition to the customs, would not "be justified by the baillies for ther brawlyng." All transactions in real estate were notified to the Sessions, so that the chamberlains could claim the Landcheap and there, too, the Water Bailiff presented his quarterly receipt of tolls collected at the Hythe. Thus, four times a year, The Company reviewed the affairs of the town, heard reports on the inhabitants' behaviour, issued orders concerning their occupations, protected and interfered with their trade, ordered them to cleanse their privies, scour their ditches and repair their wells.

Additionally the influence of the corporation extended through a range of other courts which were held at various times through the year. Admiralty courts performed for the riverside what the Quarter Sessions did for the land. There were Petty Sessions, a Pie Powder Court and a Court of the Clerk of the Market for the three annual fairs and the market days, and the Court of Record. The Company licensed plays, maintained the bridges, wharves and roads. It organised the townsmen for duties as the night watch. It set guards round the streets during fairs. It controlled a militia independently of the county and maintained its own armoury, of which the chamberlains were the quartermasters.

It assembled all males of twelve years and over, counted them and dismissed them twice yearly.

As if these were not duties enough the bailiffs were empowered to imprison, whip, hang or expel. Their license was needed to have a lodger or inmate. If a man wished to trade with an alien he had to ask the town clerk to record the bargains made. When any ship tied up at the Hythe its master had first of all to declare his cargo to the bailiffs and they were to place a starting price before he could begin bargaining.

Such was the range of activities in which a bailiff had to find his way during his earlier years in office. That is why it has been here suggested that the more experienced and those with special social standing in the town may well have been the controlling influence, backed by the essential expertise of the town clerk. Yet there was a limit to the authority which the corporation could claim. The Company was liable to find itself in serious trouble if it overstepped that boundary and that was where the special expertise and authority of the clerks and senior aldermen was most required. The phrasing of the charters, the precedents, the financial capabilities of the corporation in the coming year had to be known in order to forecast and judge the possible courses of action which the bailiffs might have to take.

Some caution may be noted in the exercise of judicial powers. The Company's jurisdiction ranged from cases of assault, fraud, smuggling and ingrossing to fornication, sacrilege, sorcery and murder. Which should they determine and which should they transmit to another court? They had a gallows, a Recorder and counsel learned in the law, so it would be expected that examples of capital punishment might be found in the borough court books. They claimed a franchise at Maldon wherein the sheriff of Essex had no power but, although there is plenty of evidence

for their employment of the gaols, pillory, stocks, tumbril, cage and ducking stool, there is no evidence that they used their "jebitt". Only one execution is referred to in any borough record and that was the burning of a man - otherwise unknown - called Gale, for which there are two entries in the chamberlains' accounts of 1548-1549:

5d paid "for lyne that was occupied at the sufferance
of Gale" and

20d paid "to make a fyer about the execucion of the sayd Gale."

Even so, the burning at the stake of this man (whose crime remains unknown) does not appear to have been ordered at a trial involving the bailiffs and common council of the borough. They simply provided the fuel. After incorporation, too, cases which were likely to end with capital punishment were quickly transferred to an external court. A case of rape was submitted to the Archdeacon of Essex and a county magistrate at some cost to the borough¹. and at least four cases of sorcery, each involving accusations of murder or premeditated murder, were transferred to the assizes or the Privy Council.² In the chamberlains' accounts for 1621 the procedure for a case of murder is clearly documented: a baby was found dead near Portman Marsh, beside the causeway to Heybridge; when its unmarried mother was suspected of murdering

1. MCA 1566: 10s 9d paid for conducting Thomas Stock, accused of rape, before the archdeacon and Mr Mildmay at Chelmsford, and then to Colchester Castle (the county gaol).

2. Case of Alice Chandler (1573/74): E.R.O., D/B 3/1/6 f.149v and Calendar of Essex Assize Files 35/16/2 (7). Case of Ellen Smith (daughter of Alice Chandler): Assize Files 35/21/4 (14) and Damnable Driftes, a pamphlet on her and two others executed at Chelmsford in April 1579 (E.R.O. library). Cases of Humphrey Poles and Nicholas Johnson (1580): Acts of the Privy Council, XII pp.251-252.

it she was held for questioning in the prison of the town and then transferred to Colchester Castle to wait for trial before the Assize Court at Chelmsford. Cost: 25 shillings.^{1.}

The corporation was also inclined to caution within the jurisdiction which was undisputedly theirs.^{1.} The presentments before the Admiralty Court are of a very limited range, concerning mostly the illegal discharge of ballast in the channels, weirs, posts and nets and oyster dredging. Caution was necessary because an appeal by the defendants to external courts - such as the High Court of Admiralty or the Chancery - might result in the weakening of the authority of the corporation. That was the lesson of the suit brought by the bailiffs in 1611 against Sir Robert Sprignell of Highgate, who had refused to pay Landcheap when he purchased the Manor of Little Maldon. The price which Sprignell had paid for the manor meant that the payment of landcheap would amount to £211, a sum which was more than twice the usual income of the borough for the whole year! A chance not to be missed but whoever advised that the bailiffs should prosecute Sir Robert when he refused to pay, had to calculate that the case could be won and that

1. MCA 1621: 6d "payd to John Sowth for the careyeng twoe severall warrants concerning the child that was found dead in the ditch near Heybredge Cawsey..."; 7s 4d "payd and defrayed by William Webb, constable, for foode and sustenance of Margery Manfeild, apprehended and committed to prison for suspicyon of murdring her base child within this Burrow, and for strawe for her to lye in..."; 4s 6d "for safe conveynging the sayd Margery to the Common Goale at Colchester..."; 18d for a horse "to carry her thither" and 11s 2d to Mr Hastler, a coroner of the borough, for drawing up an indictment of Margery Manfeild at the Assizes, and his expenses there for two days.

the landcheap would be worth the expense of a lawsuit. At the end of the case - two years later - the borough certainly had a promise of payment by instalments of a portion of the landcheap but the entire position of the corporation had been weakened. The records of the borough had to be brought from the Moot Hall Charterhouse called in question and defended in the Exchequer Court where the case was tried; the litigation cost a minimum of £28 and at its conclusion

"as touching the said Manor of Little Maldon, for that the Court was not fully satisfied touching the Landcheap challenged upon the sale thereof ... the trial for the said Manor was like to continue a long suit and great expense (being a matter of some difficulty and of great value) the Court for a final end of the suit ... (ordered the defendant to pay part of the custom) ... without prejudice to either side thereafter when any new sale shall be had or made of or concerning the said Manor..." 1.

Three years later others were encouraged by this judgement to dispute the rights of the corporation and once more suits had to be filed in the Exchequer Court, "against Sir Henry Mildmay and others for their detaining of Landcheapes due to the Borough." 2.

Similarly a case which grew out of a simple piece of normal magistrates' business at the Quarter Sessions could weaken the authority of the corporation and cause the borough considerable expense. About 1592 the justices of the borough ordered Jasper Smythe to contribute

1. Reports of the case: E.R.O., D/B 3/1/3 ff.92r - 97r (1613) and D/B 3/3/577/29 (c.1810).

2. MCA 1616.

towards the maintenance of a bastard child. Although he admitted paternity he refused to pay and was imprisoned. That was routine but then he brought a suit of false imprisonment against the corporation and a memorandum of the town clerk remarks that although the corporation claimed to have exercised only its accustomed authority, this was being held an insufficient argument to determine the case

"and so the same matter haith ever since remayned and depended, neyther adiudged nor argued." 1.

Furthermore, the nature of the borough income dictated a cautious policy. Expenditure always matched income. In some years there was a small credit balance when the audit was held; sometimes the chamberlains declared a deficit; occasionally the accounts nearly reached an exact balance. That can be seen in Table 19, which records the unending battle of the corporation to remain solvent. The reason for their predicament was the uncertain total of any year's income, whose sources (set out in Table 20) were largely composed of fines and customary tolls. Whereas rents formed the staple and assured income of many boroughs, 2. they were a weak feature of the Maldon receipts. There were some attempts to increase the yield from the Farm Rents and to reduce the unprofitable Assize Rental (see Table 21) but by and large the income of the borough chest always depended on such incalculable sources as the fines on

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/422/2.

2. Rents formed almost the sole resources of Bath; they were 80% of the Cambridge treasurer's receipt in 1519, 87% in 1590; and 96% of the Stratford-upon-Avon receipts of 1563. (F. Wardle, Accounts... of Bath; W.M. Palmer, Cambridge Borough Documents, I, p.11; and R. Savage and E.I. Fripp, Minutes and Accounts of Stratford-upon-Avon, vol. I.)

admissions to freedom, on the number of "withdraughts of action" (and so on the volume of credit transactions) or on the number of properties bought and their value. Just how haphazard the amounts received could be may be gauged from Table 22, which provides a sample of incomes over the period and shows what proportion each source formed in any year of the total receipt.

At times The Company was forced to draw on its Extraordinary Revenue to supplement its Proper Revenues, by levying a Scot-and-Lot. Even though such collections were introduced with impressive recitations of the corporation's chartered rights, solemn declarations of its dire need, they were strongly resisted and could not be guaranteed to solve any financial emergency. In 1598 twenty nine out of ninety eight free-men failed to contribute to a Scot-and-Lot and the levy produced only £7 - 17s - 8d instead of the estimated £9 - 16s - 0d.¹ Time and again the corporation sought every means to rake up the cash required by accumulated emergencies other than the levy of this rate.

The result was a continuous penny-pinching financial management. The fees of officials were kept low (see Table 23) and minor officers were paid only for specific tasks. The Company retained no Waits, Cook, Chaplain (except in 1570) or Surveyor and there are rarely any signs of extravagance on corporation affairs in the Chamberlains' accounts.

Yet they managed, soberly, to maintain the dignity of their corporation. The Moot Hall was occasionally "beautified" (as one account says) and was decorated with the royal arms and town arms, with a curtain of green say to protect the colours and gilding from the sun.² Trump-

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/33 ff.19v - 20v.

2. MCA 1603, 1607 and 1614.

eters and musicians were hired for ceremonial occasions. The ordinary visitor and townsman did not see the anxious conferences of bailiffs and town clerk, the casting up of books in the face of immediate emergencies. What he saw was the courtesy of gifts to visiting notables, the charitable gifts to genuine pauper vagrants, the maintenance of bridges, roads, causeway and wharves by the corporation and the daily payments made "at Mr Bailiffs' commandment." And he saw the bailiffs as masters of the town. He saw them, flanked by serjeants, attended by clerk and aldermen, process about the market place at the opening of business; or, preceded by mace or by oar, going into their Quarter Sessions and Admiralty Courts. He knew they could expel him or permit his residence, fix his prices, enquire into his business. They could even - as will be shown - excommunicate him from all Christian society. It would be with the greatest temerity that he would dare to challenge their authority.

Chapter 6

DISSENSION

In many English boroughs the last years of the sixteenth century were marked by quarrels and controversies: of governing bodies against the commonalty, of various groups within the corporations. At Doncaster the election of the mayor in 1590,¹ at Ripon the choice of the wakerman in 1598,² were in dispute between the commons and the towns' ruling groups; the Warden of the Cinque Ports and the commonalty of Sandwich disputed the composition of the common council of that town from 1593 to 1605.³ There were troubles at Leicester after its incorporation (1589) over the allocation of leases for the new town lands by the common council, culminating in a committee of inquiry which was appointed by the Privy Council in 1593,⁴ whilst the same period witnessed a struggle for power and trading benefits at Newcastle-Upon-Tyne between a group of mercers and coal merchants (who formed an inner ring of the town government) and the larger group of less wealthy men who found themselves without influence in the management of the Tyne coal trade.⁵ So also there were "popular quarrels" at Colchester and at Maldon before 1595, when Richard Fletcher, the bishop of London, conducted his primary visitation of the diocese and reported to Sir Robert Cecil on his pacifying activity in Essex and Hertfordshire:

"In the two towns of Colchester and Maldon I found great

1. A.L. Rowse, England of Elizabeth, p.175.

2. Ripon Borough Council Muniments: The Towne Booke (1598).

3. Rowse, op. cit., pp.175-176.

4. W.G. Hoskins, Provincial England, p.100.

5. R. Howell Jnr., Newcastle and the Puritan Revolution (Oxford 1967) pp.39-42.

quarrels and contentions, both in their civil bodies and among their ministers, the people divided and the priests taking part on both sides, and at war with themselves, as well in matter of popular quarrels as points of doctrine. All which I so travailed in that I put moderation to their perturbations and peace to their places..."¹.

Apart from those urban disputes which happen to touch on issues of general economic concern (such as the coal trade of Newcastle or the settlement of Dutch weavers at Halstead) the substance of most of these quarrels is apparently of only parochial interest but their general drift has a much wider significance, for they are often the only evidence of clashes between established authority and public opinion. Urban disputes were considered sufficiently dangerous for the Privy Council to concern itself in their speedy settlement, regarding the factions at Doncaster, for example, as "a most unchristian thing and that will in the end be the overthrow of the town." Dissensions momentarily disrupted the well-ordered surface of urban life and through the cracks it is possible to glimpse some of the tensions of contemporary society and just a little of the private opinions of the townsmen. In the case of Maldon there is sufficient information about the troubles of the borough for mounting an investigation of the relationship between the corporation and the general population and to see a little more precisely how much correspondence there was between the theory of The Company's power and the actual practice of government.

The Company and the parishes of Maldon

Before examining the course of events and the issues in dispute

1. Historical Manuscripts Commission, Cecil Manuscripts, Part V, p.394.

it is essential to consider the relationship between the borough government and the administration of the parishes of the town, for whilst the quarrels began with trouble between a new vicar of All Saints - Mr Palmer - and the former vicar - Mr Gifford - who had been deprived of the living, they quickly became a dispute between the new vicar and the corporation.

The relationship of borough to parish formed one of the areas of jurisdiction in which the extent of the corporation's powers were not clearly defined, and one into which The Company penetrated deeper and deeper during the late sixteenth century until, as usual in such affairs, the issues became matters for litigation and, in this case, dissension.

Basically there was confusion over the administration of the parishes, because the bailiffs and aldermen were the justices and so they were obliged, by statute after statute, to supervise the civil affairs of each parish. Also the small size of the town precluded a choice of parish officials from men other than those who were recruited to The Company. Very often members of the corporation doubled up as churchwardens or lesser parish officials, as in 1547 and 1553 when the churchwardens of St Mary's parish were William Poulter - who was a wardman of the old borough and an alderman of the incorporation - and Richard Johnson and Anthony Sparrow - who were both head burgesses after 1555.¹ The parish records of Maldon are mostly lost, so an extensive comparison of vestry and corporation membership cannot be made but what little evidence there is indicates what common sense also suggests, that the group of men eligible for both corporate and parish office was so small that the two distinct spheres of work, borough and parochial, were necessarily conflated. From an apprenticeship indenture of 1611 the

1. Names from H. King, "Inventories of Church Goods," Trans. E.A.S., o.s. (1873), pp. 222-223.

names of four Overseers of the Poor for St Peter's parish can be recovered and when they are checked against the corporation's membership and the subsidy return for 1610 it can be seen that although only two were members of The Company at that time, they all formed part of the group from which the corporation was recruited:

<u>Overseers</u> (1611)	<u>Borough Office</u>	<u>Tax Assessment</u> (1610) ^{1.}
John Lufkin	alderman in 1610	£4 in goods
Richard Lambert	head burgess in 1610	£3 in goods
Kenelm Harvey	head burgess from 1615	£3 in goods
Gabriel Ingram	never in The Company	£5 in lands

The 1566 account roll of the borough provides a good example of the take-over of parish work by the bailiffs and corporation. By virtue of the provisions made in the Statutes of Highways of 1555 and 1563, the bailiffs and aldermen controlled the parish Surveyors through their Quarter Sessions and it was the chamberlains who received and accounted for the fines levied on those parishioners who had failed to assist the Surveyors of Highways in repair work. The 1566 accounts include seven entries for this, some recording receipts from parish "surveyors of wayes" - such as 26s 4d from Thomas Bowden and William Reynolds, "surveyors of the wayes in the parishe of all s'ctes for the profittes of their office this yere" - and others recording distraints, apparently levied directly by the justices, such as 2s 6d from Cornelius Peterson "for defalte of workes in heighe wayes undonne this yere." At the same time that they were surveyors of All Saints parish, Thomas Bowden and William Renolds

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/420: copy of return for the first payment, 1610.

Mean assessment for lands: £3.2 (20 men), for goods: £4 (35 men).

were also both aldermen of the corporation. Nicholas Moore "an other surveyor of wayes" in 1566 was simultaneously a head burgess. Anthony Sparrowe, churchwarden of St Mary's in 1553 and a head burgess in 1557, 1559 and 1560, was a "collector of the like profittes of workes in the heighe wayes" in 1566.

That was one step into the sphere of ecclesiastical affairs but the next was due in part to the division of canonical jurisdiction, for whilst All Saints' and St Peter's parishes were in the archdeaconry of Essex, St Mary's was a peculiar jurisdiction of the Dean of Westminster. Maldon was a place where men could possibly evade ecclesiastical prosecution by a technicality, as in the office of the archdeacon of Essex against "Peter, a fleminge" in 1575, which was discontinued with the note

"habitat' extra iurisdictionem, videlicet in parochie
beate Marie de Maldon." ^{1.}

Additionally the parish clergy were in a weak position, for St Mary's was staffed only by stipendiary curates and the other two parishes were jointly in the cure of one vicar. Their vestrymen, however, were more than likely to be sworn members of The Company so that the corporation had a unifying influence where the church authorities had only a partial influence on the life of the parishes.

The Company's attitude towards the church buildings and funds was extraordinarily proprietorial. The borrowing of All Saints' funds and only partial repayment has already been noted. In 1562 the chamberlains collected all the disused vestments of the parish churches from the wardens and cut them up to make costumes for the borough play. After

1. E.R.O., D/AEA 9 f.38r. (1575.)

that, in December 1562, it was ordered by the corporation that

"omnia vestimenta cujusque ecclesie infra hanc villam
que nuper tradite fuerunt ad faciendum vestitus lusorum,
videlicet le plaiers garments..."

should be sold by the chamberlains for what they would fetch. The Company agreed that £5 of the proceeds should be made over to the churchwardens of All Saints' (albeit from the sale of goods of all three churches) but they kept the balance for the borough chest.^{1.}

By 1608 St Peter's church was effectively a secularised building under the management of the borough. It had been redundant since at least 1577, when the archdeacon of Essex had ordered the parishioners to join the congregation of All Saints' and had united the wardens of the two parishes,^{2.} and it had probably not been used for regular worship since the dissolution of the Guild of Our Lady in 1547. The grammar school which Ralph Breeder endowed in 1609, and which possibly functioned under private enterprise in the reign of Elizabeth I, was certainly housed in the church and a brief of 1628 for collections to repair the tower of St Mary's church describes St Peter's as "having the ruynes thereof (by consent of the bishop) converted into a publique schoole,"^{3.} although the will of John Morris in 1609, requesting burial "in St Peeter's Church in the middle Alley there," indicates that sometimes the old building reverted to its sacred functions.^{4.} Ralph Breeder's will gave the

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/6 f.92 and MCA 1562, recording 3d paid "for making clean of the hawle after that the plaiers garments were made there this yere."

2. E.R.O., D/AEA 8, f.280.

3. E.R.O., D/DQs 134.

4. PCC 22 Dorset.

corporation an indirect hold over the church because he made the bailiffs and aldermen the trustees of his foundation after the death of his executors (most of whom were aldermen, anyway).^{1.}

All Saints' was the largest and most imposing church in the town. It maintained a vigorous parish life and, as it stood beside both the moot halls and beside the market area, it was the corporation church. Its vicars found a need for curates to assist them in their cure of the two parishes and All Saints' vestry was obviously rich, since it could afford to make a loan of £70. Yet it, too, was dominated by The Company, who treated its nave and its belfry as if they were a part of the corporation's property. At first the vicars of All Saints may have given permission to the bailiffs to sponsor sermons and to patronise propheesyings in the church, as happened in 1570 when "Mr Chapman the preacher" was employed by the corporation on a year's salary, and as happened from 1570 to 1578, when the bailiffs commissioned sermons from a number of visiting clergy, or when they entertained Dr George Wither, the archdeacon of Colchester, Dr Walker, who was archdeacon of Essex, and preachers who had assembled for two propheesyings at Maldon in 1573.^{2.} (Dr Wither was brother to the Vicar of All Saints, Fabian Wither, at that time.)

In 1619 the corporation's influence in the affairs of All Saints' and St Peter's parishes was enhanced by the chance of making the choice of a new vicar. The patron of the living was Richard Franke of Hatfield Broad Oak (and owner of Beeleigh Abbey in Maldon), whom the bailiffs had

1. PCC 27 Dorset.

2. MCA give payments for entertaining preachers and clergy. All are printed in L. Hughes, History of All Saints, Maldon (1909),

assiduously courted with gifts of sugar loaves on his visits to Maldon,^{1.} and he left to the corporation the choice between two candidates for the incumbency. One was John Rogers, a well known puritan minister who was vicar of Dedham where, in the previous half-century, the conference of Essex and Suffolk clergy had deliberated reforms of the Church of England. The chamberlains of Maldon called him "the preacher of Dedham" and he had preached at Maldon at the bailiffs' invitation, in 1606 and 1613. The other candidate was a Norfolk man, Israel Hewitt, who had been a fellow of Christ's College since 1610. He and Rogers appear to have had an "interview by sermon" with the corporation, since both of them were entertained by the bailiffs to the customary "diet" for preachers in 1619. Then the whole Company voted for the new vicar and Hewitt received a majority.^{2.} He was duly presented by the patron of the living and all through his ministry, from 1620 to 1649, The Company were assiduous in looking after him. Apparently some of the townsfolk made a private arrangement to subsidise him and when they failed the corporation chest took over. The 1623 accounts record £5

"given and paid this year to Mr Israell Hewett, vicar of the parishes of All Saints and St Peter's, by the commandment of Mr Bailiffs and consent of the whole House toward a certain yearly contribution (meant to be given him if it could be raised and continued) which is much diminished by the death of many which did freely give while they lived."

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1. MCA 1615 and 1618, when one loaf cost 17s 4d.
 2. J. Peile, Biographical Register of Christ's College, I, p.240; E.R.O., D/B 3/1/19 for Hewitt's admission as a freeman, 1624; poll for the new vicar, E.R.O., D/B 3/3/393/3 (1619); MCA 1619, 3s 4d for horse hire to ride after "Mr Hewett," a preacher, and 6s 8d at the Star for the horsemeat of "Mr Hewett."

In 1641 the corporation gave him £3-2s-6d "in consideration of his great paines and token of their great loves and good affeccion towards him" and a further £10 was settled on him in 1644 in return for his Saturday lectures.^{1.}

So The Company became the patrons, in effect, of the clergy and parishes of All Saints' and St Peter's. They sponsored a lecturer and preachers at one, they governed a school at the other and to this day their annexation of parts of All Saints' church is commemorated by the rebuilt north side of its nave of 1728, to which they contributed £315^{2.} and by the borough arms on the rainwater heads of its north wall.

Once, in 1569, an order was made which divided the whole town into four wards - named after contemporary aldermen - in place of the three parishes named after saints. The occasion for that was an order from the Privy Council that search should be made on a stated day for all the vagrants in Maldon (as in every other place in England) but the memorandum by the town clerk suggests that The Company envisaged a permanent arrangement which would supersede the parochial organisation for all future administrative purposes:

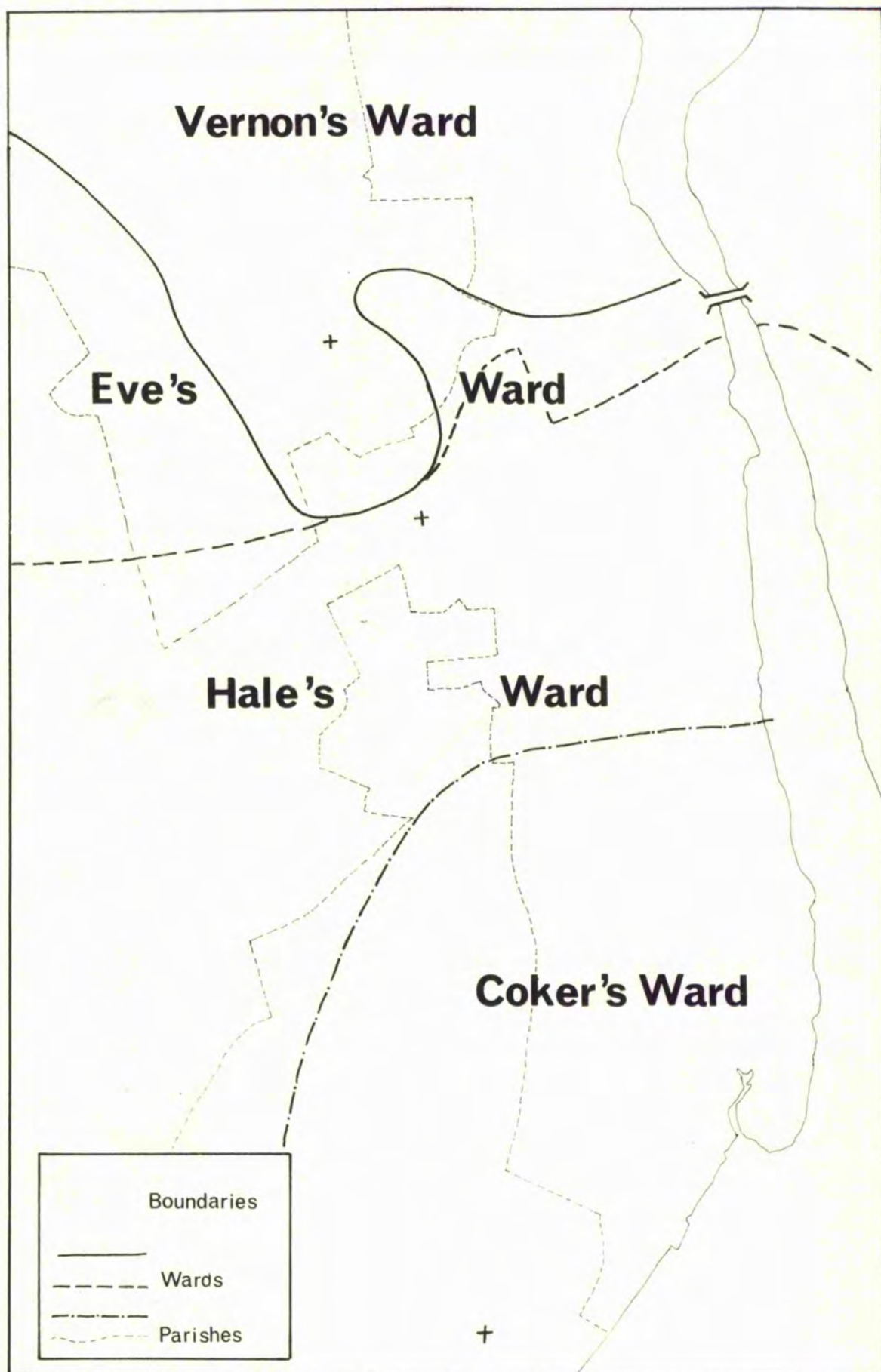
"Item, the said burroughe towne and all the hamlettes, parishes and limittes within the same alwayes hereafter shall stand divided into fower severall wardes in manner and forme following..."^{3.}

The proposed divisions are shown in Figure 22. However, the plan was quickly shelved, even for searches for vagrants, and another borough

1. MCA 1641 and 1644.

2. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/327 and /328: chamberlains' accounts, 1727, 1728.

3. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/33 f.44.



22 Proposed Wards, 1569

return of the number of masterless men two years later (August 1571) was presented by parish divisions.¹ Maldon never had any ward organisation, except for this scheme, and for all its own administrative purposes, before and after 1569, the corporation had returns made by parishes and the constables of the borough continued to be chosen on a parochial basis.

The intrusion of the corporation into the parochial life of Maldon was accompanied by an assertion of judicial rights in matters which were usually the preserve of the ecclesiastical courts. Here again, the line between the two types of jurisdiction was uncertain but the claims of the corporation were clear for all to understand. Thus a woman of Little Baddow (seven miles west of Maldon) who was accused of pre-marital intercourse and adultery was tried at Maldon in 1575: not in the borough court, however, but in All Saints' church at a court of the archdeacon, who happened to hold one session of his courts there at that time.² A Maldon girl, on the other hand, was tried for fornication by the bailiffs and aldermen in 1592, convicted by them and punished by their officers.³ Over its inhabitants and also over those temporarily within its boundaries the borough claimed a capacity to prosecute and to pass sentence, whatever the crime. Besides fornication they tried cases of transvestism⁴ and sorcery and rape. In some cases they preferred (as has been seen) to transfer the proceedings to an external court but when they did try a case they based their right and the sentences they passed on borough custom, confirmed by the 1555 charter, and on the statutes which instructed the justices of the peace. Mary Momford, the girl referred to above

1. P.R.O., SP. 12/80.

2. E.R.O., D/AEA 9, ff. 18-19.

3. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/8 f.95v.

4. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/6 f.150r (case of William Grymene of Wivenhoe).

who was prosecuted in 1592 for fornication, was sentenced at the December Quarter Sessions to be carted about the town on a pole (a "cowl staff") although she was pregnant -

"she is adjudged (according to the aunoyent custome of this borowe) to be punyshed by the Cowle" ¹.

and a mysterious punishment prescribed by an addition to the customs of 1453 called "bearing the mortar" was ordered for William Man and his daughter-in-law Elizabeth in 1591 as a penalty for fornication:

"they weare boith punyshed by riding in a cart upon the markett daye through the towne in the open markett and the said William Man ware the mortar all the whyle." ².

Three cases of excommunication can also be found in the borough records, in 1570 and 1571, ³. which were justified by a statute of 1551 ordering the excommunication of anyone who struck or laid hands upon another in a church or churchyard. Yet it was an ecclesiastical sentence properly, nor did the corporation restrict themselves to the Lesser Excommunication, which merely forbade the culprit admission to the sacraments, but gave the sentence of the Greater Excommunication, excludng a culprit from all contact with his christian brethren:

"ipso facto facit excommunicatus et exclusus de sodalitate et consocietate christiani congregatione." ⁴.

Mr Gifford and The Company, 1580-1592

Elements of these intrusions of the corporation into the

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1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/8 f.95v.
 2. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/8 f.37v.
 3. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/6 ff.92r and 87r (1570); and f.115r (1571).
 4. Ibid. f.92r.

ecclesiastical and parochial spheres of their town helped to cause the dissension, the factions and the quarrels of Maldon in the 1590's. In particular the rights of the Vicar of All Saints' parish to determine the use of his own church were at stake. In 1592 and 1593 Mr Robert Palmer, the incumbent, launched attacks on the corporation elections and membership (or so The Company alleged) but the roots of the trouble lay at least eight years further back in 1584, when Archbishop Whitgift engineered the expulsion of Mr George Gifford from the vicarage of All Saints.

This Mr Gifford is a key personality in the dissension at Maldon, a divine "who was much valued there for the good reformation he had made in that market-town by his preaching; where very notorious sins reigned before his coming; and others had been by his diligence nourished and strengthened in grace and virtue."¹ He was curate of All Saints at Maldon from about 1580 until 1582, when he was presented to the vicarage of the united parishes of All Saints' and St Peter's by Richard Franke of Hatfield Broad Oak, the patron.² He was a puritan - though in what sense will be shown later - and his special gifts were for preaching and for pastoral work. Some 25 years after his death he was remembered in Maldon as "the faithful preacher of the Word of God in this Incorporation"³ and Archbishop Whitgift by implication provided a testimonial to his power as a preacher when he publically forbade Gifford to enter

1. John Strype, Life of John Whitgift, I (1718) p.301.

2. 1581 the corporation entertained commissioners "directed from the busshopp of London towching Mr Gifford and Mr Withers" (the vicar). MCA 1581. 1582 Gifford witnessed the will of Edward Jerham of Maldon (PCC 26 Tirwhite) and was licensed as curate of All Saints (Anglin p.362).

3. Noted at the enfranchisement of his son Samuel in January 1626, E.R.O., D/B 3/1/19.

any pulpit of any church in London (in 1589) and described him to Lord Burghley (1584) as "a ringleader of the rest, against whom I have received certain complaints to the answering whereof we mean to call him by virtue of the High Commission."¹ Gifford was only vicar of All Saints' for two years and during that time he put himself right out of favour with his ecclesiastical superiors. He was at a conference in Wethersfield church in 1582 which was the inception of the famous Dedham Conference of ministers, he led the Braintree Classis of clergy and in 1584 he refused to subscribe to the Archbishop's Articles Touching Preachers. For that, and because he also refused to observe the prayer book rubrics on vestments, kneeling to receive communion, the use of the ring in marriage ceremonies or making the sign of the cross in baptism, he was singled out (as Whitgift had promised Lord Burghley) from the many Essex clergy who had refused, like him, to subscribe and he was ejected from his benefice.²

Though deprived in 1584, Gifford continued to live and work in Maldon and he had a powerful and enthusiastic following in the town, such as the shoemaker Thomas Purchas who gave evidence in 1594 that

"Mr Gifford ys his father in god for that he hathe begotten him by the gospell to god."³

He appears to have had a sufficient private income to afford his scrupulous conscience, for he purchased some land called Katherine Croft (alias Runsell Croft) from Henry Tyll of Bury St Edmunds in 1587 and by 1596 he had also acquired a house in the town from John Lawrence of

1. P. Collinson, Elizabethan Puritan Movement (1967) pp.267 and 405.

2. Anglin p.p. 250-255.

3. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/178 article 7.

Fressingfield in Suffolk.¹ That house was in St Mary's parish, in the peculiar jurisdiction of the Dean of Westminster, and if he were living in it as a tenant (according to the usual pattern of Maldon immigrants) during the 1580's, then it would have been for him a base for his activities as convenient as were the Minorities of London for other puritans. There he was out of the reach of the archdeacon and that may explain why causes which were twice commenced against him in the Essex archdeaconry court for nonconformity (1592 and 1595) were allowed to lapse.² And whilst deprived of his benefice he continued his association with the godly ministers of the Dedham Conference. In 1585 he attended the House of Commons with Robert Wright, the chaplain of Lord Robert Rich at Rochford Hall, where they lobbied M.P.'s on behalf of ministers who had been ejected from their benefices for nonconformity.³ By 1587, too, he and Richard Rogers of Wethersfield were controlling a network of correspondence between the puritan clergy who regarded themselves as a "church within the church" and whose occasional gatherings were, in Dr Collinson's words, "the provincial assemblies of a nascent English presbyterian church."⁴

Nor was he rivalled in his parishes. In his place the Franks nominated the curate of South Weald (near Epping) called Mark Wiersdale but he was an individualist rather than a nonconformist, and quarrelsome rather than controversial. Evidently Richard Franke had thought him a suitable substitute for Gifford and certainly he was accused at Maldon of the standard puritanical omissions: he did not use the ring in

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/34.

2. Anglin, p.436.

3. Collinson, op. cit. p.322.

4. Ibid. p.322.

marriage, nor the cross in baptism; he did not church women according to the Book of Common Prayer; he did not wear the surplice. But at South Weald his fault had been that "he is no preacher and because he is a nonconformist" and at Maldon he refused to commit himself. He said he wore no surplice because "he had none offered him" and he "could not tell" whether or not he made the sign of the cross or used the ring. Moreover he did not preach regularly except on Sundays.¹ Finally he got into a fruitless and pointless argument at an archdeacon's visitation of the rural deanery about the Queen's title as queen of France² and soon after that he resigned his living and went off to Cambridge to resume his studies there.³

At once the Frankes and the corporation wanted to reinstate Mr Gifford, their preacher, as the vicar. According to The Second Parte of a Register Wiersdale had resigned in Gifford's favour - or he may have been encouraged to do so by some of the townsmen, as happened to the next vicar - but the bishop of London refused to accept the nomination:

"Mr Wyersdale of Malden, who resigned his pastorall charge to Mr Gyffarde, whom the Bish'p would not admitt, but hath sett an other there, yett Mr Gyff' hath the presentation of the patron..."⁴

and through the technical lapse in the patronage (for the Franke family did not present anyone acceptable to the bishop) it was possible for the bishop to nominate his own candidate: Robert Palmer.

1. Anglin, pp.400 and 442.

2. P.R.O., SP. 12/178.

3. Venn, J. and J.A., Alumni Cantabrigienses and Anglin p.400.

4. A. Peel (ed.) The Second Parte of a Register, II p.260.

This new incumbent, who came in 1587 from the parish of Great Waltham (where he was vicar from 1585-1587) undertook no easy task. He was likely to be resented because his dispossessed predecessor was still in the town and was licensed to act as a curate of All Saints.¹ Temperamentally, too, the men were opposed. Whereas Gifford was a restrained and prudent man - "in his life he was modest, discreet and unreprieveable"² - Palmer was boisterous and flamboyant. Charges brought against Palmer in the Court of High Commission in 1594 began with a complaint that he was "a common bowler for money day by day," not only in public places but at an alley which he had opened for like-minded sportsmen in the vicarage orchard. He was also said to be a "gaymster at tables and cards for money" and that not only at the New Inn of John Spigurnell in Maldon but also at Romford, where he had been reported playing cards with one John Frith who was the rector of Hawkswell. The complaints continue with allegations that he was intemperate in his speech, given to loud talk and oaths.³ He was, in fact, a worldly man and complaints of that sort by the godly and the precisians were not unusual in clerical disputes of the time; they were merely a prologue to more serious charges, a means of indicating that Mr Robert Palmer was a "scandalous minister" like those who were scheduled in the puritan black-lists of non-preaching, worldly and ignorant clergy, the "dumb dogs who would not bark."

Only once among George Gifford's printed works can any remark be found which could be counted as a shot at Palmer. It is in a sermon preached at All Saints' but even then this judicious cleric generalised his thoughts. He may have meant Mr Palmer - or the congregation may

1. Anglin, p.362.

2. Strype, op. cit. p.301.

3. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/178.

have thought their new vicar was the subject of Gifford's reference - or he may have been speaking merely of the type:

"And now a dayes we have some Gospellers which can laugh even heartily at the committing of great sinnes and enormous offences: it is a sport to make men, or to see them made drunken. If I should enter into all particulars I should be tedious. Ye may easily see what manner of professing the Gospell hath invaded our Churches and how far it hath prevailed ... All seemeth now happie, the Gospell, the Gospell, is in everie man's mouth: but the Lord will spew out of his mouth all lukewarm Gospellers, all that be neither cold nor hot ..." ¹.

The lives of the two men were set in entirely opposed milieux. By temperament and by training Gifford was a pastoral theologian and a dedicated parish minister. He was a skilled and eloquent preacher, as a reading of his published sermons will quickly show. He was also a graduate, a member of Christ's College, ² where he had as contemporary students his three friends near Maldon - Robert Wright, Lord Rich's chaplain (who was with Gifford a lobbyist at Westminster), Richard Rogers of Wethersfield (with whom he worked to co-ordinate the members of the Dedham Conference) and Ralph Hawdon who lived nearby at Langford and

1. George Gifford, Sermons upon the whole book of Reuelation (1599) p.105.

2. Graduated B.A. 1570. Ordained in 1578, aged 30, so he was born c.1548 (at Dry Drayton Cambs.) and he cannot have been at Hart Hall, Oxford (of which Anthony Wood says he was an M.A. c.1568) since he would not have subsequently taken a B.A. at Cambridge. (Peile, op. cit. and Venn, J. and J.A., op. cit.)

eventually became vicar of All Saints in 1600. He was, in fact, a member of one of the principal forges of Elizabethan puritanism, the college of Sir Walter Mildmay of Moulsham, Chelmsford (who founded Emmanuel College), of Arthur Hildersham and of the great preacher William Perkins.

Robert Palmer, however, appears to have taken no university degree, although he had attended Magdalene College as a youth. Instead he had been educated at the Middle Temple; his training had been in the law, along with country gentlemen and budding lawyers, whereas Gifford's had been in divinity among aspirant preachers and reformers. From 1591-1593 Palmer was also an Official of the archdeaconry of Essex and he was thus an important member of the ecclesiastical establishment against which Gifford and his colleagues of the Dedham Conference had to fight.¹ An Official was necessarily a person skilled in the law; when the archdeacon sat in court in person the Official acted as his assessor; but he also acted as judge in the archdeacon's absence; he could conduct visitations; he held synods of the clergy in each deanery; he could induct parsons to their benefices; and at all times he was expected to exercise the authority of the archdeacon's office, to maintain the canon law and the laws ecclesiastical of the realm. As the archdeacon was oculus episcopi, so was Palmer the archdeacon's and the bishop's eye planted within the town of Maldon: an establishment man, a conformist, matched with a skilled and clever preacher to whom the established church was "but halfly reformed." He was, too, a protagonist of the ecclesiastical courts and archidiaconal jurisdiction, set against a corporate body which had intruded its own authority into spheres of conduct and action which were in other places left to the church.

1. E.R.O., D/AEC f.92.

Mr Palmer and The Company, 1592-1594

So it was at The Company that Mr Palmer struck, at George Gifford's supporters, not Gifford himself, and instead of a struggle for authority between the two men there was a conflict between the Official and the Aldermen. The opening issue between them was quite simply their treatment of All Saints' church as if the corporation had rights within it. Even after deprivation, Gifford had been allowed to preach in Maldon; he had also become, once more, a curate of the church, and an arrangement (known only by report now) was sanctioned by the Archbishop of Canterbury, whereby the vicar and the curate were to share the duties of preaching. That applied particularly to the market day sermons, which they were to preach by turns, when the corporation attended in state. But this was an intrusion on the vicar's freehold of his benefice and two incidents were provoked by the continued preaching of Gifford in the church.

The first, in January 1592, was provoked by Mr Frith of Hawkswell (Mr Palmer's card-playing crony at Romford) who tried to interrupt the curate's market day sermon on behalf of his friend. Arriving in Maldon this Mr Frith told Alderman William Bantoft that "he would preache there that day" and although he was warned that Mr Gifford was preaching by licence of the Archbishop, Mr Frith would not be advised and he did interrupt the service:

"when the psalme was in singinge before the Sermon (and the same more than halfe beinge songen) and Mr Gyffarde was gone out of his seat to the pulpitt, the said Mr Frithe came into the churche and entred into the Pewe wheare devyne service is used to be said. And presentlie, so soones as the psalme was ended (Mr Gyffard standinge in the pulpitt readye to begynn his sermon) the said Mr Frythe begoone to make a speech with a lowde voice where he stood, whereat

the Baylieffes and other the people there assembled (being ignorant of his pretence) weare greatly astonished, supposing him to have benne out of his wyttes rather then otherwyse..."

Mr Gifford requested the bailiffs "that the said distorbance myght be removed" but when they told Mr Frith to be quiet he insisted that it was he who was going to preach. Mr Gifford was assuming that jurisdiction within the church belonged to the Bailiffs of the borough; Mr Frith was assuming that within the church they had no special power. He ignored them

"'For,' said he, 'Mr Palmer, who is vicarre and haith more aucthorytie here then Mr Gyffarde, hadd appoynted me to preache...'"

and when he was interrogated in the Moot Hall Mr Frith refused to take the corporation's authority within the church as a serious proposition. He maintained that "yf he weare as Mr Palmer is, Mr Gyffarde sholde not preache there at all." ¹.

Later, in November 1592, the situation provoked another outburst against Mr Gifford and against The Company. One of the head burgesses, Richard Williams, told how, on a day when the curate was due to preach, a joiner was sent for by the vicar and he "sett a lock upon the pulpitt dore, whereupon Maister Gifforde did preache in the deske." ². On the same day, too, an unnecessary jibe by a labouring man at the vicar's helplessness to prevent the intrusion of Gifford by The Company, led Mr Palmer to attack two bell-ringers who had been sent by the bailiffs to announce the coming sermon:

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/155/5.

2. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/178, Article 7.

"one Sturghion, coming into the Church of All Saintes ... asked Mr Palmer, minister their (being theire presente) whether he woulde preache that daye. The said Mr Palmer made answer that he would not make him accompt. Presentlie after their came into the church one Richard Williams and John Pratt, whose range the Bell theire to a sermond and the said Mr Palmer did forbidd them, chardging them in God's name, the Queene's Majestie's and his own to leave ringinge. And (he) taking hold of the Belrope they seased.

Then the said Richard Williams said though he forbade them to ringe, yett they might toule and (Mr Palmer holding the bell roope in his hande) tooke the same and touled certayn tymes and said that Mr Giffard hadd shewed forthe an order from the L. Bishop of London that he might preache then..." ¹.

Then Mr Palmer's anger broke out. That man would not preach in his church

"nor non suche as he was, except he did weare the surplise, minister the sacraments, make the cross in baptisme and subscribe as he (Palmer) hadd done." ².

Another account takes up this event. As one of the two ringers - John Pratt - continued to toll the bell, Mr Palmer took hold of the rope and when Pratt tried to catch at it over the vicar's head,

"with his over reachinge of him he (ie. Pratt) pressed and beat down a littel his hat; and thereupon the sayd Mr Palmer went fourth the church and sayd that he was prest downe

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/8 f.97v.

2. Ibid.

and beaten out of breathe, when in truth yt was no such matter..."^{1.}

John Pratt has already appeared in this study as a leaseholder, as a short-distance immigrant who made an early start to a career in the borough, as a leading member of The Company in the 1590's and early seventeenth century; as a bailiff, a property owner and a man wealthy enough to maintain his elder son as a pensioner of a Cambridge college. Here he appears in his younger days, with a wife and apprentice already under his care, but prepared to flout authority. He was open to the charge of assaulting a clergyman who was also an Official inside a church and that was clearly a case for excommunication. It seems likely that it was for such an offence that he was committed first to the Town Prison and then to Newgate Gaol, where he gave bond for his future acquiescence to the laws ecclesiastical. The case was not, however, recorded in the borough court books and is only known by a chance observation in 1594.^{2.} Possibly it was John Pratt to whom John Morris referred in an attack (also c.1594) on the bailiffs, when he complained of their partiality to some excommunicated persons: Morris

"threatned the Baylieffes for that they would not remove persons excommunicate (as they said) out of the Churge and impryson them"

to which the bailiffs replied that they "had neyther sufficient notice nor lawfull warrant so to do."^{3.} In other words, they had not imprisoned Pratt or taken cognisance of his excommunication because he had got into trouble while carrying out their orders and because he was a favourer, with them, of Mr Gifford's preaching.

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/178 Article 7.

2. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/178 Article 13.

3. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/423/1.

In the corporation version of the bell-ringing incident there is also an interesting addendum in which the bailiffs allege that what went on in the belfry of his church was no business of Mr Palmer:

"you, the said Robert Palmer ... have quarrelled and with unseemlie speeches reviled manie, as namelie Richard Josua, being Bayliffe, terminge him 'ould rotten wolfe' with other bitter reproches, when he, the said Baylieff, did but denie (for some iust cause) the ringing of an eight of clock bell in the parishe of All Saintes when you, having nothing to do in the matter, wold appoint it to be runge..." 1.

At the beginning the issue was whether George Gifford should preach. That was apparently gall to Mr Palmer and he must have been given broad hints that many of the townsfolk admired and preferred their old preacher. In his own Official Court in January 1592, held in his own church at Maldon, Mr Palmer sat on the case of Nicholas Smithe, one of his own parishioners, who refused to contribute towards the repair of the church. Smith defended himself by saying that

"he never denied to pay towards the reparacions of the church or any thinge that is due but is willing to paie, so that he were placed in some convenient place nere the preacher." 2.

But the preaching issue was quickly replaced by a feeling in Mr Palmer's mind that it was not Mr Gifford who was responsible for his troubles. It was the Company and he was afraid of them. When he ran out of church after Pratt had pushed down his hat, he accused them of persecuting him. The bailiffs reported it thus:

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/149/13 (1594).

2. E.R.O., D/AEA 16 f.14.

"you attempted to break the order set down by the L. Archbishop betwene yow and the towne preacher for your course of preaching: and the Bailiffs, being requested by him to see the order quietlie observed, and they telling yow they would do so, you went out of the Church and sclanderouslie diffamed them, that the church doores were besett and that the Baylieffes putt you in feare of your lyffe." ¹.

These incidents occurred during Palmer's two-year tenure of the Officialship of the Essex Archdeaconry, not during the previous four years that he had been vicar, so it looks as if his troubles were of his own seeking. A by-round in his confrontation with The Company occurred during the same period and shows him using his Official Court outside the borough as a platform for criticism of the corporation and its bailiffs. One of the apparitors of the archdeaconry was a wool-comber of Maldon called Thomas Harding. He had fallen foul of William Browning, one of the 1591 Bailiffs, whom he had called "a rebell and not the Quene's frende" and when Mr Palmer held court at Great Baddow in midsummer 1592 this apparitor was still in the borough prison. ². In his place came Edmund Hunt, who told Mr Palmer that Harding was imprisoned because he

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/149/13.

2. It is difficult to believe that Harding was in prison over this matter for nine months but the episode referred to occurred in September 1591 when William Browning was recruiting soldiers for an expedition into France. Harding had apparently been wont to boast of his prowess among the militia at Tilbury in 1588 but (naturally) claimed to be "both blind and diseased" when the Bailiff tried to enlist him. Then they quarrelled. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/8 f.57r.

"did accuse Mr William Brownyng (then one of the Baylyffes of the said Borow) that the said Mr Brownyng did report that there weare non at Tylburye Campe but Rogues and Rascalls."

A by-stander from Palmer's former parish of Great Waltham asked if Mr Browning were still a Bailiff or a Justice and when Hunt said "Yea",

"'Then,' said the same man 'yf he spake suche wordes he is neyther meete to be a Baylieff or Justice but deserveith rather to be hanged.'" 1.

These incidents were preliminary sparring matches, Robert Palmer's main attack on Mr Gifford and The Company began in December 1592 (soon after the belfry episode), when he preached a sermon whose argument was that clergy should be appointed by popular election:

"that ministers ought to be chosen by the voices of the people, assertinge moreover - verie dangerouslie against the peace of the Church - that such ministers as weare not chosen by the voice of the people weare no Ministers to them over whom they shold be sett." 2.

This looks like an attack on George Giffard whose patrons, the Frankes of Hatfield Broad Oak, had presented Giffard in 1582 and Wiersdale in 1584 to the benefice of All Saints and St Peter's. It also looks like an appeal to the disaffected in the town and as he claimed immediately after that his meaning had been misinterpreted, he must have aroused an immediate response from the corporation.

1. Ibid., f.59r.

2. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/149/13 Article 4. His text was stated to be from the Acts of the Apostles, Chapter 6, which narrates how the first deacons were chosen.

"Since the first of Decembre 1592" (they said) "you have not onlie denied that doctrine in the pulpitt (which had been well) but denyed that ever you taught anye such thinge. And so many that heard you teache it weare perswaded that you make no conscience of lyeinge, that durst so openlie tell so manifest a lie. And since that tyme also yow have in private speech confessed that you did in deed preach for popular eleccion, saying that Mr Calvin ledd you awrie..."^{1.}

To his side Mr Palmer gathered a former bailiff, William Soan (who had been ejected from The Company in 1586); an innkeeper, John Spigurnell, in whose house he had been wont to play cards; Mr John Morris, a clothier, a member of the corporation from 1567 to 1583 and thrice a bailiff; and John Lock a scrivener. These men were also supporters of one Walter Lovell, for whom the bailiffs were to have a particular dislike - as will be seen - but each had his own grudges against The Company and each added to the grievances of Mr Palmer his own charges of misgovernment, partiality or separatism.

Mr Soan was one of those gentlemen whom the corporation suddenly co-opted. He was immediately a bailiff (1585) and then an alderman J.P: (1586) but then he was ejected from The Company. Apparently he believed that he knew better than the elders of that society how borough government should be conducted, so in 1586 he

"wrytt a discourse accordinge to his fancie and the same sent to Mr Vernon and Mr Garrington, then Baylieffes, who, seeinge his vayne follie returned him answeare accordinge to the same."^{2.}

1. Ibid.

2. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/423/1.

It is a pity that the treatise has not been preserved. Its rejection hurt his pride and thereafter he devoted his energies to the frustration of the course of government. Whilst still a J.P. he ordered the delivery from gaol of a man imprisoned by the bailiffs and,

"for that could not have everie matter ordered and disposed accordinge to his lykinge, grewe so hawtie and contemptuous, stirringe uppe suche troble and contencion amongst the Compaynie at everie meetinge, not onlie to the great disquyetnes of the whole Towne, that the said Compaynie dismissed him of their socyeite and putt him out of the Townhall..."^{1.}

He had also obstructed the View of Frankpledge by refusing to let his servants and children attend^{2.} and he was also given to calling members of the corporation names - the offence of Opprobrium - such as "asses" and "dolts" and "wishinge the government of the towne weare in other men's hands." Above all he fell foul of Alderman William Vernon who has been picked out in this study as the "father" of the corporation at that time and very much used to having his own way. Despite his seniority, Mr Vernon had been treated to a dissertation on how the borough ought to be governed and he was also being called a knave in public by Mr Soan.^{3.}

Mr John Morris was a Yorkshireman (from Northallerton) and he too was accused of showing contempt for his brethren in The Company and the "governors" after his ejection from the corporation in 1584, wherein he had served for 16 years as bailiff, J.P. and alderman. One of his

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

platforms has already been cited, his belief that the bailiffs chose to ignore the excommunication (or the excommunicable offence) of John Pratt. He had two other angles of attack: one concerned the bailiffs' policy toward touring players and the other was that Mr Gifford's opponents were not getting a hearing. He said that the corporation's treatment of visiting companies of actors was stingy (as it was, compared with other towns' levels of payment) and he spoke out on the subject in the Moot Hall after the bailiffs had rebuked a company who had performed on a Sunday evening in the town without the bailiffs' permission to "show forth a play." Mr Morris argued that such a policy would bring the town into disrepute, since noblemen's servants, as actors technically were, were not being treated with sufficient generosity:

"as when certein players playd on the Lordes day at nyght, contrarie bothe to the Earl of Essex's letter and Mr Bayleiffes' comandment, and Mr Baylieffes rebuking them for the same, Mr Morrys spake openlie in the hall that before tymes noble mens' menn had such entertainment when they came to the Towne that the Towne hadd the favor of noble men; but now noble men's men hadd such entertaynement that the Towne was brought into contempt..."¹

With that he had stormed out of The Company's assembly but as he went they heard him clearly say of themselves

"A sort of precisians and Brownistes,"²

and he also laid the blame for the antagonism towards Mr Palmer on the corporation:

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/423/1.

2. Ibid.

"Mr Morris saith that when the prayers are read in the Church, no man answereith (amen) for that he sayeth in his opinion if anye shoold so doe they shoold be skorned by Mr Gyffarde's favourers." 1.

So also said the landlord of the New Inn (where Mr Palmer played at "tables" and cards) John Spigurnell, in whose parochial estimation

"there is a great faccon in the Towne of Maldon, that the like is not in anye towne in England."

That he blamed on "Mr Gyffarde's favorars"

"wherbye it appeareithe he directlie chargeith the Bay-lieffes and goverors to make the facons, beinge Mr Gyffarde's favorers." 2.

Such attacks on The Company chimed in with the vicar's personal crusade against the men who disposed of his pulpit and his belfry as if those were their own property. The moment for him to speak out came in January 1594 when the annual Court of Election was held. One of the bailiffs chosen for the year was the ancient Alderman Vernon - no friend of Mr Palmer's supporters - and the other was a new man, not long come into the town and by reputation a puritan and thus another member of the Gifford party, Mr John Brooke.

On the Sunday which followed the annual Court of Election Mr Palmer preached a sermon in which he made direct and specific criticisms of the bailiffs chosen for the year. A joiner called Jeremy Pledger testified that Palmer said in his sermon that

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid.

"they had chosen one that was a schismatike and that there were manye more in the towne of Mauldon",

whilst Richard Williams, a head burgess, affirmed that the vicar had said

"that sutch as were chosen Bayliffes weare yongemen, grene heddes, sismatickes and many more in this place were sismatikes and factious persons."

In the summary of the articles deposed before the High Commission against Mr Palmer in 1594 this charge against him was similarly summarised:

"the Sabbath daye next after the Baylieffes weare chosen (he) reproved the choice of the said Baylieffes and, charging the towne with Anabaptisme and facion, he charged one of the Bayliffes to be not only yonge and intemperate but also a favoror of such faccious persons." 1.

The composition of The Company will be examined shortly in the light of these remarks on its membership. For the moment it must be noted that this sermon was preached on a Sunday and therefore it was heard by a great part of the residents of Maldon and of the head burgesses, aldermen and bailiffs. The accounts of the dispute point to only one man as the objective for Mr Palmer's accusations: Mr John Brooke, who had only entered the corporation in 1592 and was already a bailiff. With Brooke, however, Mr Palmer associated poor Mr Giffard. He "termed George Gyffarde 'hipocryte', 'one that dealeth knavishlie' and 'a maytainer of a factious person', 'an intruder' and such like". He called Mr Bailiff Brooke "schismatike" and this collection ends roundly

1. D/B 3/3/178.

with

"manie other in the Towne of Maldon, which are obedient to the lawes, you term 'schismatikes' and 'factious'".^{1.}

The vicar's supporters shared his particular dislike of John Brooke and both John Morris and William Soan were cited as supporters of one Walter Lovell, "a troblesome and quarrellous and contencious fellow" who was wont to call The Company "caniballs" and "scrape balls."^{2.} In May 1593 this Lovell stood at the street door of his house as Mr John Brooke came by. When the alderman drew level, Lovell "semed to make a legge or curtesye unto hym divers tymes" and when Brooke asked what was meant by this, Lovell replied

"I am as honest a man as yewe."

Brooke remarked that, unlike Lovell, he was no quarreller or "brabblers" and then Lovell said

"Yew are a knave, a purytane, a precycyon and a Brownist and there be manye such Brownystes in this towne."

All this was confirmed by John Stretton who happened to look out from his shop to see Lovell using "very hotte speche" to an alderman.

(Indeed, how many at other doors entertained themselves with this piece of alderman-baiting?) When Stretton asked Walter Lovell why he had done this, the man repeated his accusations,

"For" saith he, "there are dyvers of suche fellowes in the towne who will be rooted out ere it be longe."^{3.}

1. D/B 3/3/149/13 Article 3.

2. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/423/1.

3. D/B 3/1/8 f.123v - 124v.

Having voiced the opinion of one section of the townsmen from his pulpit, having "indeavored to stirr upp stryff betwene the townsmen and government" ^{1.} and having accused a head Burgess of assault within his church, Mr Palmer rounded off with a complaint to the Archbishop of Canterbury and this forced the corporation to take action against him since he firstly accused the bailiffs of threatening him physically ("the Baillieffes hadd putt him in feare of his life and hadd besett the churche dores for him") and he secondly implied their disloyalty to the laws ecclesiastical in an allegation similar to that of Mr Morris

"that there was an universall dumbness in the church at tyme of Common Prayer and that non in the church answered unto the prayers that weare reade." ^{2.}

And so dissension came to a head in the spring of 1594. Its roots lay back in the 1580's, it had brewed steadily since 1592 and now The Company turned upon its critics. They complained to the Privy Council, who ordered the matter to be heard by the Archbishop in the Court of High Commission and the accusations which Mr Palmer had to answer have been used here as part of the evidence with which to trace the course of the troubles.

A Narrative of Dissension: The Company and the Townsmen

At the same time that they opened proceedings in the High Commission the corporation also prepared a case against their disaffected townsmen. The activities of William Soan, John Morris and John Spigurnell have already been described, since they were particularly associated with Mr Palmer's case, but there were others who had taken the opportunity to

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1. D/B 3/3/178 (summary of articles against Mr Palmer).
 2. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/422/2.

add other grievances to those of separatism. In particular The Company had to deal with a cousin of John Spigurnell who was the stipendiary curate of St Mary's parish - one Thomas Spigurnell - and whose professional fitness the corporation was at pains to belittle: "sometyme apprentice with a booke-bynder, after a vagrant pedler, then a ballett singer and teller, and now a minister and alehousekeeper in Maldon." This description occurs in the case they built against him:

"A Breffe Colleccion of such slanderous matters arisinge against the present governors and government of the said Burroughe, devised by certein common distorbors of the peace and quyett estate of the same, pretended to be informed unto certein persons of worshipp within this Countie (by way of compleynt) to seke reformation but rather (more probablie to be coniectured) tendinge to styrr uppe the Commons of the Towne to oppose them selves against the same governors and government and to cause a tumult and uproare within the same Towne, sett downe in wrytinge and attempted to be putt into practise by Thomas Spickernell..."¹.

Here they listed three aspects of this priest's agitation, by which they thought he had attempted to overthrow them.

His first allegation was that the common pastures - the Potman Marsh (formerly Portman Marsh) and the Town Downs - had been enclosed against the wishes of the townsmen (though some sixty years before Spigurnell's time!) and were being leased for long terms at very low rents. Thus Spigurnell was guilty of inciting riots against enclosures, for he had said that the free burgesses might "of their own auctorytie enter and dispossess the tenant (of the Marsh) and use the same as in

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/397/18, dated June 1594.

ould former tymes" and he had claimed that "the common ways and passage of the Town" in the Downs pastures were stopped up by the Bailiffs

"tendinge therby (as it may be presumed) to procure the under sorte of the people unlawfullye to assemble and with vyolence to uncloze and ley open the same grownde."

This was the most serious of his offences - similar cases in other places had gone before the Star Chamber - but his other two lines of attack were also calculated to disaffect the townsmen and "under sort". He complained of The Company's officiousness and excessive zeal: "there is no penall statute but the same is executed upon them to the uttermost" (which is also a comment on the paramountcy of the corporation in the town's affairs); they levied excessive fines upon "forreners" for the right to trade in Maldon and upon residents for "hogges going in the streetes and for many other smale matters and tryfles." Thirdly, he alleged, the feasts which the Bailiffs, Aldermen and Commissioners held at the Quarter Sessions and after the levying of subsidies were paid for with public funds. This was a shrewd blow if the poorer people of Maldon stood outside the Blue Boar Inn - as the men and women of Casterbridge gathered outside Mayor Henchard's dinners - whilst the corporation and their preacher or commissioner guests feasted within, and calculated to "inflame the hartes of the Commons of the Towne with yre and to move them to murmure and grudge against the governors," as this collection of slanders puts it.¹ (It may be noted that the dinners of three subsidy commissioners in 1625 cost £1 - 7s - 5d each and contained twenty

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/397/18.

two items. ^{1.})

Mr Palmer's dispute thus had a "spin-off" of additional grievances which bubbled to the surface as soon as he took a stand against The Company. Some were probably quite unfounded - certainly the allegations by Spigurnell about the enclosures and long leases at low rents were entirely false - but others, like the remarks concerning the corporation's harshness, were based on personal observations and formed a medium in which deep-seated resentment of the all-powerful bailiffs could be expressed. A haberdasher, Edmund Hunt, added the weight of his opinion to the general resentment in June 1594, saying

"that the chere of the towne was lost and the liberties of none effect" ^{2.}

and so had Mr Lock "used the meanes to perswade the people that the chere of the towne was lost and the liberties of no force; verie dangerous to the styrringe upp of lewde persons to resist auctorytie." ^{3.}

So far the term "The Company" has been used as if they stood

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1. D/B 3/3/397/22 (1625). The items were: boiled and raw oysters (3s 4d); boiled chickens (2s 6d); leg of pork and greens (3s); 2 puddings (2s 4d); 1 sirloin of beef (8s); 4 mince pies (4s 8d); 1 goose (2s 4d); 1 pig (2s 8d); breast of veal (3s 4d); 1 capon (2s 6d); 2 rabbits (2s); 3 roast chickens (2s); fried sole (2s 6d); 2 partridges (2s); soused soles (2s 6d); quince pie (4s); warden pie (1s 4d); apple tart (2s); dried neat's tongue (1s 4d); bread and fine beer (9s 4d); wine and sugar (14s 6d); and their horses' food (4s).
 2. D/B 3/1/8 f.137r.
 3. D/B 3/3/423/1.

together, united against these attacks, but by the middle of 1594 that was not so. Then "two or three" of the head burgesses (whose names are nowhere given) joined eight of the freemen and dissociated themselves from the two suits which the corporation had just begun in its own defence. One lawsuit was against Mr Palmer in the Court of High Commission, the other was against Jasper Smith, who had accused the bailiffs of imprisoning him unjustly. "Fyndinge them selves greved with many thinges" these men had written to the Privy Council and complained that the lawsuits had been commenced by Mr Vernon and Mr Brooke, the bailiffs, "out of malice and "not for any iust cause". Their complaint called in question the principle of corporate responsibility which should have been one of the great strengths of The Company. ^{1.}

In reply the bailiffs pointed out that they had taken counsel with their aldermen and head burgesses, "being the common counsell of the towne", declaring that they (the whole corporation)

"have the whole of the ordering and disposing of the matters and affairs that are to be dealt withall within the said Borrowghe" ^{2.}

which is an interesting statement in view of the ubiquitous formula "at Mr Bailiffs' commandment" used to warrant expenditure in the chamberlains' accounts. Secondly, the bailiffs pointed out that their critics had not availed themselves of their right to question the past year's expenditure at the General Assembly of Freemen in the January Court of Election, when they would "heare the yearlie accompt" and when a time was appointed

"for everie man to be at libertie to speake too and to be

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/422/2.

2. Ibid.

harde (heard) in any thing he shold except against or
 aledge to be undewlie dealt in, mencioned in any the said
 severall yearlie accompts."

However, a committee of four local gentry on the commission of
 the peace for the shire was appointed by the Privy Council to examine
 the chamberlains' accounts for the past six years (1588 to 1593 inclusive)
 and the dissidents were justified. The committee concluded that some
 part of the legal costs of these actions had been borne by the common
 chest of the borough and evidently felt that the bailiffs had not been
 justified in calling them suits of common concern to The Company, for they
 ordered that they should repay the appropriate sums to the chest.^{1.}

In the memorandum which relates this episode the writer was at
 pains to stress that only eight out of eighty freemen and only two or
 three of The Company of twenty four had dissented from the corporation's
 proceedings. Yet in another memorandum, concerning Soan, Morris, Lock
 and John Spigurnell, it was admitted that their enemies had created a
 considerable opposition and were believed to have attempted the over-
 throw of the common council. These men, with the aid of the dissentients
 in the ruling group had

"fayned to them selffes a Counterfeyt Corporacion"

which ("the more to defeace the lawfull government of the Towne") they
 claimed gave them "a greater hall than the Baylieffes".^{2.} So, during
 the spring and summer of 1594 the quarrel between Mr Palmer and the
 bailiffs brought to Maldon a threat of civil disobedience, open contempt
 for the common council and a secession among the ruling group:

1. D/B 3/3/422/2.

2. D/B 3/3/423/1.

"and what they (ie. the counterfeit corporation) have consulted upon in their assemblies, that might tende to the disgrace and reproache of the governors and government and slander of the Towne, haith beene published in the pulpitt, prattled in alehouses, affirmed to personages of honor and worshipp, and reported boithe in Citie and contrey." ¹.

"Greenheads" and "Schismatics"

Most of the dramatis personae of this narrative - Palmer, Gifford, John and Thomas Spigurnell, Morris, Brook, Pratt, Richard Williams and the venerable William Vernon - were immigrants; so, most probably, was Walter Lovell; and at least nine of thirteen witnesses hostile to Palmer (in an interrogation before the Court of High Commission) were immigrants. ². So, in a town which appears to have had a replacement rate of 50% of all its male, adult inhabitants in the ten years 1570-1580, the transiency of the population offers itself as an obvious factor in the dissension at Maldon. It could be suggested that it really represented a clash between the older inhabitants and a new, thrusting group of young men who sought to infiltrate and control The Company.

The case in point is the opposition of Palmer and his supporters to Mr John Brook, the "greenhead" of the vicar's sermon in 1594. Mr Brook was a newcomer to the freeman body: he was enfranchised in 1592 (and stated then to be a native of Bradwell-juxta-Mare) and was made an alderman immediately after his admission. Only two years later he was elected a bailiff and moved into the seniority of the town without serving any apprenticeship in the lower ranks of the headburgesses or

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/423/1.

2. D/B 3/3/178.

any cursus honorum of successive offices in the corporation. Two of Palmer's supporters, on the other hand, (Soan and Morris) were men whose membership of the corporation had been suddenly terminated; men apparently qualified for the aldermanic and bailiff's seat occupied by the new-comer Brook but now thrust out. By the end of 1594, too, The Company had become divided into those who claimed that the cause against Mr Palmer was a private affair and those (claiming to be a majority) who had aligned themselves with Mr Brook and Mr Gifford.

The collected descriptions of the corporation delivered by Robert Palmer correspond interestingly with the varied contemporary usage of the term "puritanism" which Dr Christopher Hill has surveyed.¹ Palmer called his opponents schismatics, young men, greenheads (ie. inexperienced) intemperate and factionous: epithets which correspond with early seventeenth century definitions of puritans as those who refused to accept or conform without question, who argued for reforms and were "ever discontented with the present government". John Morris' jibe at The Company - a sort of precisians - carries the same social and political implications, rather than the ecclesiastical meaning of observing the outward forms of religious affairs, for he was referring to their inhospitable attitude towards noblemen's companies of actors. Palmer also called them "hippocrites", which was another frequent accusation: "the hollow crew, the counterfeit elect", whose characteristics have formed a literary tradition from Malvolio to Mr Slope. Palmer's claim that they were anabaptists can be safely ignored and so, it will be shown, can his and Morris' statement that they were Brownists but two descriptions of particular interest are: a few base aldermen and such as loved not gentlemen. Besides echoing the contemporary allegations that puritans

1. C. Hill, Society and Puritanism (1964) pp.13-29.

were base-born ("no gentlemen, none but mean persons") they bring the matter home to the composition of The Company, its pretensions within the town of Maldon and the influence of Brook's supporters within it.

There is no means of finding out for certain who those three or four were who were members of The Company and who objected to the bailiffs' lawsuit. There are, however, two sources for establishing the names of some of Mr Gifford's supporters and John Brook's favourers: a list of the voters when Brook was elected an alderman in September 1592¹. and the depositions of witnesses before the Court of High Commission in 1594 - interrogatories ex parte Palmer to make good his case against Mr Gifford.² To these can be added the evidence of wills, which help to suggest possible relationships between the townsmen.

None of the material really substantiates the vicar's remarks and indeed the reverse is much more likely. There was indeed a distinct and recognisable group of townsmen who were favourers of Mr Gifford, but they conformed to the traditional pattern of borough government and sought to cleanse and improve it. They were "intemperate and factious" in the sense that they were critical of slackness and sought reforms, but it was the men who seized the opportunity of Mr Palmer's quarrel to vent their own feelings against The Company who were the real faction.

Yet this is to anticipate. Firstly the evidence for the opposition to Mr Palmer must be examined. For a start he spoke of Mr Gifford's followers as if they formed a single group but there were two quite distinct, informal associations of townsmen who favoured the preacher. This can be seen from Table 25, which sets out the evidence from a set

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/8 ff.89v - 90r. (September 5th, 1592.)

2. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/178.

of questions posed on Palmer's behalf. Sixteen witnesses were interrogated about their religious activities and about events in the quarrel between the vicar and the corporation. From their replies 23 names can be extracted of men (and one widow) who associated with Mr Gifford and each other in prayer and bible study meetings.

The larger group represents a closely associated religious "family" which actively supported George Gifford. It also included five members of the 1594 Company and three future members. At its head appears to have been John Maldon, with whom the associations of the rest of the group are the greatest. He was 30 years old in 1594 and he had become a member of the corporation when he was 28. Despite his name he was born at Chelmsford and probably he was a son or grandson of that William Maldon (also of Chelmsford) whose youthful sufferings in the protestant cause c.1540-1543 have survived in his personal narrative.^{1.}

Eight names can be appended to the list afforded by the replies of the witnesses to Palmer's questions. In particular there was William Rochell (a head burgess in 1593 and 1594) whose will includes legacies to George Gifford, "preacher of Maldon" and Mr "Raffe Hawdon of Langford" who was "an other Gifford", to John Pratt and Alderman Brook, and to Henry Hart and John Clark who, like Rochell, were newcomers to The Company.^{2.} This William Rochell obtained his freedom of the borough by his marriage to the widow of Alderman Richard Josua - the "ould rotten wolfe" - and she was also the daughter of that Alderman William Bantoft who had attempted to prevent Mr Frith from interrupting George Gifford's

1. Narratives of the Reformation, Camden Society 1st series, LXXVII, pp. 349-351.

2. E.R.O., D/ABW 32/55 (Jan. 1595).

sermon. Thus Rochell was closely associated with the puritan group and with the vicar's opponents. Late in 1594 he died and then his widow made a third marriage, this time with a Suffolk gentleman called John Martin. He in turn became a member of The Company (1595) and - outdoing John Brook - he was immediately elected a bailiff of the borough to accompany his father-in-law William Bantoft. Like Rochell, this Martin made bequests to Mr Gifford and Ralph Hawdon and must be counted as one of the godly of Maldon in this particular group.¹

Five of the 9 voters for Brook as alderman were members of this group and two more of Brook's supporters can be associated with them. One is Andrew Mumford, the oldest of them in terms of membership. He was referred to by John Pratt as "goodman Mumford" in his deposition before the High Commission - a term of respect used for the godly.² The second is Ralph Breeder, an immigrant from "Ayson" in Suffolk, who made bequests in his will of 1609 to Mistress Gifford (the preacher's widow, John Pratt and his son Elisha, Thomas Chese, Thomas Johnjohns, Jeremy Pledger and Ralph Hawdon (on whom was settled an annuity of £10), who were all members of this group.

So John Brook's supporters were mostly recent members of the corporation, attached to the cause of George Gifford and representatives of a distinct group within the town. Young men were prominent among them, though the group as a whole extended over a wide age-range. However, there is no evidence that they were separatists or schismatics.

1. PCC 24 Kidd (1599).

2. Pratt said that "there was one man in the town who had confessed to goodman Mumford that he had done John Pratt wrong." E.R.O., D/B 3/3/178 Article 13.

Indeed, Gifford was at pains to prevent any such movement. "He never used conventicles but ever preached and catechised in the Church" ^{1.} and in 1590 and 1591 he attacked the movement towards independent congregations in three pamphlets: A plain declaration that our Brownistes be full Donatists; ^{2.} A short treatise against the Donatists of England; ^{3.} and A short reply unto H. Barrow and J. Greenwood. ^{4.} Nevertheless, he did favour the creation of puritan cells - such as the group under present discussion - who formed a church within the church, to be the leaven in the lump. In their answers to the court and in their wills his followers appear attending each others' houses for prayer and supper, providing support for godly widows (like Mistress Gifford), bequeathing each other rings for remembrance, bibles, books of sermons or commentaries and witnessing each others' wills.

"Schismatic" can be more fitly presumed to apply, in its religious sense, to the second group which emerges from the analysis of the court interrogations. This had nine members (see Table 25) of whom three were certainly immigrants. ^{5.} Their replies to questions reveal little association with the first group and little with each other, except that they had all prayed with Anthony Topley. They met in two's and three's, haphazardly, as when Topley invited Richard Scott to accompany him "by chance, once or twice in the evening before he usually went to prayer" or when he "did bidd one Henry Matthews to supper one night with him and

1. Strype, op. cit., I, p.301.

2. Published 1590. STC 11862.

3. Published 1590. STC 11869.

4. Published 1591. STC 11868.

5. Anthony Topley of Stetchworth, Cambs.; Richard Scott of Wakefield; Richard Floud of Llandawes, who had worked at Boxford, Suffolk.

that after supper he stayed untill that he had sayd prayers: but denieth that ever there were anye more at one tyme than the said Richard Scott with him." In fact Topley declared that he usually prayed alone ("unlesse at one tyme when he was not verye well he desyred the sayd Richard Scott to praye for him.")¹. Remarks made to him by William Soan indicate also that he was usually independent of the larger group:

"understanding that one Anthonie Topley hadd benne produced to testifie in a commysseon betweene Mr Palmer and the Towne, (Soan) saied unto ... Topley presentlie after that he had ioyned him selfe with a sort of faccious fellowes;"

and he had sometimes made remarks about Mr Gifford's influence within the group which he would not have felt able to do had Topley been one of its members:

"and haith said unto the said Topley, when he haith perceyved anythinge done or ordred by the governors to his mislyking, that he knew who did paine that to be donne, saying it was G.G. dwellinge above".²

Nineteen years later, in 1613, Richard Scott took an oath of allegiance to the Crown as a Brownist,³ though his religious views could have hardened and altered in the nineteen years since 1594.

None of this group of nine men were members of The Company in 1592, 1593 or 1594. So it appears that the vicar was wrong to allege

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/178, Articles 3 and 4.

2. D/B 3/3/423/1.

3. "Ricardus Skott de Maldon predicta, shomaker, cepit iuramentum pro legiancia sua secundum formam Statutum, eodem Ricardus existens de sectu de les Brownistes." E.R.O., D/B 3/1/9 f.64r.

that the corporation was a gang of sectarians. Similarly he was wrong in his accusation that they loved "not gentlemen" and his description of them as "a few base aldermen" could have brought him before the Court of Chivalry as well as an ecclesiastical commission, for William Vernon - the companion bailiff to John Brook in 1594 - was himself a gentleman: he is so styled in his will ¹. and his descendants possessed a coat of arms; his daughter Susan was married into the Franck family who owned Beeleigh Abbey and were certainly gentry; his son William (who is styled Esquire on a monument in All Saints' chancel) married a daughter of John Butler of Thoby Priory in Essex, another armigerous family. So was John Martin, bailiff in 1595, a gentleman with estates at Bildeston, Chelsworth and Wattisham in south-central Suffolk. ² Ralph Breeder (number 22 in Table 25) did not aspire to the title of gentleman, although he had sufficient lands, plate and cash to maintain the style of living appropriate to the rank, but he was a friend of several of the local gentry, of Sir John Sammes of Wickham Bishops, ("my right worshipfull good freind" to whom he bequeathed £3-6s-8d to make a ring for remembrance), of Sir Thomas Harris of the Friars Mansion in Maldon, Lady Cordelia Harris, Lady Sammes and Henry Wentworth Esquire, a lawyer of London who had married Annastacy, daughter of old Alderman William Hale of Maldon. ³

It was, however, the vicar's allegation that his opponents in the corporation were "greenheads", men of little experience, intemperate

1. Will of 1605, PCC 70 Hayes.

2. Will of 1599, PCC 24 Kidd. A coat of arms was granted to Martin of Bildeston and Chelsworth by Sir William Dethick, Garter, in 1600 (Joan Corder, Dictionary of Suffolk Arms, Suffolk Records Society, VII, 1965, p.288).

3. Will of 1609, PCC 27 Dorset.

and "young men" which was the most misleading of his remarks. He implied that the faction existing within The Company - and one certainly did, as the narrative has shown - was identifiable with the men who favoured Gifford. Now in 1586, before Mr Palmer became vicar over Mr Gifford's head, the corporation recruited the abnormally high number of nine new members. As there were usually only one or two replacements a year this suggests some kind of revolution in The Company. Three of the new members of 1586 were still there in 1592 and voted for Brook - though another of them voted for Thomas Hutt - and these three were associated also with Mr Gifford. They were: Ralph Breeder, John Stephens and Thomas Albert. Other members of the larger group of Gifford's supporters were admitted after 1586: Richard Williams, John Maldon and Henry Hart in 1590, John Clark in 1591, Thomas Johnjohns and William Rochell in 1594; though Andrew Momford, another of the group, had been a member since 1582. So when Mr Palmer launched his campaign for the control of affairs in his church in 1592, he was faced with a corporation infested with men unlikely to permit him to oust their preacher. (See Table 26.)

This was Mr Palmer's own theme, expanded here by the evidence which can be found to amplify his points and it looks a plausible explanation of the dissension. Yet it will not do. Although the new, post-1586 councillors were opposed to Palmer and by September 1592 had become the majority in the corporation, an examination of how The Company was recruited shows that the Elizabethan common council was always populated with new men, with head burgesses and aldermen just as inexperienced as the 1592 and 1594 "greenheads". Moreover, to accept Palmer's view involves the assumption that a faction could seize power within the corporation. In fact, its organisation did not admit influence by minority groups; it was dominated by the two annual bailiffs and it had no democratic processes. Though there were opponents of

Mr Palmer within the common council, they cannot have manipulated its procedure.

Moreover, the newcomers of 1586 to 1594 were not initiating a new policy on the matter of Mr Gifford's preaching. The Company had always asserted its right to interfere in parochial and ecclesiastical affairs within Maldon. It had sponsored preachers in the 1570's, it maintained a town lecturer in 1570 (Mr Chapman, who was possibly a disciple of the would-be reformer Thomas Cartwright^{1.}) and it had been involved with the prophesying movement. It had also supported Mr Gifford in 1582 and 1584; it had been asked by the Dedham Conference to make its own petition to the Privy Council on behalf of the ejected, nonconforming ministers in 1586, separately from the petition organised for the County;^{2.} the bailiffs had written to Archbishop Whitgift in defence of Mr Gifford when he was deprived of his benefice in Maldon. So the puritan members of the corporation in 1592 and 1594 were maintaining an established policy, not initiating a new one.

In fact, none of the allegations made by any of the parties can be found to cast any true light on the cause of the dissension of the 1590's. Behind each particular grudge or criticism lies the general, primary cause and much better sense can be made of the controversy at Maldon if the members of the common council are viewed as a group who had become alienated from the main body of the townsmen and whose attempts to assert the authority of their corporation aroused an unprecedented quality of resistance.

1. MCA 1570 (2 payments of 20s to "Mr Chapman"), Venn and P. Collinson, op. cit. pp. 124, 128, 141, 185 and 204-88.

2. A. Peel, (ed.), The Seconde Parte of a Register, II, pp.188-189.

The Impact of Government

Long before the quarrel of Mr Palmer, Mr Gifford and the corporation threatened to tear Maldon society apart the control of the town had become the exclusive possession of a tiny group, the aldermen. They and not the common council who were the real, the effective ruling group. It was rare for one of the forcibly co-opted head burgesses to be moved up to the dais of the Moot Hall where the bailiffs and the aldermen sat and it has been shown that instead of taking a real part in the formation of policy these head burgesses simply assisted by giving their attendance in the common council. Yet they were implicated in the policies of the aldermanic group and they were as much targets for popular abuse or criticism as were the bailiffs.

Restiveness under so narrowly based a system of government is understandable, for in many ways the power of the corporation and of the earlier borough was arbitrary. It was of uncertain and undeclared extent, based on charters and records which were locked away behind the blank, brick walls of Darcy's Tower, guarded with oaths of secrecy by the permanent few in the corporation and expressed by an intrusive system of policing. But Maldon men never succumbed entirely to the dictates of the bailiffs and aldermen or their minions the head burgesses and constables. Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries there are examples to be found of their defiance of petty rules and tyrannical behaviour, sometimes by obstructiveness or by abuse, by blankly and openly ignoring the bye-laws, and by that most effective form of revolt, mockery and jest.

Such tactics were not confined to any one class of men. Gentry and artisans, freemen and "foreigners", residents and visitors alike abused The Company and the language in which they couched their grievances was uniformly coarse and injudicious:

"You are a lyer and an unhonest man and you have spoyled the town already."

"Too young...a jackanapes..."

"Knaves, villains and slaves..."

"Bankrupt."

"The poxe of god take all the Bayliffes of the town..."

"A fawlse, forsworne knave..."

"I care not a towrde for Mr Church - nor hym nor none of you all."

"The whole Companie of the xvjiiten headburgesses were all a Companie of periured knaves"

and a saddler of 1664 remarked that "he did not care a turd nor a fart" for any member of The Company. When one of the head burgesses (called John Maldon) accused a gentleman of the town for being "a common haunter of innes" and a drunkard ^{1.} he provoked the following response: the accused was John Shipton, a man of independent means, the brother of a London grocer and (according to his will ^{2.}) the friend of many godly clergy and pious widows of the district but he sent the head burgess a playing card showing the Knave of Clubs and called him "a cockescombe, and a foole and an asse"; he had seen more honest men hanged. When he was presented at the Quarter Sessions of Michaelmas, 1618, to answer the charge of drunkenness he told the assembled court

"that their were none but boores and clownes with the said Towne; and that their was none their fitt to governe; and that afterwards he would spitt the Baylieffes in their face and give them a boxe of the eare - but he would have his garde about him."^{3.}

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/478 (1618).

2. E.R.O., D/ABW 36/346 (1619).

3. D/B 3/3/477 (1618).

The borough customals all contained prohibitions against "opprobrium" and the revision of 1555 repeated the order made in the 1444 custumal that none might call any member of the common council "thyff, hursonne, fals, forsworne, cowkewold, knave, bakbyter or bawde" but this had to be re-enacted in 1571 after one of the head burgesses (William Browning) had "miscalled" another of his Company.¹ In 1555 it was also ordained that whenever the bailiffs inspected the ordinary markets they were to be accompanied by four head burgesses, the two Market Lookers and one of the Constables; and additionally by two aldermen and all the town constables on the Fair Days.

Every town took precautions for the protection of its corporate dignity and normally the bailiffs were able to maintain their authority with their pillory, their stocks, their ducking-stool, the cage and the tumbril. But the course of the dissension at Maldon shows how such men there chafed under the intrusive and omnipresent power of their bailiffs. When a challenger of the corporation's self-asserted rights emerged they were out with their protests and their grudges: that the magistrates were far too rigorous over trifling breaches of the town bye-laws; that The Company fed itself with public money; that it defrauded the common people of their grazing rights; that it inhibited the trade of "foreign" newcomers by imposing large fines upon them; that it was bent on destroying the good name of the borough and the good cheer of the town; that plays might not be performed.

Such a challenger came with Mr Palmer's institution as vicar in the place of Mr Gifford. His identification of his persecutors as The

1. 1555 custumal, paras. 6 and 26; 1444 custumal, para. 39; D/B 3/1/6 f.119r.

Company triggered off an outburst of complaints far greater and far more extensive than ever the town had experienced. Strengthened by his example, the issues for once sketched out boldly and simply in his own quarrel, the townsmen were encouraged to voice together their long-standing grudges and misgivings. Injustice, arbitrary fines, haughtiness, corruption, were their themes, amongst which the vicar's own remarks planted the suspicion that schismatics, men who wished to subvert the laws ecclesiastical, had wormed their way into the government of the borough. By 1594 these had entirely obscured Mr Palmer's original grievance that The Company were usurping his authority within the church of All Saints.

The transiency of the population of Maldon may be suggested as a cause of this restiveness. Possibly the immigrants, brought up under different systems of local government, were less ready to accept the authority of the corporation than a largely indigenous population would have been. Possibly those who planned to leave the town were prepared to run the risk of criticising it. Possibly some had been disappointed in hopes of establishing good trades there. It may alternatively be suggested that the small scale of the population and of the physical size of the borough may have helped to arouse dissension. Possibly Maldon was too small a place to bear so complete an array of authority as that which The Company possessed. These suggestions cannot be tested by any of the formal methods used to investigate modern social groups but it is still possible to consider how far these were factors underlying the swarm of complaints which were stirred up by the original ecclesiastical quarrel.

The inhabitants of Maldon lived in one or another of the four clumps of buildings which composed their town. Each of these was quite small in area and within each the rich and the poor lived intermingled. Thus the aldermanic group had no chance to withdraw themselves from

public gaze as they did in larger towns such as Exeter or Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, where the well-to-do and the very poor tended to be segregated in different parishes.¹ At Maldon they were surrounded by their subjects and every foible, every slip or error could be scrutinised by curious neighbours. Thus Thomas Clarke, a clothier and one of the bailiffs for 1571, was presented in his own Quarter Sessions court because the state of the privy in his garden gave offence to passers-by and neighbours.² The townsmen kept a watch on two gentlemen residents, Mr Edward Garrington and Mr William Waldegrave, who were attempting to move their fences out into the common land beside their houses.³ Mr Furnes and Thomas Clarke were admirals during their terms of office as bailiffs but they were also suspected to be smugglers.⁴

In some cases there were personal foibles which attracted mockery, as with Mr William Burles (six times a bailiff) of whom it was remarked that he

"did gorge and fill himself full of varieties of meats and victuals; and when he had so filled himself he would come out of the door like a hog and ready to vomit up that he had eaten." ⁵

Some of The Company did not possess the reticence or the self-control necessary to retain their integrity or to uphold the authority

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1. At Exeter and Newcastle the rich congregated in the central parishes, the poor in extra-mural suburbs. (MacCaffrey, Exeter, pp. 250-251; Howell, Newcastle, pp.11-12.)
 2. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/6 f.115.
 3. Ibid., ff. 39, 69 and 73.
 4. R.H. Tawney and E. Power (ed.), Tudor Economic Documents, I (1924), pp. 193-198.
 5. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/177 (c.1600).

of their corporation in this little town. "The vehement suspition and comon fame of incontinenencie with one Anne Gates, widdowe" and "like comon fame that he hath formerlye attempted the chastitie of the wife of one John Carden, deceased" led to the expulsion of Thomas Aldridge, Head burgess, from The Company in 1647;^{1.} and Benjamin Hussey was expelled in 1656 for drunkenness.^{2.} Michael Marchant, tanner, was deposed from his head burgess-ship "for that he was a common gamester and frequenter of inns and houses of common resort, drinking and spending much time there in derogation of the reputation of his place" but also because he was "vehemently suspected to have disclosed the secrets of his fellows of the house."^{3.} In this case the secrets were not the contents of the charter but the opinions passed in the common council or the discussions of the Affeirrors who assessed the fines which were to be imposed for various offences. Similarly in 1502 Robert Smith, a wardman, had told John Bantofte what was said in the Moot Hall about a theft from St Peter's church; and in 1503 John Trott reported in the alehouse of John Alday what his fellow wardmen had said about John Alday's wife. The first was only threatened with a fine if he committed a second like offence but the second of these wardmen was expelled and disenfranchised.^{4.}

One of the most unstable and choleric of the corporation's members was William Browning. He abused another member of his Company and attacked the wife and maid servants of another, striking her unconscious with "a shackell of yron or horse gives", laying about one of the maids

1. D/B 3/1/20 f.158r.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., f.62r. (1636).

4. Noted by Dr Andrew Clark, "Early Maldon Police Notes", Bodleian Library, Clark MSS V, ff. 22-56.

with a rope's end and pommelling the other on the neck with his fist.^{1.} When he became a bailiff in 1591 he misused his powers by attempting to impress for the army the aged and infirm Thomas Harding. One of the poor man's characteristics which appear to have picqued William Browning was a habit of relating improbable deeds in the militia of 1588

"Who was so good a manne as yew when yew weare at Tylburys Campe? For then yew sett forth your selff as though yew coulde fyght agaynste fourtie Spanyardes" ^{2.}

and for this he tormented the old man with threats of enrolling him in the Queen's forces which were to be sent to France. Moreover William Browning was one of Mr Gifford's supporters and Thomas Harding was an apparitor of the archdeacon's court and so, at that time, an officer of Mr Palmer. It has been seen already how this little act of private vengeance led to criticism of the corporation by the county gentry who were at the Official's Court when Thomas Harding could not appear because Mr Browning had put him in prison. Later still, in 1607, Browning openly criticised the corporation, making "unseemly speeches against the bayliffes and governors of the Burroughe, saying that they were but boyes in respect of the good that he did when he was in their place." ^{3.} Only his marriage to a daughter of Alderman William Vernon can have secured him time and again a place in the corporation which he abused and whose reputation he damaged.

If the ruling group found life uncomfortably public, so did the ordinary townsman suffer from the proximity of members of the corporation.

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1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/6 f.99 (1571).
 2. D/B 3/1/8 f.57r. (Sept. 1591).
 3. D/B 3/1/19 f.7v.

In a town where one in five of the inhabitants in any decade was likely at some time to be a member, the scrutiny which The Company could maintain over the townsmen's lives must have been intolerably close. Every minor breach of the bye-laws, every peccadillo, could be traced so easily, conned and noted in this over-staffed community: who, for instance, was not at the parish archery practice, whose stray dogs, horses, cows, hogs were those in the street, whose was the mastiff wandering the roadway unleashed, whose maid servant had brought in a load of faggots from the borough copses or failed to take the slops all the way to the town midden. The Quarter Sessions were filled with such minor affairs.

Apart from the scale of the town, the corporation's power could be felt through the work of the Affeirrors and here was one office in which a head burgess might take some independent action. The work of these men was to sit in committee after the Quarter Sessions and assess the fines payable for each of the day's convictions. Within the bounds of custom they settled the amercements as they saw fit and the charge delivered to them when they commenced work defined their duties thus:

"truly to affure and set all manner of amercements;
to high no man for malice, to low no man for love;
but to set every man after the quantity of the trespass."

A zealous group of affeirrors, hoping to find the ultimate deterrent for the regular petty offender, was thus able to increase the amercements according to its judgement and, if "quantity" were confused with "quality", that is an explanation of the complaints raised in the 1590's at Maldon about the levy of excessive fines for "smale matters and tryffles." Since the affeirrors were chosen from among the head burgesses, Mr Gifford's followers in The Company had a chance to act in the cause of reformation and the enforcement of good order. To them the fines may have seemed commensurate with the offences but to others such a line of thought may

have seemed hypocritical.

Furthermore, there were periods of slackness in the government of the borough and Mr Gifford's preaching had brought reformation after just such a time - so the corporation claimed ^{1.} - but the process of tightening up would clearly exacerbate the situation. This seems to have been what happened when, from about 1586, the supporters of Mr Gifford installed themselves in the common council. Maldon became an over-policed and over-punished community, where The Company scrutinised the activities of their neighbours and the common people observed and criticised the activities of their governors.

When Bishop Fletcher reported to Sir Robert Cecil on the dissension at Maldon, he considered that there were two issues, one ecclesiastical and the other civil. This view tallies with the evidence which has survived: the complaints of the townsmen against The Company and the split within the Freeman body over the lawsuits raised by the bailiffs are the lay quarrels; the attempt by Mr Palmer to obtain full control of the affairs of his parish church was the religious quarrel. When the vicar transferred his animosity from Mr Gifford to the corporation and mounted an outright attack on their membership and their authority, he managed to confuse the civil and ecclesiastical issues and this too the bishop noted had happened. The clergy, he said, took part on both sides "as well in matters of popular quarrels as points of doctrine."

The attack on the corporation's right to dispose of All Saints' church as it saw fit was itself a mixed affair of ecclesiastical and local political rights but it appears that Mr Palmer's remarks about the bailiffs and aldermen had no religious application of any value, although

1. Strype, op. cit., I, p.301.

they can be understood in the context of contemporary hostile opinion about the role of puritanism in society. Mr Morris and Mr Soan, the vicar's adjutants in this quarrel, did not bother themselves with the religious aspects of the dispute but confined themselves to comments on current civil grievances of the town. The split in The Company and the freeman body was not concerned with the merits of Mr Palmer's ecclesiastical claims. They were agitated by the bailiffs' use of corporate money for a lawsuit and disputed whether it was a personal or a corporate matter.

Ecclesiastical outcome

The final concord effected for these troubles is not so well documented as their substance. The decision of the High Commission is not extant and - significantly, perhaps - there are no complete lists of the corporation between 1596 and 1606, no adequate records of the admissions of freemen, few memoranda of the common council decisions during that time. Yet the broad outline of the results of the dissension can be traced.

The personal quarrel between the two clergymen seems to have been settled sensibly, albeit slightly to Gifford's material benefit. It appears from Gifford's will that Mr Palmer was required to concede him some part of the vicarage house and some share of the benefice, since Gifford bequeathed to Alderman John Brooke (that same Brooke whose election as a bailiff provoked Mr Palmer's sermon attacking the reputation of the corporation) his lease, held "by demise and grant of Robert Palmer, vicar of All Saints' and St Peter's" by indenture

"of and in the vicaradge howse, tithes, proffits and other things therby letten and devised,"

though the will also shows that Gifford was not resident there, since he

bequeathed to his wife Agnes "the messuage where I now dwell" with the proceeds of its sale after her death to the benefit of their children.¹ He continued to preach and to write, he was still the centre of a coterie of leading townsmen (including the aldermen Brooke, Breder, Burles, Garrington and Vernon, who were overseers of his will and nominated by him to administer his goods on the death of Agness Gifford) but, nevertheless, Robert Palmer remained the vicar of the two parishes.

So, despite the settlement of personal differences between the two men, there was no letting-up in the agitation to secure a living of some sort for George Gifford or for some one of his type. Fortunately the matter was described very clearly by an outsider, the stipendiary curate of St Mary's parish, William Arthur, in a letter to the Dean of Westminster in 1596.² He reported, first, that the bishop of London had established a rota for the preaching of the two clerics but, secondly, that special Wednesday sermons by Gifford were to be discontinued -

"my Lorde of London in his late visitacion compounded rather than cured (and that with very much adoe) the envyouse brawls and controversies betweene Mr Palmer and Mr Gifford, with these condicions and orders prescribed and to be kept on both partes, viz:

that they should by turnes preach on sondayes,
the other should catechize the afternoone, etc.

Mr G. his wonted Wednesdayes sermons utterly to cease;

1. London County Record Office, DL/C/359 (register "Sperrin" ff 210v - 211r): will of George Gifford, "clark, preacher of god's word in Maldon," 8th May, 1600, proved 31st May, 1600.

(I owe this reference to Dr A.J. Macfarlane.)

2. WAM 8125.

by which order his L. no doubt hoped to remedy the schisme and take away the dangerouse factions here amonge us, but howe happily may it please your worship now to heare..."

The curate explained why he needed to write about this affair to the Dean (since it was apparently of no concern to either of them). The supporters took little notice of the bishop's orders and were continuing to pester Mr Palmer that he would permit George Gifford to preach on Wednesdays in All Saints' church,

"promysinge Mr Palmer money for his consent, which he utterly refused"

whilst they rejected his wry offer to seek the bishop's permission to deliver the mid-week sermons himself. ("To preache on those dayes himself to his owne flock that desired so much teachinge, which they as obstinately refused except Mr G. might do it.") So they turned to St Mary's church at the bottom of the town, firstly asking the curate to allow the Wednesday sermons to be held there. Then chance put in their way an opportunity of which they made what seems at this distance deplorable use, for the tower of the church collapsed and destroyed the roof of some part of the nave:

"as men never satisfied...they have bene as earnestly in hand with me to suffer him to preach weekly in S. Maries, as it were in despight of Mr Palmer (I will not say of my Lorde himselfe), and offeringe upon that condicion ten poundes or a maine somm toward the settinge up againe of our steeple stayers and church roof, borne dowme with the fall thereof the very Wednesday before Shrovesunday last, which is thought will cost som threescore poundes to re-edify..."^{1.}

1. Ibid.

Except for Mr Bailiff Hutt, who did offer freely to subscribe to a rate of all the parishioners, the townsmen refused to subscribe to the repair work and rebuilding unless their favourite preacher was accommodated with its pulpit, and in fact it was only rebuilt c.1628 after a general collection under royal patronage.¹ The curate listed their alternative suggestions:

"some bid, lett it all fall, that the parish may fall to

Mr Gifford;

other would have it (to save theyre owne purses) the churches sold;

other say the verstry pulled downe to help"

whilst one of the aldermen (unnamed), who was paying only 6s 8d a year for the lease of a house owned by the parish and who was sub-letting it for 30s - "and such in reason as I think should be most liberall" - offered a contemptible 3s 4d towards the rebuilding.²

Additionally the curate mentioned in his letter another preacher called Ralph Hawdon who was a member of the Classis Movement in Essex,³ a graduate of Christ's College - like Gifford, though slightly junior to him⁴ - and a member of Gifford's Maldon circle. He was, in fact, a pluralist and an absentee, since he was vicar of Rayleigh (some fifteen miles south of Maldon and across the River Crouch) from 1594 to 1609 but

1. E.R.O., D/DQs 134 (1628, brief for a collection) and CSPD 1609 (letter about a petition to James I for the rebuilding of St Mary's, Maldon).

2. WAM 8125

3. Anglin, op. cit. p.436.

4. Gifford graduated B.A. in 1570, Hawdon in 1577 (Peile, op. cit., I, pp.98 and 124).

all that time up to 1600 he seems to have spent in Langford parish, two miles north of Maldon and from 1600 he was in the borough itself. However, the godly of the town do not appear to have held that against him and accepted him into their society. In 1594 William Rochell bequeathed £10 to "Mr Raffe Hawdon of Langford" and Hawdon's signature appears among the witnesses to that godly old man's will; ^{1.} he was also given £5 as "Mr Ralph Hawdon of Langford" in the will of John Martin in 1599. ^{2.} George Gifford was similarly favoured with substantial gifts by Rochell and Martin and it seems that Hawdon was specially associated with Gifford and his school of thought. William Arthur's letter especially links the two men in a reference which illustrates the dogged persistence of the puritans of Maldon:

"the phantasticall sort run by flockes ij or iij myles of(f)
to one Ralph Hawden, an other Giffard (so knowne to be this
two seaven yeares) or rather the same as well in consent for
his part as conceipte for theires"

to whose sermons Gifford's supporters went whenever Mr Palmer had his turn for preaching. ("If Mr Cyffard preach the church is full but if the other, not half so.")

Langford was in the Archdeaconry of Colchester; Gifford resided in a peculiar jurisdiction; both he and Hawdon thus took advantage of redoubts created by the difficulty of co-ordinating the canonical jurisdictions of the Archdeacons of Colchester and Essex and the Dean and Chapter of Westminster; and from those redoubts they combined from 1594 to effect a siege of Mr Palmer's parish. The issue was (as has been

1. E.R.O., D/ABW 32/35.

2. PCC 24 Kidd.

shown) no longer a matter of nonconformity but out of Gifford's original misdemeanour in refusing to subscribe to Archbishop Whitgift's Articles Touching Preachers (1584) there had come one guarantee of Palmer's security: Gifford had been deprived and, whatever the pressures exerted by laymen or the patron of the living, deprived he was to remain. In 1600 the matter resolved itself. Robert Palmer and George Gifford both died in that year and by their almost simultaneous decease the impasse dissolved itself.

When the patron, Richard Franke of Hatfield Broad Oak, presented his man for institution as vicar of All Saints' the bishop of London made no objection. The new vicar was Ralph Hawdon. So, after thirteen years the godly of Maldon and particularly the corporation had their way. And as Elisha's mantle fell to Hawdon, so did the gifts, the patronage and the respect which the pious townsmen had formerly bestowed on their great preacher Gifford.^{1.}

For sixty years the corporation enjoyed a delegated patronage of All Saints' and St Peter's benefice. After Hawdon, in 1620, came Israel Hewitt of Christ's College, chosen by their vote and with the corporation's guarantee of the private subscription raised to augment his income. After him, in 1650, came Thomas Horrocks, whose removal from his school house in Romford and the costs of putting the vicarage in order for him

1. 10s from John Wytham of Beeleigh, 1604 (E.R.O., D/ABW 41/41); 20s for the burial of William Vernon in the chancel, 1605 (PCC 70 Hayes); 10s from Elias Lufkyn, who styled him "preacher of Maldon" in 1610 (D/ABW 24/93); an annuity of £10 from Ralph Breeder (PCC 27 Dorset); 10s from William Lufkin, to whom Hawdon was "my loving Friend and Pastor" in 1618 (D/ABW 24/188).

The Company were prepared to pay out of the borough chest.¹ Hewitt and Horrocks were both admitted freemen of the borough without fine, in respect of their ministry. Additionally the corporation controlled the grammar school, which provided another opportunity for patronage of the clergy (and the new master of 1650, Robert Gouge, was also made a free-man). They also brought in preachers from the market area of their borough to augment the labours of their own clergy.

Thus one outcome of the dissension of the 1590's was a confirmation of the de facto authority of the corporation in ecclesiastical affairs, a completion of the trend which had become so marked in the early years of Elizabeth I's reign. In so far as overt dissension had been sparked off by the vicar's attack on the pretensions of The Company, Mr Palmer really lost outright. Yet his own persistence and tenacity cannot but be admired.

Civil outcome

One naked fact about the government of the borough after 1594 was apparent. The Company had been divided; schism was possible, the will of the aldermen really could be opposed. For four years the breach must have remained for a memorandum of an Assembly held in the Court of Petty View, December 1598, spells out clause by clause the harm which had been done. "Great mischiefs and inconveniences" were endangering the borough, "likely to cause not only the impeaching and violating of its Franchise but also to frustrate and overthrow its rights and liberties." The internal discipline of The Company had been flouted. Even aldermen who were "the onlie capeable of thoffice of Bailiffshippe...as by late experience haith been heretofore seene and tryed" had absented themselves

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/20.

from the Courts of Election of Officers. There was thus a danger that lesser men might, by default of the "onlie capeable" wealthier candidates, win their way to the aldermanic bench.^{1.}

The document has a smell of fear about it. The aldermen of 1598 were William Vernon, John Brook, Ralph Breeder, William Browning, William Bantoft and Elisha Garrington, all of them of the traditional ruling class of Maldon for whom two traditional nightmares had turned into actuality. The franchise of the borough could be lost and that danger had already been illustrated by the commission sent down from the Privy Council for outsiders to examine the accounts of the chamberlains. Moreover the commissioners had found against the bailiffs and aldermen in the use of corporate funds for their actions against Mr Palmer and their civilian critics and so had brought into dispute the principal of corporate responsibility for corporate action. The second nightmare was exemplified by Mr Palmer's sermon on Popular Election and by the attempt of Thomas Spigurnell to "rouse the commons" against the corporation: it was the possibility that the common men might seize the initiative in government, as they had attempted in their "counterfeit corporation."

As immediate action to safeguard the proper government of the borough (as they understood it) the aldermen carried out the obvious measure of re-enforcing the internal discipline of The Company. Fines were increased. Aldermen and head burgesses were ordered to appear personally at each Court of Election - a re-enactment of the old custom - and an injunction was issued that they might not leave that or the First Court of Quarter Session (which followed immediately on the election of officers) without specific licence from the presiding bailiffs.^{2.} A

1. E.R.O., D/DQs 133/1.

2. Ibid.

note of compromise can also be detected in the memorandum, an admission that the charges levied against the corporation had some basis of truth, for where it had been alleged that the feasts of The Company were paid for out of the borough funds, a scale was now laid down of payments by each grade of member, "for the better preservation, sparing and increasing of the common treasure and money of the said Town." As additional retrenchment which would avoid future criticism of financial policy, it was ordered that the Affeirors should themselves pay for the customary "diet" when they fixed the fines after the Quarter Sessions. The Auditors, too (who were wont to certify the annual chamberlains' accounts over a dinner) might in future only charge their firing, candles, bread and drink to the borough chest.

In fact the corporation did not save its reputation with the same success that it had preserved its ecclesiastical pretensions. After 1594 defiance of its franchise and its rights appears to have increased. Soon after its reform, in 1602, the corporation had to appeal to the Privy Council for help against one of their freemen, John Cade

"an inhabitant of the said towne and before a cittizen
of London, beinge of a verie proude and contencious spirit" ^{1.}

who had

"these divers yeres togeather verie willfully maliciouslie
and impudently prosecuted iniuste sutes against us in most
of the Cortes at Westm' and also had made divers severall
complaintes on us at severall times unto the LLs of her
ma't's most honorable privie counsell at the counsell table,
seekinge by all the meanes both our discredite and the over-

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/397/23.

throw of our Corporation and liberties, so did he likewise exhibite a longe and slanderous Bill of compl' not only against us but also ag't all the officers in our Towne before there H.H. in that said honourable Corte of starre chamber, charging us all with exactions, extortions and divers other misdemeanours in our severall places..."^{1.}

Cade had in fact disputed the ownership of a storehouse and a quay at Maldon Hythe.^{2.} The corporation won the case in Star Chamber but they could not get the costs which had been awarded them, for Cade was gaoled in the Fleet Prison. Hence this request for help from the Privy Council.

Then there were refusals to pay landcheap - by Sir Thomas Gardiner in 1599, by Sir Robert Sprignell in 1611, by Sir Henry Mildmay in 1616 - and a resurgence in 1618 of the ancient claim by the men of Heybridge to free passage for their colliers past the Hythe to the wharves in their own village. And the criticism, the slander, the opprobrium and the individual discordances within The Company continued. There was the case of an alderman, Robert Snape, who walked out of the assembly when the young John Soan was elected bailiff in 1613 saying

"I will not come more in this place to doe service ... I will not from henceforth come in his company or have to do with him ... You, sir, you are the author of all my wrong. I may thank you for all"

and threatening his fellow aldermen with a law suit:

"Well, my masters, will you set Mr Bailiffs and me together by the ears? As I am a man, Mr Bailiffs, I will have mine

1. D/B 3/3/423/25.

2. D/B 3/3/423/17.

action against you." 1.

Snape was, of course, expelled from The Company and just before that (in 1607) another alderman - the vintner and innkeeper Matthew Abraham - had been expelled because he had taken the side of a non-freeman called Jonas Harrison who had been prosecuted for calling the corporation "a Companie of periured knaves." 2.

The bailiffs and aldermen cannot be found to have gained in power from the quarrels of the 1590's. Perhaps they lost a little; possibly the procedure of the assemblies of "the House" had to be modified to admit actual voting and government by majority decisions. The admission of three freemen in 1619 was put to a vote and decided by a majority of 22 in favour. 3. The demolition of the Butcher Row (1620) was also subject to a majority vote and it seems that the discussion of the scheme led to three votes. 4. However, few examples of decisions taken by majority votes are left in the files of borough memoranda and in each of the cases quoted special circumstances may have made the procedure desirable. Each of the freedoms voted for involved charging entry fees different to the standard rates. The proposal that the Butcher Row be demolished involved leasing the cleared ground as a single site (so the motion implied and that was what happened 5.) and it was a matter

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/19 ff. 75v - 77r.

2. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/19 ff. 9v and 22r.

3. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/478.

4. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/393/4, 7 and 18.

5. The motion was "that the shoppes and buildinges called the butcherow shalbe sold for - (blank) - pounds and so taken downe and carried awaye and the soile whereon they stand let for xxj yeres for the yerelie rent of v li'" (*Ibid.*) In 1639 the whole site was leased to one man and before that it was leased entirely to Thomas Plume. (E.R.O., D/B 3/1/3 ff. 105-107)

involving the trade of so many that it would have been dangerous to make it a matter of decision for the two bailiffs alone. Similarly the choice of a new vicar of All Saints' in 1619 was the subject of a vote by the whole corporation, perhaps because the situation was unprecedented but surely also because past experience had shown how necessary it was to have the consent of the majority.

There is no evidence that voting was introduced in the Quarter Sessions to decide corporation orders until as late as 1676, when some rough notes of business conducted at the Michaelmas sessions state that it was "Voted by the Majoritye of the Bayliffes, Aldermen and Head-burgesses that ..." a barn on the borough marsh should be sold and that two gentlemen should have their freedom of the borough gratis.¹ Yet it is not very surprising to find at that date in the century the principle of government by majority generally accepted. All that can therefore be said is that voting on corporation business was not unknown after about 1600. It was accepted that, on some occasions at least, the "greater voice" was the best that could be achieved; that a minority dissentient to the general opinion could exist within The Company and did not necessarily tend to the utter undoing of the franchise of the borough. Yet the paternalist, authoritarian position of the bailiffs remained. That is clearly indicated by the texts of the borough oaths as they were written in a new copy c.1604: in them only the bailiffs' oath is personal and all the others are mere charges, even down to those for new decenners and freemen.² The formula warranting expenditure remained "at Mr Bailiffs' commandment." The hold over the corporation and the initiative remained with the few who maintained themselves for a

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/22.

2. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/3.

long period as members of the aldermanic group. Fortunately for those aldermen of the early seventeenth century, time could be a speedy healer of dissension because the "turnover" of the population was sufficient to erase most bitter or defiant memories within ten or so years.

But the last word here on dissension should rightly come from George Gifford. Whereas modern attitudes of mind have directed this examination of cause and effect, from his chamber in Elizabethan Maldon Gifford's mind sought an explanation of his situation by surveying the panorama of contemporary Europe. He observed sure signs of an impending Doomsday; the Holy Spirit was at work in the persons of godly reformers; the Pope and his seminary priests, casting off all pretence, were discernible as creatures of the Bottomless Pit. It seems, from his 1599 sermons on Revelations that he found this view acceptable, his own conflicts in a minor sector of the apocalyptic battlefield not without a place in the Divine plan; and so his mind came back to the solitary figure there in All Saints' pulpit, provoking the malice of the Devil by his steadfast witness for the godly:

"We must ever look for such stirs at the preaching of the gospell: it cannot be otherwise while there be devils." ¹.

1. George Gifford, "Sermons upon the whole booke of the Revelation," 1599.

Chapter 7

MALDON IN RETROSPECT

Differences between the borough of c.1500 and that of c.1688 such as could be ascribed to changes in purely local circumstances are by no means as obvious as might be expected, considering how momentous were the changes in English society at large during the intervening 188 years. It has been shown, for example, that the apparent change in the borough constitution in 1554/1555 consisted, in fact, of the extension, rationalisation and confirmation for the future of previous practice. Attempts to examine a change in the commercial and occupational condition of Maldon also break down under examination and it is impossible to reach any firm conclusions about changes in its prosperity. Topographical evidence merely mirrors that economic situation: there were changes but only in detail; the shape remained roughly the same, give or take a fallen tower here, a slight extension there, some in-building and some reconstruction here and there. Maldon existed by a constant process of re-structuring, piecemeal patching, subdivision and minor modification not only to its physical structure but also to its government, its economy and its ruling groups. The main outlines, the matrix, remained intact.

The real differences between early sixteenth and late seventeenth century Maldon have to be sought at a deeper level, for the borough was actually subject to constant change throughout those two centuries. There was too much purely local change and - as this study has laboured to demonstrate - it was no less than the constant replacement of the very lifeblood of the town because of the mobility of its population.

Quality and Quantity

If any rule can be applied to the ceaseless, almost random

shifting about of the Maldon population, it would seem to be that the locality, the nearer part of Essex, tended to provide the majority of immigrants but the more prestigious freemen and inhabitants tended to come from further afield. The quantity was recruited in the market area of Maldon; the quality was distinctively a contribution of long-distance immigrants. That may be observed from the admissions of freemen: many of the most influential (like Ralph Breeder, William Vernon or Thomas Furnes) came from Suffolk and from north of the Trent, yet the long-distance immigrants form only eighteen per cent of the known admissions of freemen, whereas eighty two per cent were Maldon or Essex born.

The point is also made by information which can be derived from the 568 surviving apprenticeship indentures between 1566 and 1660. No less than eighty eight per cent (510) concern boys born in Maldon and in parts of Essex within a twenty mile radius of the market place. If only those born in the town or within ten miles of it are counted, they still form no less than seventy four per cent of all the known apprentices. If the aggregate figures are further broken down by periods the same pattern is reproduced:

Percentage of all apprentices born within 20 miles

1566-1580	90% (where 100% = 113 apprenticeships)
1581-1600	81% (where 100% = 202 apprenticeships)
1601-1620	94% (where 100% = 139 apprenticeships)
1621-1640	92% (where 100% = 74 apprenticeships)
1641-1660	90% (where 100% = 40 apprenticeships).

Even though the enrolled apprenticeships are nothing like a complete record of the numbers actually indentured in that hundred years, the overwhelming proportion of local boys is a convincing demonstration of the preponderance of Essex natives in that sector of the population.

Nevertheless, this generalisation needs modification. The number of long-range immigrants decreased and - more important - their influence declined during the middle and later years of the seventeenth century. Thus Maldon was a more "cosmopolitan" community during the sixteenth century than it was around the time of the Restoration (excepting the single instance of Mr Anthony Gratiano in the 1670's). Between 1500 and c.1570 aliens also had a distinctive place in the economy of the town, just as they seem to have done in the general economy of much of East Anglia, whereas in much of the seventeenth century the borough was populated chiefly by Essex men and governed by Essex men.

Immigration at Maldon during the sixteenth century must be compared with that of early sixteenth century Norfolk, which has recently been demonstrated by Mr R.A. McKinley in his study of Norfolk surnames.¹ He has indicated a pattern of movement very similar to that of the very much smaller case of Maldon: most population mobility was fairly localised but there was also an inflow of people from more distant areas. Just as most Norfolk "locative" surnames have been found to form groupings indicative of short-distance migration, so does the evidence of litigants, freemen's admissions and apprenticeships indicate a special link between Maldon, mid-Essex and north-central Essex. Maldon also recruited in the sixteenth century from neighbouring counties (Suffolk, Norfolk, Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire) where late-medieval Norfolk recruited from Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire, Suffolk and Essex. (Incidentally, Mr McKinley noted immigration from Kent but Maldon does not seem to have ever had any clear communication with that county.) Furthermore, both Maldon and Norfolk drew immigrants from Yorkshire and the extreme North-West of England.

1. R.A. McKinley, Norfolk Surnames in the Sixteenth Century. (Leicester University Press, 1969). See especially pp.20-33, 40-44 and 55-56.

Clearly, then, the range of migration which has been noted in the sixteenth century population of Maldon was part of a phenomenon operative in the whole of East Anglia at least. Yet it is also clear that by c.1600 there were changes afoot and the rule begins to break down. By that time, too, the second modification of the general rule "Quantity from the locality, Quality from further afield" begins to be apparent. That was the increasing contribution made to the social life, economy and government of Maldon during the early seventeenth century by gentry (and widows of independent means) who seem to have included many members of local families. It is well to remember that short-distance migration (as described in Chapter 2 above) was always the dominant factor in the population structure of Tudor and Stuart Maldon. Attention has been given to the contribution of the long-distance immigrants but for this final, generalised prospect of the town, the effects of the more predominant local mobility must be examined.

Maldon and the local community

The market area of Maldon formed a community held together by kinship and by common commercial and agricultural concerns. It was bound by common catastrophes, dangers, pressures and opportunities and it maintained constant inter-communication through its wayfaring life, the markets and fairs, the special occasions which drew men to one place or another from all over the market area. That area was very large. It reached up to north-central Essex, to the headwaters of the Stour and the Colne; westward it went ten or twelve miles out to Chelmsford and the fringes of the Roding villages which bordered on Hatfield Forest but southwards it extended down to Epping Forest and the Thames-side marshes. Many inhabitants of Maldon had families in that countryside, either in parental homes (from which they had migrated to Maldon) or the families of their brothers, sisters and children who had migrated from the town.

Maldonians also had manifold points of contact and co-operation with that local community. Some had fields, crops, cattle, salt-cotes or woodlands there; others had ships at work along the coasts of the Thames Estuary and the North Sea; whilst non-residents had houses, shops, stalls and quays in Maldon. Besides the resident freemen the town clerks always had on their books a number who lived outside the borough (varying from about 20 in the 1590's to nearly 40 in the 1630's) who provided another link between town and country.

The drama provides a reasonably well documented example of cultural links between the settlements of the area during the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. There were several "native" plays which went on tour, so that the borough chamberlains in 1469 made payments to the performers in Maldon of the Stowe St Maries' play, the players of Latchingdon, a performance by the Earl of Essex' Players at the Corn House (ad domum frumentum ludentibus) and the players of Sandon, Ulting and Woodham Ferrers.¹ In 1530 the Heybridge Play went to Maldon and then out through the villages as far as Tollesbury, Coggeshall, Terling, Felsted and Woodham Ferrers.² A performance of Maldon's own play in 1540 received contributions of cash from a Londoner, a Chelmsford man and the inhabitants of Great Dunmow. Its scenery was made by a Chelmsford painter; a London "professional" produced it; Prittlewell and Rayleigh were involved with it (though how is not clear).³ In 1562 the producer of the Chelmsford "native" play was engaged to produce the Maldon Play

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1. A. Clark, 'Maldon records and the drama.' Notes and Queries 10th series, VII and VIII (1907).
 2. J.E. Oxley, Reformation in Essex, (Manchester, 1967) p.27.
 3. W.A. Mephram, 'Municipal Drama at Maldon.' Essex Review LV (1946) and LVI (1947).

and the next year the dramatic wardrobe of the town was bought by two Braintree men.^{1.}

After c. 1560 the drama became the province of professional touring companies but in its place as a local activity where ideas and attitudes could be both shared and inculcated, Essex men put sermons and lectures as their group activities.^{2.} There were in the 1560's and 1570's five centres of prophesying within the market area of Maldon: at Romford, Horndon-on-the-Hill, Brentwood, Chelmsford and the borough itself. (There was another, too, at Colchester.)^{3.} There was also a Classis of ministers at Braintree in the 1580's, presided over by George Gifford of Maldon. These occasions provided market-folk with demonstrations of preaching ability and public moderations on the rhetorical or theological skills of the clergy of their area. At Maldon in 1573 they could hear an apprentice preacher ("Mr Andrewes") and a "Mr Malson and his colledger."^{4.} They could also enjoy a sermon by Archdeacon Walker, when he preached "against our play" on the second day of the 1573 prophesying.^{5.}

Tudor and Stuart men were (perforce) good listeners who understood the art of participation in sermons and lectures. The preachers, for their part, provided entertainment and general instruction as well

1. MCA 1563.

2. Collinson, op. cit. pp. 372-374.

3. Ibid. p.171.

4. MCA 1573. Bartholomew Andrewes was Preacher at Fordham, Essex, in 1577 and curate of Rochford in 1594; in 1600, after a career as a minister, he graduated B.A. at Peterhouse, Cambridge. (Anglin, op. cit. p.339.)

5. MCA 1573.

as divinity. George Gifford's printed sermons are full of history and geography, while some manuscript notes of the later seventeenth century preserved in the Plume Library at Maldon show that congregations received linguistic analysis of Hebrew and Greek variant texts and comparisons of commentaries by the Fathers and recent Reformed divines in the course of their sermons. The pulpit was a purveyor of popular education. As a mark of esteem the chaplain of the Earl of Sussex in December 1573 received a "diet" costing 9s 4d after "his most learned sermon made in the parish of All Saints" (three to five shillings was the usual sum expended on such meals.)¹ As social occasions, too, the market day sermons were events of some consequence in the life of the local community. Sir John Bramston remembered that in Maldon c.1670,

"neighbouring Ministers preached on the bailiffs' feast-days and on their market days, for in my memory that was usual and the nobility (as two Earls of Sussex who lived at Woodham Walter after New Hall was sold to the Duke of Buckingham) came very often to the Saturday market-day sermons, as also did the gentry."²

So far as they can be identified, the preachers mentioned in the chamberlains' accounts were generally clergy of the market area of Maldon but carefully selected so that their sermons provided a regular stream of puritan views for the market folk, the gentry and the corporation. Thus a preacher of 1608, Ezekiel Culverwell, belonged to a distinguished puritan circle: one of his brothers-in-law was Laurence Chadderton, first Master of Emmanuel College; another was William Whitaker, Regius Professor of Divinity and Master of St John's College (Cambridge); and

1. MCA 1573.

2. Sir John Bramston, Autobiography, p.376.

William Gouge who rebuilt Blackfriars in London as a preaching-house was his nephew. The year after his sermon at Maldon Culverwell was deprived of his rectory (Great Stambridge, Essex) for nonconformity; so was another 1608 preacher, William Negus, rector of Leigh, who had already been suspended from that benefice in 1584 for refusing to wear a surplice.^{1.}

Clergy of that sort complemented the preaching of Maldon's own special ministers, Gifford, Hawdon and Hewitt, whose reputation attracted visitors and thus business to the town. In that valuable letter to the Dean of Westminster about the activities of Gifford's supporters in 1596^{2.} the incidental commercial benefit of having a popular preacher is reported in connection with Gifford's Wednesday sermons: the supporters alleged

"that many of them are greatly decayed and become poore
for wante of the concourse of people on those dayes, by
whom they were wonted many wayes to gayne money,"

Gifford himself described how sermons by popular preachers drew crowds from many parts of the countryside. In The Countrie Divinitee (1582) he makes the Atheist in his dialogue complain how "now they run in the week-days and beggar themselves" and how people even went off to other towns to hear sermons when they should have been at work.^{3.}

Outside church the inns of the market place provided further general contact between townsmen and countryfolk, bringing together news, opinion and anecdote from north Essex and Thames-side. An intoxi-

1. MCA 1608; W. Haller, Rise of Puritanism pp.67-68; Peile, op. cit.

I, p.119; Venn and R. Newcourt, Repertorium Parochiale Londiniense, (1708-1710), II, p.384.

2. WAM 8125.

3. Collinson, op. cit. p.373.

cated Maldon shoemaker was heard to say in the Blue Boar (in 1579) alta et aperta voce that he hoped

"there might be a change either by the queen's mariadge with the Frenchman or by her deathe, for then he hoped ther wolde be a pardone and the sonne sholde shine in on our backside and he sholde inherit his father's lande." ¹.

He was in the company of another shoemaker of Billericay.

Yet Maldon held no pre-eminence among the townships of its local community, except by its borough status. Its inhabitants travelled as much as the countrymen. One, at least, had a shop in Braintree market and Joan Anderson met her "dead" first husband on a routine business trip to Chelmsford market. Maldon was but one of several markets; it shared its market area with Braintree and Brentwood, Rayleigh and Chelmsford and Witham, besides smaller markets like Burnham-on-Crouch and Castle Hedingham. Thus reports of Mr Palmer's gambling with Mr Frith at Romford were quickly retailed in Maldon and the corporation in 1594 was keenly aware that the factious goings on in Maldon were common talk over a wide area, "prattled in alehouses, affirmed to personages of honour and reported both in city and country" as they complained.

The numerous schools of the area also deprived the borough of any role as the educational centre of the community - nor did townsmen make much effort to improve the situation - and similarly the other markets provided sermons and prophesyings to balance Maldon's contribution to the cultural life of the community.

Economically, too, Maldon was not a centre nor dominant. The occupations of its inhabitants were shared with the whole region - in

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/6 f.236v.

shipping, livestock, market gardening, brewing, leather and metal work - since these activities were dispersed over the whole region and lacked any formal craft organisations. On the edge of the northern region there lay, too, the large ports and markets of Colchester and Ipswich, which certainly monopolised most of the traffic in textiles (except that some central Suffolk clothiers preferred to transport finished cloths to London for sale ^{1.}) and the London market certainly channelled the food and drink trade of the southern half of the county.

However Maldon did act as the chief supplier of coal and iron ore which came into the Blackwater from Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The trade had been a Maldon speciality since the fifteenth century and the tolls imposed by the borough were a constant source of friction between the townsmen and countrymen. Despite efforts by men of Heybridge in particular to break the corporation's privilege the rights of the borough were successfully defended right through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, until in the 1790's the Chelmer Canal was constructed by which coal supplies could be transported across country from Heybridge Basin to Chelmsford. Unfortunately the chief source of information about the coal trade would be the Water Bailiffs' accounts (a sub-section of the annual chamberlains' accounts) but they are often recorded only as composite receipts of all the dues collected by that official. It is therefore impossible to chart the quantities of coal imported whilst the absence of complete tables of the dues imposed in the port (which were several times revised) precludes any calculation of general trends in Maldon's sea-borne trade, of which coal was certainly an important part.

Anyway, the accounts could only reflect the income derived by the

1. G.A. Thornton, History of Clare, Suffolk (Cambridge, 1928) pp.160-164.

corporation, not the profits of the wholesalers who owned or leased the coal heaps which littered the Hythe waterfront. Maldon men appear to have operated their coal trade on a simple "cash-and-carry" basis rather than by organising the distribution of supplies. It was the countrymen who complained of

"the tedious way to the quay of Maldon and dangerous
for horse and man in regard of the straightness of the way
and steepness of the hill when they are loaden"

in 1641,¹ which implies that the carts on which the corporation charged a toll of 1d each belonged to them. So long, too, as the corporation could levy the higher tolls on colliers going into Heybridge Creek, it was not inclined to stop the actual sale of coal in that village. Their right was not to a monopoly of the coal trade but to a toll on colliers which did not use the Hythe of Maldon. In the 1630's a merchant called William Slater regularly sold coal and iron ore at Heybridge Creek (importing 662 chalder of coal between 1638 and 1641.²) In 1641 the tolls were raised and the freemen evidently demanded the imposition of a complete monopoly so that Mr Bailiff Plume seized the vessel of Slater

"who doth use to serve the country of Heybridge, being the
only man, all men else being driven from buying of coal by
reason of the turbulency of the corporation"³.

but he was soon back in business, importing 1,223 chalder of coal in

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1. House of Lords Record Office "Petition of the inhabitants of that part of the county of Essex which is served with coal from the channel which cometh up to Heybridge by Maldon," June 25th 1641.
 2. MCA 1639 and 1640.
 3. House of Lords Record Office, petition.

five years between 1641 and 1647. So the coal trade with the local community was not completely controlled by the borough freemen; countrymen could decide whether the higher prices outside Maldon (which resulted from the high import dues paid to the borough) would be offset by the greater cost of carriage from the Hythe.¹ When they really exerted themselves the freemen were certainly able "to starve the country by not parting with coal but at their pleasures and at their own rates"² but that was only occasionally the actual practice. Even in this aspect of the commerce of the local community there was a tendency for the dispersal of supplies and certainly strong resistance to monopolisation by the borough freemen.

Similarly Maldon provided a special service through its facilities for recording debts but they were only short-term (as has been shown) and could not offset the damage which warfare, piracy and accidental loss of freight caused to commerce. Neither in coal wholesale trade nor in moneylending did Maldon secure a control of any sector of its market area. The town was completely involved with the commerce and the social life of its surrounding countryside but of it, not over it.

Emigration

Mr McKinley's study of Norfolk surnames suggests that population mobility was localised to a great extent, at least in the 1520's in that county. There was movement but for the most part of short range. It would also seem likely that around Maldon there was similarly a great deal of localised migration for two reasons: the wealthier townsmen have

1. This is not stated in the text of the 1641 petition but is written in the summary on its front cover page.

2. Ibid.

been shown to have invested in country property and the evidence of non-resident property owners indicates a tendency for Maldon people or their heirs to move into the market area of the borough; possibly their migration also created a system of sponsored movement for lower income families of the town.

It is, of course, impossible to trace the movements of emigrants in detail since there are no centralised pools of information such as the apprentices' indentures, bills of impressment and freemen's admissions from which immigration has been described. However, it can be shown that some freemen moved into the local community from the memoranda occasionally added to the lists of the elections of officers in the early seventeenth century:

John Clarke, who refused election as a Bailiff in 1630

because he was resident then in Great Baddow;

John Sammes, J.P. in 1629, who went back to his family home
in Langford in December 1629;

William Hutt (head burgess) who moved to Terling in 1630;

Thomas Clarke, alderman, who moved with his family to Chelmsford in November 1641;

and Richard Legge (head burgess) who moved with his family to
Prittlewell in 1639.

Localised movement of that sort (for the first four moved only within a ten mile range and Legge only some 25 miles) has also been shown for the Maldon family in the early seventeenth century and it is also likely that Thomas Young, who became a bailiff without previous service in the corporation in 1589 and was only an alderman for one year after that, can be identified with the Thomas Young, gentleman, who lived at Young's at Newland, some three miles west of Chelmsford, and was buried in 1593 in Roxwell parish church (where there is a brass bearing his coat of arms.)

There is one other case of movement by a member of the corporation but it seems to be atypical of the general pattern. In December 1637 Alderman John Ruck asked permission to vacate his office because he was about to go with all his family "to partes beyond the seas" and on March 29th 1638

"Thomas Ruck gent. and Hawkyns his servant and Joseph Hills and Wayte his servant took everie of them the oathes of Supremacye and Allegiance to his majestie before the Bailiffes and Mr Thomas Plume, one of his highness Justices of his peace within this Burroughe in the Mootehall of the same, the said persons being bound for the plantacions in America called Newe England." ¹.

There they founded the township of Malden in Massachusetts, on the banks of the Mystic River. Emigration to America was a special characteristic of East Anglian and Essex population movement in the seventeenth century but if more Maldon families crossed the Atlantic then they only did so after first moving out of the town and into some part of the market area.

It could be argued that since the bills of impressment of the 1620's show workmen and serving men moving from Suffolk or even further afield, it is also likely that movement among the lower income groups out of Maldon was sometimes long-range, taking them into quite different communities (just as, for example, Joan Anderson's life took her from Totnes to Truro and then to Maldon). Since they were not tied to the locality by property or by the demands of family business, this seems reasonable except for the fact that migration really needed sponsorship if the travellers were to avoid the violence meted out to mere vagrants.

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/20 ff. 72v and 76v.

At least they needed a certificate and for that they would need to convince a Maldon Justice of the Peace that they had a place to go to. Between 1597 and 1662 the laws of settlement began to harden and after the enactment of the Settlement Act in 1662 it seems unlikely that movement except by sponsorship or to and from relations was possible. Possibly, then, emigration from Maldon bore the same characteristics as immigration: at first, in the sixteenth century, a marked degree of long-range emigration and then, in the seventeenth century less and less movement over long distances and at all times the greater part of movement restricted to the local community.

Sed quis custodiet ipsos custodes?

It is evident that Maldon was committed to a passive role in its local community. Its privileges, its authority, the franchise of which its official decrees so proudly boasted, related only to the government of the people who actually lived within the borough precincts or were temporarily there. Only twice are there instances recorded of voluntary co-operation with other men of the local community. One was in 1553, when East Anglians rose in favour of Mary Tudor during the Duke of Northumberland's attempt to enthrone Lady Jane Grey. The Maldon accounts record expenditure for two men "going towards the Queen's Majesty this year" and £22 "which was given to the Queen's Majesty this year." The incorporation of the borough was made the next year without fine because the townsmen had given their support to the Queen during John Dudley's rebellion. Self-interest also characterised the other instance of co-operation, when the Bailiffs entertained the High Sheriff of Essex and the Bailiffs of Colchester at the Blue Boar for two meetings "concerninge the dividint of monyes imposed upon the said Incorporacions and other maritime townes in the counties of Suffolk and Essex for the providinge of a shipp of warre of 700 tons" and attended two other meetings about

Ship Money at Rayleigh and Chelmsford. There is no information about the corporation's activity during the Armada crisis (since the 1588 accounts are lost) but during the Civil War the greatest part of the borough's military expenditure was for self-defence¹ and the objects of expenditure during the siege of Colchester (1648) suggest self-interest rather than determination that the Parliament forces should regain that town. All other military expenditure was dictated by the Lord Lieutenant or the Privy Council.

Even within their own borough the governors of Maldon appear to have been almost entirely subservient to the dictates of the local community. The gentry and the nobility resident in the area, who occupied the commission of the peace in Essex and controlled the general local government of the county through the Quarter Sessions and the Grand Jury were thus the real arbiters of Maldon policy. They, to whom bailiffs and aldermen scraped and bowed assiduously, were the keepers of the borough council as much as they were controllers of the county outside its boundaries. That was of course never openly stated although it was tacitly admitted by the corporate gifts of fish, fowl, flesh, oysters, sugar and wine with which the Mildmays, Harrisses and Sammes, Frankes, de Veres, Radcliffes and Riches were courted and, conversely, by the occasional rewards for obedience and marks of good will towards their incorporation which the freemen were sent by these great personages of the county.

The religious policy of the borough bears witness to the control of Maldon by the gentry. There is no evidence, for example of heretical tendencies among the townsmen in the first half of the sixteenth century. On the contrary, the leading townsmen were apparently conservative. The ex-abbot of Beeleigh lived on in the neighbouring parish of Ulting (to

1. See Table 24.

which he had providently collated himself in 1515) and the church of St Giles' Hospital continued to be used after the dissolution of the foundation (1536), since William Stokes, the farmer of the Spital pasturelands, made provision in 1539

"every yer to have at sent gyles chapell a masse on Mary Magdelensday and a masse every sent gyls day" ¹.

and the altar was still standing there in 1565 according to the arch-deacon's visitation report. ² William Stokes was also prepared to treat the ex-abbot as if his monastic life continued, asking that

"Sir John Copshef, late abbot of byley have to pray for me yf he lyfe: iij ^{li} vj ^s viij ^d."

Maldon's play, which appears to have concerned the life of St John Baptist, was performed until 1562 and in the early years of Elizabeth I's reign one of the Bailiffs, Robert Gaywood, was still hopeful that he could have his obsequies solemnised with the old ritual which suited his rank (1559):

"such honest helpe and service as the Law will suffer, as they can be gotten or provided, with clarkes to mynistar such service as at that time shalbe appointed to be used and donn at the funerall"

with wax tapers (5 of a quarter of a pound each, 10 of 1d value each) to be carried "during the tyme of thadministracion and other obsecutesby five honest free men" and a Month's Mind attended by the bailiffs and aldermen. ³ John Church, his colleague, was another adherent of the old faith. An examination conducted in June 1558 (during the last

1. E.R.O., D/ABW 33/68.

2. E.R.O., D/AEV 1.

3. PCC 2 Mellershe.

months of Queen Mary's reign) shows him walking the High Street to enforce the solemn observation of the feast of Corpus Christi. Finding the shop of Henry Pynell open he asked him what day it was. Pynell replied

"Yt is Thursdays."

"I knowe yt is Thursdays" said Church "but yt is more, for yt is Corpus Christie days."

"Corpus Christie days?" then said Pynell, "whether is Corpus Christie a man or a woman?"

"Yt is the Feaste of the bodie of god."

Then said Pynell to John Church

"Yt is the Feaste of the Romysh masse and as for you, you are more the pope's frynd then the quenes." ^{1.}

Behind John Church and Robert Gaywood there was a weighty group of Essex gentry who were also supporters of the Marian reaction. Five of the M.P.s for Maldon during her reign were active in the attack on heresy in Essex: two lawyers, Anthony Brown of South Weald and Richard Weston of Skreens in Roxwell, Roger Appleton, John Wiseman and Sir Edmund Tyrell of Beeches in Rawreth parish. ^{2.} They were all especially involved with the seizure of property belonging to persons who had fled overseas but Tyrell was also active in the arrest of heretics and he was prone to violence and the use of torture. ^{3.} Moreover, he was especially connected with both Church (his brother-in-law) and Robert Gaywood. ^{4.}

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/5 f39v.

2. Oxley, op. cit. pp.159 and 226.

3. Ibid. p.232.

4. PCC 2 Mellershe and W. Metcalfe (ed.), Visitations of Essex (Harleian Society, 1868-69) sub 'Tyrell.'

It is also possible that their colleague in Maldon, John Boswell, was the same person as the John Boswell who acted as clerk to the Bishop of London's commissary in Essex and helped Tyrell in the examination of suspected heretics.^{1.}

There was another aspect, too, of the corporation's assistance in the promotion of Catholicism in Maldon. Their charter of incorporation of 1554 was made at the request of Sir Robert Rochester of Terling, the faithful Comptroller of the Queen's Household. When the revised charter of 1555 was being negotiated the borough accounts show payments for a messenger going to "Mr Rochester's" and a tip of 2s "to Mr Comptroller's servant for bringing the buck that Mr Comptroller did give to the town this year" to celebrate the new charter. The burgesses got a corporate government and a buck; the court got the compliance of the borough in the counter-reformation; and the gentry of Essex got their seats in parliament.

Thirty years later the situation had changed completely. Later Elizabethan Maldon was controlled by puritan peers and puritan gentry of mid-Essex and southern Suffolk. Partly the change was facilitated by the break-up of the de Vere estates in Essex and East Anglia, for the family had been landowners in Maldon and John Church and another member of the corporation associated with him in the Corpus Christi business, Anthony Sparrow, were farmers of the de Vere lands in the borough.^{2.} Similarly two other members of the Church family - Bartholomew Church of Earls Colne and Robert Church of Castle Camps, councillor-at-law - were respectively a gentleman servant and Steward of John de Vere.^{3.}

1. Oxley, *op. cit.* p.226.

2. E.R.O., D/DU 65/72A. Transcribed extent of de Vere manors, 1563.

3. Pedigrees in 1612 and 1634 herald's visitation. John Church was born at Braintree, about 10 to 15 miles from Earls Colne and Castle Camps. (W. Metcalfe, *op. cit.*)

But by 1570 John Church and Anthony Sparrow were dead, Church's son had moved out of the borough and the heir to the estates, Edward de Vere, had begun to gamble his property away. At the same time the composition of Maldon society was being fast replaced by immigrations and the gentry of Essex and Suffolk were beginning to patronise the more extreme clergy of the Church of England.

Maldon became puritan because the gentry willed that it should be so. They patronised the preachers, they protected them and their adherents, they began the provision of educational facilities with which to raise a new generation of godly divines. Emmanuel College was founded by Sir Walter Mildmay of Apethorpe, Northamptonshire, whose relatives were the Mildmays of Moulsham and Little Baddow; Sidney Sussex College was founded by the widow of the Earl of Sussex, who often hunted in his park at Woodham Walter, adjoining Maldon, and who lived sometimes at New Hall, Boreham.

The control of Maldon by the local gentry is also demonstrated by the elections of M.P.s for the borough throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. With few exceptions those elected had little or no material interest in the town itself. Only six were ever residents: ¹.

Thomas Wyborough

Henry Dawes

Thomas Harris

Vincent Harris

William Wiseman

and William Vernon

and of them only Wyborough and Vernon were members of the common council (though Wiseman had been a J.P. from 1578 to 1581 but he was not an M.P.

1. See Appendix 5, numbers 4b, 8b, 20b, 21b, 23b and 25a.

until 1584). Although there were statutory regulations that M.P.'s should be burgesses of and resident in the places for which they sat, the elections at Maldon, as at other boroughs, were made technically correct by the admission of the men as freemen and subsequently they were included in a special category of the lists of freemen alongside the chief officers of the borough, not with the "extra burgenses". There is never any record of payments to the M.P.'s centuries and indeed at the 1539 election the court book includes a note that the two new M.P.'s had undertaken to bear the cost of their office themselves. ¹.

Some of the M.P.'s were, indeed, men of the locality but great men within the local community, such as Sir Henry Radcliffe (1555 and 1559), Sir Robert Rich (1610) and Sir Henry Mildmay (between 1622 and 1653). Generally the elections fall into a pattern comparable with the general trend in the immigration of the Maldon population: in the sixteenth century M.P.'s were recruited from the market area but also from East Anglia and a few from outside that area; in the seventeenth century they were predominantly recruited from Essex; and in 1663 the net was tightened by a new Custom which decreed that an M.P. for the borough had to be a native of Essex and also had to have been continuously resident in the county for seven years preceding his election. ². One of the Paston Letters shows how seats for Maldon were campaigned for by East Anglians

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/2. Admission of John Edmondes and William Benham as freemen, Hockmonday 30 Henry VIII - "et eciam ceperunt et uterque eorum cepit officium burgensis parliamenti sumptibus eorum propriis expensis durante toto termino dicti parliamenti et quilibet eorum pro et ex parte sua disonerant burgum predictum exomnibus oneris..."

2. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/3. Custumal, para. 92. (24 May 1663.)

in the early period ¹. and in the later sixteenth century it is clear that the bailiffs (who technically had control of elections through the revised custom of 1559) were inclined to offer seats to local gentry rather than wait for nominations from their High Stewards, the Earls of Leicester and Essex. ². Places went to four Maldon men, to the Recorder of the borough, a Mildmay and to the Suffolk puritan supporter Edward Lewkenor (of Denham near Bury St Edmunds), ten out of the thirteen M.P.'s who sat for Maldon between 1572 and 1600. ³. There is an indication of the control which the local gentry had over the seats in a tricky situation of October 1605, when Sir Edward Lewkenor, one of the sitting members, died. The Privy Council wished to nominate Lord Howard de Walden for the vacancy but the bailiffs of Maldon had to tell them that already, within eight days of Lewkenor's death,

"divers have made means for the place and there being a gentleman within three miles of our town, one Sir John Sammes, a man well esteemed of, had procured many voices for his electing, and in all appearances was like to have the place.."

Of course Sir John Sammes stood down ("as not willing to oppose himself against so worthy a man as my Lord of Walden" though a Sammes of Langford was unlikely to oppose the Council!) but they had to persuade him. They were, they reported, "driven to some hard exigent" by the Council's request. ⁴.

There were no Maldon residents as members of parliament after

1. Everyman edition, vol 2, p.118.

2. Sir John Neale, Elizabethan House of Commons (1949) p.210.

3. See Appendix 5, nos. 20-25.

4. Historical Manuscripts Commission, Cecil MSS, part XVII p.455.

1610. From about 1620 the bailiffs and aldermen lost control of the elections and the gentry of Essex (particularly members of the Mildmay family) secured an ever growing influence. There are two clear reasons for that. One is that parliamentary politics became much more complex when the Commons began to fight for the initiative in policy-making and it is noteworthy that 1620 was also the date when, approximately, members of the Commons began to demand wide franchises in borough elections of M.P.'s.¹ A second reason for the control of Maldon seats by the county gentry appears to be that the bailiffs and aldermen were forced, after the dissension of the 1590's in their borough, to sound the opinions of the freeburgesses and of other interested parties before they selected their candidates. Theoretically the elections were made by a committee of twenty men - the aldermen, two head burgesses and 12 freemen - and probably by the aldermen in fact, since they appointed the other members of the committee.² However, there exists an undated letter (probably of 1624) directed to the High Steward Sir Julius Caesar by the bailiffs in answer to his request that he and Sir Henry Mildmay should be elected as M.P.'s for the next parliament. The bailiffs' reply is in draft form with so many erasures and rephrasings that they seem to have had real difficulty in telling him the truth, that they had lost the initiative in Maldon elections:

"The contentes of your honor's letter wee have made knowne
to our brethren the aldermen and the Common Councell
but the electors beinge all the Freeburgesses and manye of
them now affected to men of qualitie neere to our Townshipp,
(who) are desiorais to gratifie them with place with us.
In which regard we, findinge question of your honor's satis-

1. J.H. Plumb, Growth of Political Stability (1967) pp.34-44.

2. See above, Chapter 5.

facion for our accomplishment of your honor's letters,
thought it our dueties to give speedie advertisement thereof
to your honor..." 1.

That statement of all the freeburgesses being electors must be modified by the evidence of a list of all the freemen of 1625 (89 persons) arranged beneath the names of Sir William Masham and Sir Henry Mildmay, who were M.P.'s for the borough in that year. It is not an actual poll, for only the names of the two men elected are given and, secondly, the name of each freeman appears only once - under one M.P.'s name. Moreover, the two men were elected at different times, Sir Henry in April 1625, Sir William in July 1625. So the list is really of each man's supporters and perhaps it was drawn up for the bailiffs' future guidance, at some time after July 1625. 2.

So Maldon came under the control of outsiders and had no policy of its own to fight for. In the Long Parliament one of its Members, Sir John Clotworthy, has been singled out in the principal guide to the composition of the House of Commons as the clearest example at that time of a "carpet bag" politician. 3. How he got elected at Maldon remains uncertain; there is no local information about that but Clarendon said it was procured by "powerful persons" and it is likely that the other M.P. for Maldon, Sir Henry Mildmay, Master of the King's Jewel House, High Steward of Maldon and a local landowner, arranged the election. The

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1. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/392/67. (This is the text upon which the bailiffs finally decided.)
 2. E.R.O., D/B 3/3/392/18 (list); D/B 3/1/19 ff. 197r and 201v.
 3. D. Brunton and D.H. Pennington, Members of the Long Parliament (1954) pp.8 and 125.

two men have been judged possibly the most unattractive of the scoundrels who intruded themselves into that parliament.^{1.}

It is also noteworthy that dissension within the borough - surely an appropriate subject for the 1640's and 1650's - did not occur. To be sure, there are some signs of political manoeuvring among The Company and the record of the elections each January appear to show some purges of the corporation over the period. Of the twenty five members in 1640 (including the "off duty" alderman)

- (a) nine had been replaced by 1646;
- (b) another eight had gone by 1651; and...
- (c) another four had gone by 1654;

so that only four survived to the Restoration. Of the ejected men one, George Gifford,^{2.} was demoted in 1643 and as he was reinstated by writ of Charles II in June 1660 (immediately after the Restoration) some political reason seems certain. Four more were ejected in 1648, which was the year of the siege of Colchester by the Parliament's forces:

Alderman Jeremy Browning

Alderman Peter Jervis

Bailiff Reuben Robinson

Bailiff James Starling

of whom Bailiff Starling is explicitly stated to have been disqualified by an Ordinance of the Parliament in 1647 which meant that he had either given service in the Royalist forces or had supplied them with aid (which, the memorandum does not make clear).^{3.} His fellow bailiff offered

1. Ibid.

2. The son of the former vicar of Maldon.

3. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/20 f168r and C.H.Firth and R.S.Rait (ed.), Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, 1642-1660 (1911), numbers 1023-5.

resignation but the cause of the other two men's demotion is not explained.

The case of these five men do not offer a case for supposing that the corporation divided in the matter of the Civil War. Of those members of 1640 who disappeared, the majority did so in the traditional manner. Death or extreme age terminated the career of eleven; another two were ejected for unbecoming behaviour (which was a traditional cause for leaving The Company); another one left the district. Really there is only a clear case for identifying two of the departures as political moves.

What is apparent from the chamberlains' accounts is that the corporation's policy was for immediate compliance with the wishes of any power controlling their neighbourhood. Table 24 shows how much of their military expenditure was devoted to purely local, entirely precautionary measures; and with what Falstaffian prudence the bailiffs trimmed the expenditure on military affairs further afield. Outwardly, too, they conformed to circumstances. Hardly had the martyr king's head been stricken off with the crown on it than they were having the maces altered and the State Arms painted in their Moot Hall. As King Charles II landed in 1660 they were taking down the Commonwealth arms and replacing those of the Stuart kings, and re-altering the maces. During the Interregnum they dutifully apprehended men wanted by The State for interrogation; in 1660 they, whose town once sheltered Isaac Dorislaus (one of the chief advisers to the commissioners who tried Charles I,) were active "to make stave of one who, it is supposed, was one of the late King's Judges, whose name was thought to be Cornelius Holland." They proclaimed equally the accession of the Lord Protector Richard Cromwell and the coronation of King Charles II with suitable celebrations.

From 1660 all remaining pretence of the borough's independence

was removed. The corporation retained only nominal control of elections to parliament for their borough; the gentry even permeated its ranks in order to secure their hold on electoral procedure, so that one baronet who was not a resident (Sir William Wiseman of Rivenhall) was three times a bailiff and a Bramston of Roxwell twice a bailiff. By then, too, the freemen had certainly regained their old franchise - although the corporation did not acknowledge that by amending the custumal - and the admission of freemen usually increased dramatically in election years, so that there was an average of 48 new freemen at election times and in other years an average of 8 admissions, between 1660 and 1688. The situation was unexceptional: many boroughs "got down on their knees, in full regalia" ¹. to offer their charters for remodelling by the Crown five or six years before 1688, when Maldon docilely accepted its four successive new constitutions. And the men who grumbled at the alterations were not the corporation members, the freeburgesses or the townsmen but the county gentry who for a moment were ousted from their posts as fee-ed officials of the boroughs. ².

John Horrocks, vicar of All Saints' during the Commonwealth, felt the change in local politics more sharply than other townsmen of Maldon. He had come in 1650 at the warm invitation of the corporation; ³. in 1662 he refused to subscribe the Act of Uniformity and, like Gifford in 1584, he was ejected from his benefice. Like Gifford, too, he stayed in the town and he also settled in St Mary's parish. The Corporation, however, had been purged and where The Company of the 1580's and 1590's had lent

1. Plumb, op. cit. p.55.

2. Cf Sir John Bramston's Autobiography, p.304.

3. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/20, f.176v.

powerful support to their chosen minister, that of 1662 bent its local authority against him. There were other Dissenters who, with Horrocks, refused to accept the re-established Church of England and absented themselves from the parish churches. They, Horrocks and his household, were accordingly prosecuted ^{1.} and after he had been gaoled in the Moot Hall prison and assaulted in court by one of the new bailiffs he was run out of the town on horseback, "with a sergeant on each side of him thro' all the town like a common criminal." ^{2.}

The dissension of 1660-1668 was quite distinct from the disputes of 1584-1600 in Maldon. Elizabethan dissension was based on the personal opposition of the borough government to one Official and to one decision by established ecclesiastical authority; Restoration Dissent was the opposition of a minority to a borough government which enforced an ecclesiastical establishment. Gifford and the godly of c.1590 were presbyterian by inclination but they were decidedly not separatists; Horrocks and his faithful flock were practising presbyterians ^{3.} and separatists. Gifford had the patronage and protection of the local gentry but Horrocks suffered because a new generation had taken over the direction of affairs in the borough.

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A final pattern

Undoubtedly a degree of mobility of labour is essential for the

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1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/20: prosecutions of 1662 for absence from church.
 2. Edmund Calamy, Nonconformist's Memorial (1775) pp. 510-512.
 3. When Horrocks was in prison his wife went to London to seek the intervention of the Earl of Manchester, who was one of the remaining influential Presbyterian supporters. (Calamy, op. cit. p.511.)

prosperity of a community because it brings in fresh skills, new blood and different ideas and because the conditions favouring mobility also promote the departure of unemployed or unsuccessful men. Maldon ought to have been, therefore, a successful urban community, blessed with easy social mobility and unable to stagnate. Such a state, too, the first chapter of this study sought to describe and to all outward appearances its prosperity seemed obvious. Then, however, a process of population movement was considered whose over-riding power was such that it could be seen to have affected every aspect of life in Maldon. Beneath the assured, rather smug and vain surface of the town's life there lay a continuous process of adaptation and that is the area within which the degree of mobility, the rate of replacement, is of critical importance for interpreting what happened to sixteenth and seventeenth century Maldon.

For whilst it is the peculiar strength of organisms which survive by change or adaptation that they cannot be crushed by external pressures they can nevertheless disintegrate. The population of Maldon was excessively mobile. Over the course of the seventeenth century, too, the range of immigration (and of emigration, possibly) narrowed, so that the distinction between town and country was completely blurred. By the combination of these two factors the borough suffered not merely change but the loss of its integrity as an urban community.

No "native" core of families existed to provide continuity. Consequently the personnel of the corporation (and of the earlier common council of bailiffs and wardmen) was constantly changing. For a time the pattern of movement admitted long-distance migrants to the town. At the beginning of the sixteenth century their numbers were swelled by alien merchants, craftsmen and servants; from about the beginning of Elizabeth I's reign only English long-distance immigrants came in and during the

early seventeenth century their numbers dwindled. Their period of effective immigration, their place among the richer of the townsmen, was an ebullient phase in the life of Maldon: incorporation was achieved then; the market was developed; occupations were diversified. Then, gradually, over the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, immigrants of an entirely different class, of gentlefolk and clergy, pensioned persons and property owners, began to take control of the town. They continued to stimulate the market in drapery and mercery but they were in the town rather than of it. Maldon men became their clients, catering for the specialist demands of the gentry for such personal services as medicine, surgery, music and cookery. They, in return, provided the borough with status and consequence sufficient to mask its commercial instability. The few public works and charities with which the town was endowed were their gifts: Thomas Cammoke gave the corporation a conduit on St Helen's Lane, with water piped across his fields from the Cromwell; Annastacy Wentworth established a charity for education and for repairing the south aisle and chapel of All Saints' church; Ralph Breder endowed the grammar school; two non-residents gave funds for relieving poor freeburgesses; and later (1704) the Archdeacon of Rochester, Dr Thomas Plume, made further endowments for the grammar school and for his library at Maldon.

It has been shown that gentry were often co-opted into the Common Council and that, by and large, Maldon men expected and preferred to be governed by gentry. They were prepared to be clients and they did not consider this relationship to be derogatory to their borough. The increasing localisation of population movement was also contributory to the power of the gentry in Maldon, for they were the landowners, the principal employers, the magistrates in the countryside from which, into which the majority of Maldon migrants moved. And that localisation was a national trend. During the seventeenth century the movement of people everywhere

declined in range and the vast proportionate increase in the number of freemen at Maldon who were admitted by right of parentage or marriage (as compared with those admitted by fee or apprenticeship) has been found elsewhere.¹ The election of M.P.'s through both the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries also illustrates, generally, the willingness of the burgesses and their corporation to seek the patronage of the gentry of Essex - particularly the local families - but so did many other English boroughs. The corporation lost the initiative in parliamentary elections c.1620, at the moment when there was a general increase in the number of "open" borough elections in the country, since that is when the House of Commons began to assert its privilege of adjudicating on disputed elections. Thus Maldon history falls within a well-known framework of English social and political history.

In its local context the history of Maldon explores a slow process of disintegration. Instead of the urban society which could have been grown within the framework of franchise and corporate government created in 1554 and 1555, the townsmen were simply one group within a local community to which they were tied by birthplace, by kinship and by common interest. The market became only one of many points of contact for commercial and craft activities which were dispersed across the whole area of that community. Where aldermen and head burgesses had once set about creating a miniature Geneva they later preferred to be ciphers who administered the borough according to the wishes of the landed gentry of east-central Essex. Of all its functions only that of sending representatives to the House of Commons had increased in importance - and that had passed from the hands of the aldermen to an electorate which (by 1688) began to comprise a great number of non-residents.

1. See Table 5.1 and L. Stone, 'Social mobility in England, 1500-1700.' Past and Present no. 33 (1966), pp.46-47.

In 1688 the borough lost and then regained its mid-Tudor constitution. Only eighty years later, in 1768, the charter was lost for good. The process of dissolution was complete. Over a technicality the Court of Chancery declared an election of the two bailiffs to be invalid and ordered a new election. Supinely the common council and the freeburgesses failed to hold fresh elections, a judgement of ouster was passed and the Borough of Maldon ceased to exist. Significantly the borough representation in parliament continued, the only function for which Maldon had been valued for over a century.

The property, the archives, the rights to markets, fairs and fisheries were promptly mortgaged to the town clerk but when the records were returned to the new corporation which was chartered in 1810, the letter patent of Henry II in 1171 and the charter of the bishop of London of 1403, from which were derived the joint office of Bailiff, were lost and have never been recovered.

Appendix 1

POPULATION ESTIMATES

Four sources are available with which to construct an over-all picture of the size of Maldon at various "marker" points across the 188 years of this study. The first is the Lay Subsidy return of 1523-1524. Next come the statements of the number of communicants which are in the Chantry Certificates of each parish in 1547. Thirdly there is the unusual source of the lists of freemen and decenners prepared between 1570 and 1580 but after that no material suitable for making estimates has survived until the Hearth Tax returns of 1671, 1672 and 1673.

Four other sources are, regrettably, unavailable: the Survey for Harness of 1522; the ecclesiastical "censuses" of 1563 and 1603; and the Protestation Return of 1641-1642. Those would have bridged the gap between the 1570's and 1670's and would have added also much for a comparison of Maldon with other towns. One more useful source which has also gone is the Poll Tax receipt for 1377, which would have given a useful perspective to the population size of Maldon. Two more sources, Elizabethan muster lists and the Compton Census of 1676, are quite unsuitable as bases for estimates and of the four with which this study is left, only the lay subsidy returns and the hearth tax returns have any established reputation as demographic material.

Lay subsidy taxpayers, 1523-1524

In 1524 Maldon had 194 taxpayers when the first general instalment of the new subsidy was collected. That places Maldon, apparently, in the same category as towns like Thaxted, Aylesbury or Sudbury which had a taxable population of around 200 persons each. Since they also appear to have had minimum populations of about one thousand persons, the source

suggests that Maldon too may have had a population of about that size.

Beyond such a rough comparison it is possible to attempt a more exact estimate by either of two methods. Each, it must be appreciated, is no more than an attempt to convert a statement of the number of taxpayers into quite a different statement about the number of all inhabitants. Each is a manipulation rather than a calculation and, as far as Maldon is concerned, there is very little substantiation for the assumptions which have to be made.

Method I firstly multiplies the number of taxpayers by an estimate of the median size of families in the town (as 194 times 4.5 or 5 or 6). Secondly it adjusts the product according to the proportion of heads of families who are estimated to have evaded taxation or were exempted. Clearly the guesswork involved in this process is considerable: there is no clear indication of median household size (or median family size) at Maldon in this period; it is not necessarily true that all taxpayers were heads of households; nor is it clear how extensive evasion of taxation was in the town.

Results tending towards either of two extremes can be obtained from Method I:

- (a) if the persons evading or exempt from taxation were negligible, and if the median household size were 4.5, then there were some 880 inhabitants
(194×4.5);

or...

- (b) if so many as 50% of the heads of families avoided assessment and if the median household size were 5, then there could have been some 1,940 inhabitants.

Method II is another approach to the problem of making suitable

allowance for the number of "missing persons." It has been suggested by Mr Julian Cornwall from his observation of a fairly constant difference between the subsidy returns of 1524 and the generally fuller returns made in the 1522 Survey for Harness of certain towns in Rutland and Buckinghamshire. For towns like Maldon which have no extant Survey he proposed an estimate based on the assumption that the 1524 Subsidy return is 30% short of the number of males aged twelve or more whom the Survey would have included. To the resultant product (277 when applied to Maldon's 194 taxpayers) a further correction of 10% is made, based on his estimate that the Survey returns were generally that much deficient. For Maldon the figure now becomes 304. Next, that must be doubled (result - 608 to allow for the female population and, lastly, the figure reached must be taken to represent only 60% of the total population, on the assumption that some 40% were generally under twelve years old in communities of that date. For Maldon the result is an estimate of 1,013 inhabitants, or roughly 1,000. ¹.

"Houseling folk" 1547

The figure of 1,000 inhabitants in the early sixteenth century is supported by another estimate based on the number of "houseling folk" or communicants in the 1547 Chantry Commission certificates for each of the three parishes in Maldon. ². Their value is rendered a little uncertain because they are the result of depositions by juries of parishioners who may have exaggerated their testimony about the populousness of their parishes in order to lay claim to some of the endowments which were about to be claimed for the Crown. A modern reader will also be uncertain of

1. J. Cornwall, 'English Provincial Towns in the 1520's', Economic History Review, 2nd Series, XV, pp.54-69, especially pp.59-60.

2. P.R.O., E.301/19/31.

the average age of confirmation in pre-Reformation England.

For all three parishes at Maldon the number of 720 houseling folk was claimed in 1547. The assumption that the claim is not excessive is buttressed by the fact that Thaxted, which had the same number of taxpayers as Maldon in 1524, had almost the same number of communicants in 1547 (700).¹ A further assumption must be made: that confirmation generally occurred about the twelfth year of a person's life and that the houseling people were 60% of the total population. Given these conditions, the figure of 720 represents a population at the middle of the sixteenth century of about 1,200.

Decenners and freemen, 1570-1580

The acceptability of the lists of decenners and freemen, combined, as a source of population data has been discussed in Chapter 2. Of all the lists four sets are suitable for the present purpose, since it must be remembered that they were not compiled at the same times - freemen lists applied to January, decenners' lists were compiled for courts at Eastertide and Michaelmas - so only those can reasonably be used which are the closest in date. In combining them it has to be assumed that a balance of male to female inhabitants applied and that children under twelve formed 40% of the population. On those grounds these estimates can be made:

1. P.R.O., E.301/19/17.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Decenners</u>	<u>Freemen</u>	<u>Both</u>	<u>Estimated Population</u>
January 1576		118		
April 1576	226		344	1,140
April 1577	225			
January 1578		104	329	1,100
January 1578		104		
April 1578	231		335	1,120
January 1580		94		
September 1580	200		294	980

The fluctuations in numbers could be the result of absences from the Court Leet by men owing suit of court as decenners but it has been shown that the courts were conducted with rigour. Nor would that explanation account for the steady fall in the number of freemen. It is also possible that an epidemic caused the reduction in numbers between January 1578 and September 1580: there was an outbreak of plague in Ipswich from September 1579 to about April 1580 and a serious plague at that time in Norwich¹, but the decrease does not seem sufficiently great to indicate an outbreak in Maldon and there are no references in the borough records to any epidemic of the sickness.

Instead the fluctuation in numbers of inhabitants can be explained as a result of the mobility of the population and it must be remembered that the intervals between the compilations of the lists allows time for changes by death, immigration and emigration to take place among the people represented here as population units. Considerable latitude must

1. John Webb, Poor Relief in Elizabethan Ipswich (Suffolk Records Society, IX, 1966), p.110.

be allowed either way to these estimates and so, as with the 1524 and 1547 estimates, the population figure which can be suggested must range around and possibly a little above the figure of 1,000.

1580-1671

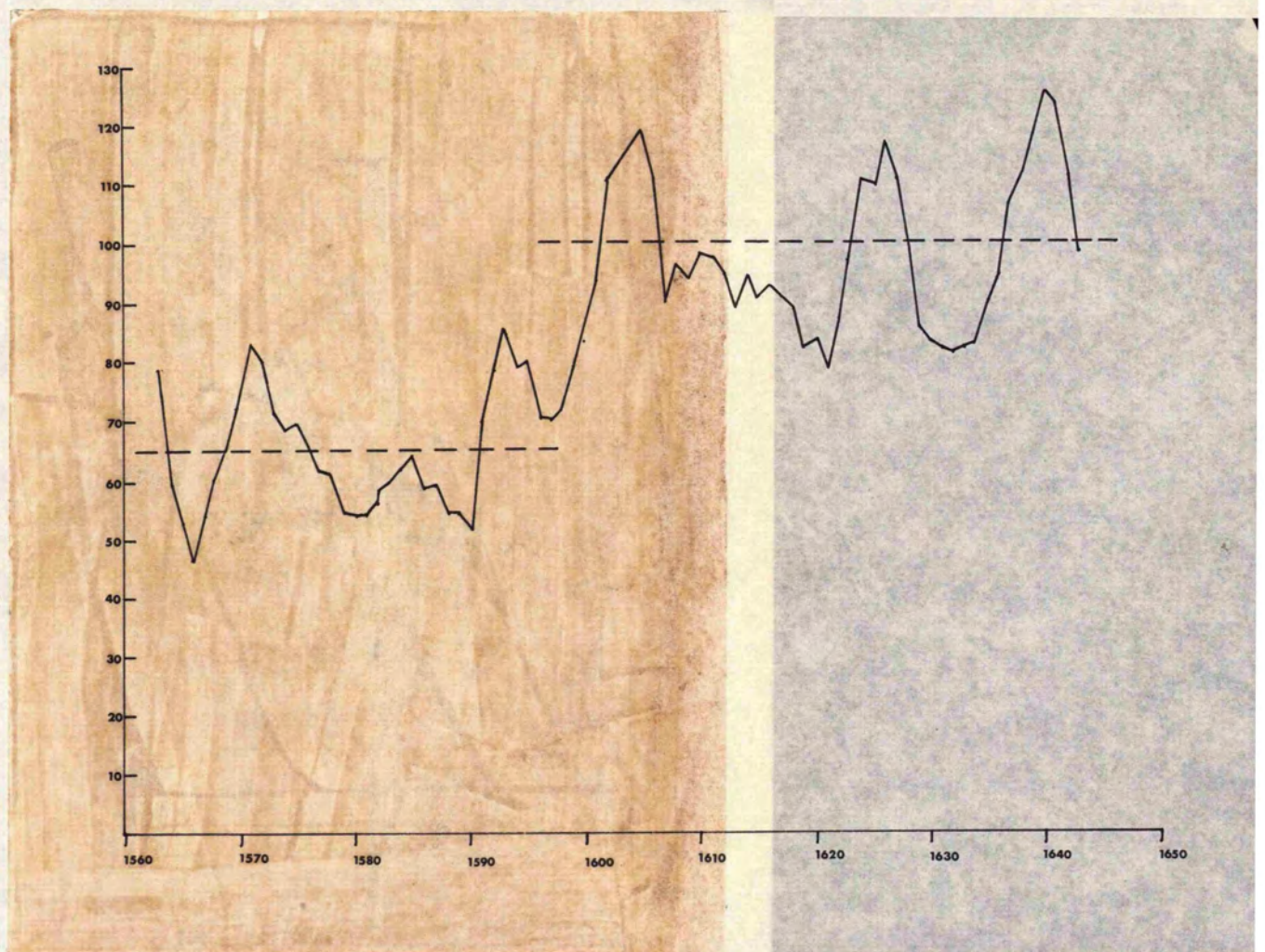
By authority of its 1555 charter the borough levied a rate for the repair of its bridges in 1618 which was to be paid by all classes of inhabitants - "as well forrine as free" - but only 128 names are listed and only those who were assessed as capable of contribution were included in the record of that local taxation.¹ And it is the only tax record or source available between 1580 and the Hearth Tax returns of 1672-73.

To bridge the gap of ninety years the only information which can be turned to is the registration of baptisms, burials and marriages in the three parish churches. Their use has been criticised in Chapter 2 on the grounds that the registers are transcripts and patently incomplete before 1598; and that the mobility of the population argues against their employment as evidence of the demography of the town. However, in the absence of better material, there may be a case for taking an aggregation of all the events listed in the registers - of the number of marriages and baptisms and burials in each year - and smoothing off the result by calculation of five-year moving averages to show simply the general trend of population events. This can be done for the period 1561 to 1645 and the result is shown in Figure 23.

At first sight it may seem that there was a considerable jump in the level of the population occurring c.1600 but it is significant that this was the moment of change from transcript evidence to live registration

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/19 ff.84v - 87v.

23 Five Year Moving Averages of
Aggregate Register Entries 1561-1645



by active incumbents. Since the material for the sixteenth century is under-registered (as has been shown in Chapter 2) the first half of the diagram should be ignored, in the opinion of this writer, whilst in the second half attention should be given to the three peaks of "activity" which occur at the period of three severe plagues. If any conclusion can be drawn from this diagram of the trend in population, it is that any increasing size was offset by the excessive mortality of the plague years and so remained stable until at least the 1640's.

The Hearth Taxes, 1671-1673

Of this class of taxation the 1671, 1672 and 1673 returns are the most useful as they include lists of the householders exempted.¹ Confining attention here to the number of householders, the returns were thus:

	<u>Taxed</u>	<u>Exempted</u>	<u>All</u>
1671	153	72	225
1673	149	52	201

(1672 simply recorded changes to the 1671 list.) As ever doubts about the multiplier must reduce confidence in the acceptability of the estimates. The most reliable assumption is that the mean household size was between 4.5 and 5.0 persons. Gregory King used 4.45 as the average for urban households outside London in his contemporary studies of English population,² and Mr. Peter Laslett has reported that the listings of inhabitants which he has examined closely indicate a mean household size "fairly constant at 4.75 or a little under, from the earliest point for

1. E.R.O., Q/RTh 5 (1671); Q/RTh 7 (1672); Q/RTh 8 (1673). The 1662 return (Q/RTh 1) does not include exempted householders but the numbers taxed (157) correspond nearly with those of 1671.

2. D.V. Glass, Population in History (1965) p.200.

which we have figures until as late as 1911." 1.

A little evidence for Maldon can be culled from wills, by counting the number of children named, and from the memoranda of freemen's admission, where the number and names of their children born before enfranchisement are stated. The results of those two counts are shown in Table 27 but, whilst both types of evidence suggest a ^{completed} family size of five persons the numbers of children recorded in these sources do not necessarily represent fully completed or fully recorded families. Nor do these sources allow for living-in servants or apprentices.

It seems best to go cautiously, since even for large towns like Exeter or Bristol multipliers no greater than six have been employed to convert the Hearth Tax figures into population estimates and in a recent study of Newcastle-Upon-Tyne one of only 4.75 was found suitable. 2. So, using the figures of 1671, the estimates for Maldon can be either

1,012 inhabitants

(using a multiplier of 4.50)

or 1,069 inhabitants

(using a multiplier of 4.75)

or 1,125 inhabitants

(using a multiplier of 5.00)

There is no reliable information to be obtained from the 1676 Compton Census about the population of Maldon. 3. It covers only two

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1. P. Laslett, 'Size and Structure of the Household in England over Three Centuries.' Population Studies XXIII (part 2, July 1969) p.199.
 2. R. Howell Jnr, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne and the Puritan Revolution, (Oxford, 1967) p.8.
 3. For this study a transcript in the Essex Record Office (T/A 420) was used.

parishes (All Saints' and St Peter's) and there is uncertainty about its nomenclature. Conformists are stated to have numbered 394, which is markedly less than the 480 communicants stated to have been in those parishes in 1547 but whom did the clergy count as Conformists? All communicants? Or only heads of conformist households? Or those who were heads of Dissenting families but still took three communions a year? Furthermore, the return for the two parishes states that there were no more than six Dissenters. Since St Mary's parish was excluded from normal archidiaconal jurisdiction it may be that the Dissenting population of Maldon after 1660 (and there were at least thirty five prepared to risk fines and imprisonment between 1662 and 1664 rather than attend the parish churches) tended to reside there, where they registered a meeting house in 1689 and 1692.¹ Lacking any return for St Mary's parish the evidence of Bishop Compton's Census can be taken no further than this. It may be added that its value for other parts of Essex has been found to be low, since the clergy were not provided with sufficiently explicit instructions and also because Bishop Henry Compton had made himself very unpopular with a section of the Essex clergy (he was their diocesan) and they do not all seem to have co-operated with him in this enquiry.²

A stable population

Taken as a whole the evidence appears to bear heavily towards an interpretation of Maldon as a place whose population did not greatly increase or decrease over two centuries. There may have been fluctuations of some size from decade to decade but their general trend is not towards

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/20 ff. 296r, 299v 305r and 314r; and D/B 3/1/23, Quarter Sessions business of July 1689 and April 1692.

2. R. Burley, 'Analysis of Bishop Compton's Census of 1676: Ongar Hundred.' VCH Essex IV (1956).

an ever-increasing size nor - unless the reader insists that the 1524 subsidy represents only about 50% of the taxable population - is there any sign of a general movement towards a smaller population. At this point discussion of the economy and of the complementary evidence must take over. Essentially the estimates for Maldon must be considered no more than very generalised indications.

Appendix 2

MANORS IN MALDON

Just as Maldon was topographically dispersed across its hill site, so were the manorial, ecclesiastical and burghal jurisdictions of the town fragmented and complex. There was no single ecclesiastical authority: St Peter's and All Saints' parishes were in the diocese of London and the Archdeaconry of Essex but St Mary's was a peculiar jurisdiction of the collegiate church of St Martin-le-Grand in London until 1503 and thereafter of Westminster Abbey.¹ There were six manors in the town (not counting the Parsonage Lands of St Mary's church and the Carmelite Friary estate) besides scattered holdings of external manors such as Langford and Purleigh.

Exactly what were the manorial origins of Maldon must remain obscure but it seems certain that originally the whole district had constituted a single Saxon estate which was later fragmented into the six estates and manors which existed around 1500. Figure 23 below shows the descent of those manors from the original estate, as it was tentatively reconstructed by Dr Andrew Clark c.1905.² By the 16th century there were:

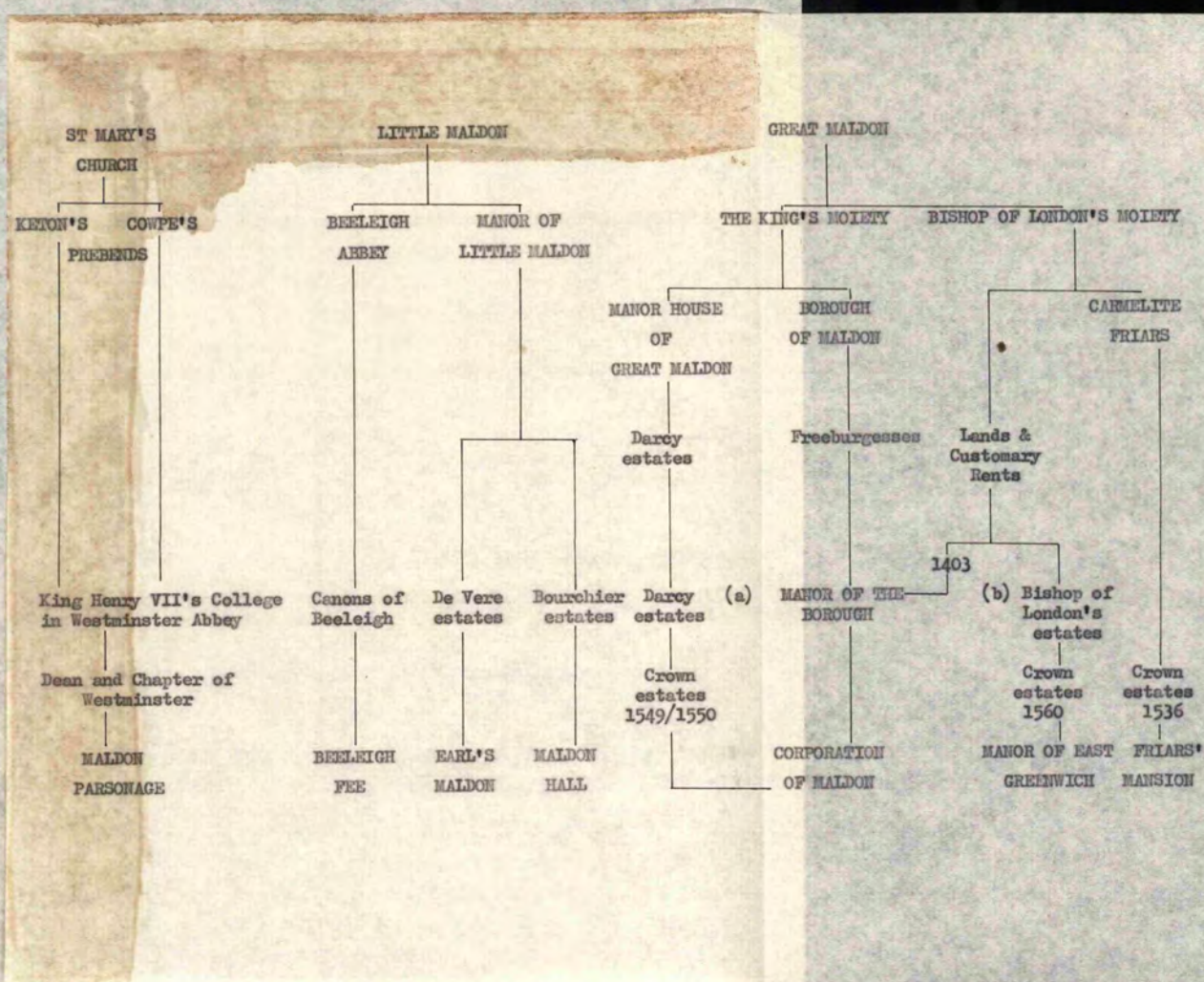
Beeleigh Fee, Earl's Maldon, Little Maldon (Maldon Hall), the Manor of the Borough,³ Crown estates derived from two fragments on an earlier Great Maldon Manor and various "estates of inheritance" whose tenure was uncertain by the 17th century.⁴

1. In 1503 St Martin's College was dissolved and its endowments appropriated by Henry VII to his vast collegiate chantry in Westminster Abbey.

2. Bodleian Library, Western MSS 33775 ff 61 - 72.

3. E.R.O. D/B 3/3/421.

4. Ibid.



- (a) Farm rent of £2-13s-4d paid by the borough to the Darcy family. (Post 1550, to the Crown.)
- (b) Farm rent of £6-13s-4d paid by the borough to the Bishop of London. (Post 1560, to the Crown.)

In particular the manor of Great Maldon had been divided about 1100 A.D. into three portions, each of which involved the burgesses of the town. For the present purpose it is best to examine what the manor had become from the point of view of the townsmen of 1500, when the chamberlains of the borough paid two ferm rents:

One of £2 - 13 - 4 to the Darcy family and
one of £6 - 13 - 4 to the Bishop of London.

Both the Darcies and the Bishop were thus lords of the borough and the rents represented compositions for services and customary dues which should have come to them as lords of the King's and Bishop's Portions of the old manor of Great Maldon. Yet the burgesses also had charters from the Kings of England which granted them burgage tenure and freed them from all services other than the provision of a ship (if required) for 40 days in any year for royal service. By 1500 there were eight confirmations of the earliest - but lost - charter of Henry I to these burgesses of Maldon.

Constitutionally the evolution of the borough from the manor of Great Maldon was represented by the annual election of two bailiffs as the joint heads of the freeburgesses. One bailiff represented the burgage tenants of the King, to whom the medieval charters had been granted; this man was styled The King's Bailiff. In the earliest court book, before 1403, he can be seen to have presided alone over the assemblies of the freeburgesses¹, but from 1403 he was joined by "the other bailiff" who represented the burgesses before the Bishop of London. In that year the greater part of the bishop's portion of Great Maldon, including the customary toll of landcheap and a building called the guildhall of the burgesses (the Moot Hall), was demised to the freemen and the commonalty of Maldon. That was why there were two bailiffs from 1403 and that was why the borough paid the bishop an annual ferm rent of £6 - 13 - 4.

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/1.

There was thus considerable jurisdictional confusion in early sixteenth century Maldon. The borough existed under three nominal masters. Additionally there were the lordships of the earls of Oxford and of the Abbot and Canons of Beeleigh. During the first half of the sixteenth century, however, these tenurial complexities resolved themselves so that the borough, equipped with a new charter which entirely replaced all earlier grants, emerged incorporate as the only civil authority in the town other than the Lord Lieutenant of Essex and the Privy Council.

In part the decline of manorial jurisdiction was due to the absence of open field cultivation in Maldon (or indeed in most of Essex).^{1.} In part, too, it was due to the urban character of many of the manorial tenements. No manor court had any part to play in the organisation of communal cultivation and the courts of the manor of the borough absorbed the civil business of disputes, transactions and of registering conveyances. The borough had also a body of customary law which involved all freeburgesses, whatever the manor of which they were tenants. In part also the decline of the manors was accelerated by the dissolution or removal of the older landholding families, so that the manors' non-urban territory became simply farms leased by men who were often leading freeburgesses and who had a vested interest in the borough. The demesne of Little Maldon was farmed by the Gaywood family from about 1500 to 1570,^{2.} of whom

1. Thus Maldon Field was not cultivated in common but was a "close or pasture, parcel of the farm of Seeley House called... (as it is supposed) Maldon Fielde for that the same lieth nearer unto the town of Maldon than any of the rest of the other ground."
(MCA 1595, footnote to last sheet of the account roll.)

2. A lease of 1570 (CPR 1569-72) of Little Maldon to William Waldegrave recites the former lease (1543) to Robert Gaywood on the same conditions as he had held the manor at ferm in the time of Henry, Earl of Essex, who died in 1540.

Thomas Gaywood was Bailiff of the borough six times between 1510 and 1518, and Robert Gaywood was Bailiff at least four times and one of the first members of the incorporation in 1555. Another leading burgess, John Church, had been under-steward and auditor of Beeleigh Abbey and after its dissolution in 1536 he continued as farmer of some of its estates in Maldon and also farmer of lands which formed part of the de Vere estate called Earl's Maldon (after their title, earls of Oxford). Other de Vere lands were held on lease by their bailiff of Earl's Maldon, Anthony Sparrow, who was also a head burgess of the corporation in 1560. John Church also succeeded another bailiff of the borough, Thomas Wyborough as farmer of the Friars' Fields which extended over a great part of the southern side of the town and were de Vere lands.¹ Thus the administration of the lands of the manors came under men whose interests tended towards the exaltation of the borough jurisdiction.

Darcy's Tower stands as a symbol of the increasing practical hold of the burgesses over the whole town. Its owner in 1549 was Sir Thomas Darcy, one of the soldier-courtiers whom Henry VIII had gathered about him in the last years of his reign. By 1549 his ambition and his prospects made him look much further than the prospect of completing the family mansion on its cramped site in Maldon. He became Vice-Chamberlain of the Household of Edward VI in 1550; he was Lord Chamberlain of England in 1551, a Knight of the Garter and Baron Darcy of Chiche; and he had acquired in 1547

1. (a) Augmentation Office, Miscellanea Book 397 ff.108 - 110, printed in R.C. Fowler, Beeleigh Abbey, pp.47 - 49. (b) Essex Record Office, D/Du 65/72 (manorial extent of the lands of John de Vere, deceased, 1563, ff. 6 and 7. (c) E.R.O., D/B 3/1/34 f. 5lv. (enquiry into a right of way to Friars' Fields, 1569, citing previous farmers, including those at and prior to the dissolution of the Priary).

the reversion of a lease of St Osyth's Abbey which the king had granted to Princess Mary Tudor. (St Osyth's is on the Essex coast beside the estuaries of the Colne and Blackwater.) This was to be his mansion and from it he was to take his title as a baron.

As part of the arrangements for the reversion of the abbey, so it seems, the Darcy Tower in Maldon was included in an exchange of lands. This is known only from the title deeds of the tower, reciting its previous ownership and conditions of past conveyances, which were enrolled in the White Book of Maldon in 1576¹. and the event is dateable by the entries in the chamberlains' accounts for 1549 and 1550 for the payment of the ferm rent for the King's Portion of the borough:

Michaelmas 1549

53s 4d paid "to the baylyff of Syr Thomas Darcye, Knight,
for one yeares rent due at the sayd feast for the sayd Towne."

Michaelmas 1550

53s 4d "by them payed to our soveræn lorde the kynge,
before payable to Sir Thomas Darcye."

The other lordship, vested in the bishops of London, reverted to the Crown by 1560: after the deposition of Bishop Bonner in 1558 some of the estates of the see of London were confiscated by Queen Elizabeth and among them was the ferm rent of £6 - 13 - 4 which had previously been paid by the borough to the bishops.² So, at the time of the incorporation of the borough both portions of the old manor of Great Maldon at last returned into the lordship of the Crown, whilst the corporation became the representative of the Crown in Maldon and whilst the other manorial jurisdictions faded away.

1. Essex Record Office, D/B 3/1/3 f.58.

2. CPR 1558-1560, order to survey lands of the bishopric of London (1559); *ibid.*, 1560-1563, grant to Edmund Grindal, 1562.

Appendix 3

Domestic Building Operations Recorded at Maldon,c.1508-1682

NEW HOUSES

1. c.1508-1536 House on Fulbridge Street "late John Dutchman's", 1536. Landcheap of purchase for £20 from John Dutchman, MCA 1536/37. Paid a Rent of Assize and so was a new construction on town waste land.
2. c.1537-1540 Tenement beside St Helen's Cross. In MCA 1540 Assize Rental but not in that of 1536/7.
3. & 4. c.1545-1562 Two houses on former garden plots at the corner of St Peter's Lane and High Street. E.R.O., D/DA T640 (deeds of 1545 and 1562); D/AER 10/171 (1562).
5. c.1560 Tenement "at the cawsey ende" listed in the Assize Rental of 1573 (MCA).
6. pre-1573 "A new building in the parish of All Saints, in a certaine messuage or tenement late of John Wright and abutting upon an inne called the Sarazan's Head." MCA 1573 Assize Rental.
7. pre-1574 Conversion of the Carmelite Friary ruins into a mansion by Vincent Harris. PCC 44 Martyn.
8. c.1580 Conveyance of Tyler's, formerly a waste plot and "lately built on". E.R.O., D/B 3/1/34, f.16v.
9. c.1592 "The new house recently built" of Thomas Beane, yeoman. E.R.O., D/ABW 5/245.
10. c.1592 Cottage on the Hopyard Field, built by Elias Lufkyn, baker, nine years before a conveyance of 1601. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/34, f.77r; D/ABW 24/93 (1610).

11. c.1600 House built by John Cade, merchant:
 "he hath lately built him a house in
 this Towne that hath stode him in by
 his owne reporte, CCCC li." E.R.O.,
 D/B 3/3/423/25 (letter of the corporation
 to the Privy Council).
12. c.1618 Conversion by Timothy Rogers of haylofts,
 parcel of the New Inn, into a dwelling.
 E.R.O., D/B 3/1/35 (deed of 1671 reciting
 the property's origin) and MCA 1618, land-
 cheap of 8s on £6 - 9 - 0 from Timothy
 Rogers for "one stable and one littell
 slipe of grounde scituat and being in the
 parishe of Saint Peter's, late by hym purchased
 of John Malden."
13. c.1600 "The new building" in All Saints' parish.
 "Sometime of Mr John Hewett, then Jasper
 Kingsman (ie. c.1620), late Ruben Robinson,
 now in tenure of Mary Thicknesse." E.R.O.,
 D/B 3/3/70 (Rental of 1670). By 1670 it had
 also "a late enlargement."
14. c.1600 House and blacksmith's shop in All Saints'.
 In tenure of James Fowle in 1670 rental. Now
 (1971) a doctor's surgery, 13 High Street.
 It is a late 16th century encroachment on
 the town ground leading from the market to
 the midden and beside the Saracen's Head (it-
 self a 14th or 15th century encroachment on
 the same area). E.R.O., D/B 3/3/70 item 44.

15. c.1600 Extension called The Three Mariners to the
"ancient hall-house" of Ridler's. It comp-
rised a hall, buttery and kitchen, with two
chambers above them. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/34,
f.75v and deed of 1631.

- 16 & 17. c.1624 Two houses built by the extension of
Smallwares by James Seares. E.R.O.,
D/B 3/1/34, deed of 1624.

18. c.1650 "Plot of land near the Town Dunghill,
upon which there is a tenement hithence
built of one Richard Coker." MCA 1652.

19. c.1670 "The new brick building" standing partly
on the town land in Fullbridge Street.
E.R.O., D/B 3/3/70, item 8.

20. 1664 Fine of 5 shillings "received of Mr John
Harrison for a fyne for an incroachment by
him made upon the soil of this Burrough
with his new building in St Peter's parish."
MCA 1664; E.R.O. D/B 3/3/70, item 37.

21. c.1674 Ground in All Saints' parish of John Wright,
"whereon the said John Wright hath erected
and built a new house." Landcheap of 1674,
purchase price of £27. This "newly built
messuage" was bequeathed by John Wright to
his wife in 1675. PCC 120 Dycer.

22. 1672 Hill House in All Saints' parish. Included
in Hearth Tax assessment, 1672, with the
note "novo erecto". Not in 1671 tax return.
Two hearths; householder John Watts. (E.R.O.
Q/RTh 7 and 8.)

ENLARGED HOUSES

23. 1537-1540 The Blue Boar. Frontal extension (possibly the saloon bar of 1971) by John Church, bailiff and farmer of the former abbey lands of Beeleigh. Formerly the building was known as Crosse's Great Tenement and the earlier parts are dated c.1350 by the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments. In the 1540 MCA the building first appears in the Assize Rental and its former and new names both occur in that account roll.
24. 1575 Grant of waste land 30 feet wide for enlarging the groundsills of William Poulter's house, Cobbes-at-the-Corner, (now the Rose and Crown). An assize rent of 1d per annum was chargeable thenceforth. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/34, f.7v.
25. 1579 Richard Josua enclosed land 40 feet by 30 feet westwards from his mansion in All Saints' parish. Assize rent of 4d. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/34 f.14r.
26. c.1586 Extension of Wrenches. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/34, ff.28v and 36r.
27. c.1598 John Nash extended his house frontage 30 square feet by filling in below the jetty. An adjoining smithy was also incorporated and - in 1613 - a porch was added. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/19 f.66r and D/B 3/3/421.
28. 1623 Edmund Rayner, blacksmith, extends the frontage of his shop below the pentise. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/19, f.153v. (MCA 1623: "for enlarging his Shopp toward the Kinges streate so farre as the chamber or loft over the sayd

shopp doth jetty over.")

29. c.1629 Robert Jones converts two tenements and their shops into one mansion and shop on the east side of the Fishmarket.
E.R.O., D/B 3/1/34, deed of 1625.
30. 1627 "A new building at his dwelling house" by All Saints' churchyard gate, built by Samuel Pratt, tailor. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/19, f.237r. (It may be noted that this and item 29 were buildings beside the market place, an area which had been altered and improved c.1621-1622.)
31. 1629 Thomas Trowers enlarges his house by a new section on the street front. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/19, f.270r.
32. pre-1670 "An incroachment with a new building upon the soyle of this Burrough in the messuage in the parish of All Saints." 1670 rental, D/B 3/3/70, item 36.
33. pre-1670 "A new building in the messuage or tenement in the parish of St Peter's." Encroachment made by (blank) Moorcock.
E.R.O., D/B 3/3/70, item 40.
34. pre-1670 Enlarged building by Robert Jennings "neere the Tainterfield" in St Mary's parish.
E.R.O., D/B 3/3/70, item 41.
35. pre-1670 "A new building in his messuage heretofore called or known by the name of the Swanne" in St Mary's parish by Francis Gournay.
E.R.O., D/B 3/3/70, item 45.

(The Swan is an ancient structure with a central portion sideways-on to the street which has a fine first-floor Hall with a queenpost roof and aisles. This extension is possibly the western wing.)

36. pre-1670

"The end of a parlour and shopp in his new building in the parish of Saint Marie, in a certain messuage in the several tenures of Martin Carter the younger and Thomas Bonner, glazier."

E.R.O., D/B 3/3/70, item 48.

37. c.1670

Ferm rent of one shilling imposed for the porch and palings of John Carter's dwelling

E.R.O., D/B 3/3/70, item 59.

SUBDIVIDED HOUSES

38. c.1554-1574

Great and Little Cranks divided by John Spearman, barber. Great Cranks renamed the White Lion. MCA 1573.

39. c.1568

House of Daniel Winterbourne divided in two parts. New parlour added. Both parts were purchased in 1621 by the feoffees of Ralph Breeder's endowment for the grammar school. In 1897 these two buildings were numbers 66 and 68 High Street (directly opposite St Peter's tower).

E.R.O., D/ABW 39/270 (1568); D/B 3/1/1, ?f.87v.-88v. f.79v.; D/B 3/3/204; D/DQs 137/6.

40. c.1570

Subdivision of a tenement in Fullbridge Street (which is number 1 of this table) into two parts. MCA 1570, assize rental.

41. c.1575 Saykin's alias Bekkes!: two dwellings by
1575. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/34, f.11v.
42. pre-1583 Scarlett's and Hasting's (1 mansion in 1558)
once more divided.
E.R.O., D/ABW 4/142 (1558); D/ABW 29/67 (1583).
43. c.1575-1630 Aylewyn's into Allen's and Hoore's.
E.R.O., D/B 3/1/34, deeds of 1630.
44. c.1592 Provision in the will of Thomas Beane for
the division of a house into three parts.
E.R.O., D/ABW 5/245.
45. c.1592 Instructions for the division of Thomas
Beane's new house (number 9 above) into
four parts.
46. c.1595 Cottingham's in Fullbridge Street divided
into two parts.
E.R.O., D/B 3/1/34, ff.60v and 61v.
47. by 1601 House of Andrew Momford divided into three
dwellings: "late newly builded and now
converted into three several tenements
with the yards and gardens .. to either of
them now severally laid and belonging."
E.R.O., D/ABW 26/119 (1601).
48. by 1602 Tenement late of Richard Wood "modo in
seperales cottagia dimissum".
E.R.O., D/DWd 3 (deed of 1602).
49. by 1620. Triple division of Francesces Garden in
St Peter's parish near the Hythe.
50. by 1625 Two tenements made out of a house beside
Portman Marsh. Bequeathed by Thomas Cheese,
1625, and described by him as "late purchased
of Mr John Rudland, now in tenure of Thomas
Fairchild, glover." In 1641 one half was in

tenure of William Harris, shoemaker and was purchased and united with the other half by John Scott, who purchased them from Sir Simon D'Ewes of Stowlangtoft, Suffolk.

E.R.O., D/ABW 47/252 (1625); D/B 3/1/34, deed of 1641.

51. c.1636

Three houses called Duke's, Bundock's and Gifford's, "modo nisi unum messuagium sive mansionum" standing beside Hog Field in St Mary's parish.

E.R.O., D/B 3/1/34, deed of 1636.

52. pre-1655

Messuage in All Saints' parish, purchased of Thomas Welles by Elizabeth Browne. By then it was divided into two buildings with an oatmeal house and a mill.

PCC 87 Berkeley.

53. pre-1670

Tenement in St Peter's parish "late of Thomas Langham" and by then subdivided as two dwellings.

E.R.O., D/B 3/3/70, item 35.

54. c.1672

Schoolmaster's divided into three dwellings.

E.R.O., D/ABR 9/205 (1672).

55. c.1682

Division of a house purchased by Thomas Pettit, shoemaker, into two dwellings.

E.R.O., D/ABR 11/163 (1682).

REBUILDING

56. c.1496

House facing Darcy's Tower. Reconstruction by the tenant a condition of the lease by the earl of Oxford.

E.R.O., D/DWd 1.

57. c.1567 Reconstruction of the Spread Eagle by John Manning at a cost of about £100. Formerly the house had been called The Bull and it formed part of the property exchanged with the Crown by Sir Thomas Darcy in 1550. Manning's will of 1582 refers to the wainscot and "the glasse which ys nowe standinge and framed about the windows" of this house. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/33, f.17 (1567); D/ABW 25/290.
58. pre-1610 £17 - 5 - 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ bequeathed by Thomas Johnjohns "unto and betwixt such and so many of my loving friends and neighbours heretofore contributing to my relief and help toward the building again of my dwelling house when it was burned down." E.R.O., D/ABW 21/244 (1610).
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Appendix 4

BAILIFFS OF THE BOROUGH OF MALDON

There is no record of the eighteen bailiffs for the years 1505-1507, 1531 or 1551, 1552, 1553, 1554 or 1556. All other years between 1500 and 1688 are recorded. Additionally this list gives years of office before 1500 and after 1688 for those who were bailiffs at earlier or later times.

Names are given in order of their first appearance in the lists of bailiffs. An asterisk before a date indicates office in that year as the first, or King's Bailiff.

In 1687 and 1688 the office of the bailiffs was replaced by that of a Mayor.

1. Thomas Wyborough, 1493, *1494, *1500, 1503, 1504, 1510, *1512, *1513, *1516, *1517, *1522, *1523, *1524, *1526, *1528, *1530.
2. Thomas Dale I, 1478, 1479, 1483, 1485, 1486, *1488, 1492, 1500.
3. John Stukk I, *1501, 1502, 1503.
4. William Harding, *1496, 1498, 1501, *1502.
5. John Ormesby, *1504.
6. Robert Goldborne, *1508, *1509.
7. John Dale, 1508, *1511, 1513, 1518, *1519.
8. Thomas Gaywood, 1509, *1510, 1512, 1514, 1515, 1518.
9. John Dawes, 1511, 1517, 1520, 1521, 1525.
10. Reynold Fowle, 1514, 1519.
11. John Nash, 1515, 1516, *1520, *1521, *1525, 1530.
12. Richard Beynham, 1522, 1523, 1524, *1527, 1528, *1529, *1532.
13. John Bush, 1526, 1529, *1533, 1534.
14. Thomas Solme, 1527.
15. John Basse, 1532, 1539.

16. John Church, 1533, *1534, *1538, *1539, *1544, *1545, 1546,
*1550, *1555, *1559.
17. John Robards, *1535.
18. John Richmond, 1535, *1536.
19. John Sherman, 1536, *1537, *1540, *1541, 1547.
20. John Stukk II, 1537, 1538.
21. Edward Shovelard, 1540, 1541, 1542.
22. Reynold Smith, *1542, *1548, *1549, *1557.
23. Robert Gaywood, *1543, 1544, 1550, 1555, 1559.
24. Philip Goldborne, 1543, 1545, *1546, *1547.
25. William Poulter, 1548, 1549, 1560.
26. John Hastler, 1557.
27. Richard Brett, *1553.
28. Edward Coker, 1558, *1562, *1566, 1570, *1574, first half
of *1578.
29. John Boswell, *1560, *1564.
30. John Cooke, *1561.
31. William Hale, 1561, *1565, *1569, *1570.
32. Richard Josua, 1562, 1566, *1587, *1591.
33. John New, *1563.
34. Edward Carrington, 1563, *1567, first half of *1571.
35. Thomas Eve, 1564, 1573, 1577, second half of 1578, 1581.
36. William Vernon, 1565, 1569, 1573, *1577, *1581, *1586, *1590,
*1594, *1598, *1602.
37. Andrew Michaelson, 1567, second half of *1571.
38. Richard Roberts, *1568.
39. Thomas Spigurnell, 1568, *1572, 1576.
40. John Southern, 1571, *1575, *1579, *1583.
41. Thomas Clarke, 1572.
42. John Morris, 1574, first half of 1578, second half of *1578,
*1582.
43. William Bantoft, 1575, 1579, 1590, *1595.

44. Thomas Furnes, *1576, *1580, *1585.
45. Thomas Smith, 1580, 1584.
46. George Frend, 1582, *1588, *1593.
47. Blaise Salter, 1583.
48. Richard Pellett, *1584.
49. William Soan, 1585.
50. Edward Garrington, 1586.
51. William Browning, 1587, 1591, *1597, *1601.
52. Thomas Walker, 1588, *1592.
53. Thomas Young, *1589.
54. William Burles I, 1589, 1593, 1597, 1601, *1605, *1609.
55. Ralph Breeder, 1592, *1596, *1600, *1604, *1608.
56. John Brook, 1594, 1598.
57. John Martin, 1595, first part of *1599.
58. Thomas Hutt, 1596, 1600, 1604, 1608, *1612, *1616, *1620,
*1624.
59. Elisha Garrington, first part of 1599, last part of *1599, *1603.
60. John Amory/Emery, second part of 1599, *1606.
61. John Maldon, 1602.
62. Thomas Preston, 1603.
63. John Soan, 1605, 1609, *1613, *1617, *1621, *1625, *1629,
*1634.
64. Edward Hastler, 1606, *1610, *1614, *1618, *1622.
65. Benjamin King, *1607, *1611.
66. Matthew Abraham, 1607.
67. Christopher Living, 1610, 1614.
68. Robert Snape, 1611.
69. John Pratt, 1612, 1616.
70. John Luffkin, 1613, 1617.
71. William Francis I, *1615, *1619, *1623, *1627, *1631, *1635,
*1639.

72. George Purkis, 1615, 1619, 1623, *1628, *1632.
73. John Clark, 1618, 1622, *1626, 1631.
74. William Burles II, 1620.
75. John Edwards, 1621, 1625, 1629.
76. Jeremy Pratt, 1624.
77. Thomas Welles, 1626, 1630.
78. Thomas Plume, 1627, *1633, *1637, *1641, *1645, *1649.
79. John Hammes, 1628.
80. William Browning II, *1630.
81. James Maldon, 1632.
82. Thomas Ruck, 1633, 1637.
83. Joseph Hills, 1634.
84. Samuel Bedell, 1635, 1639, *1643, *1647, *1651.
85. William Francis II, *1636, *1640, 1644.
86. Ruben Robinson I, 1636, 1640, *1644, *1648.¹.
87. Thomas Clark, *1638.
88. Jeremy Browning, 1638, *1642.
89. Edward Everley, 1641.
90. Edward Whitefoot, 1642, *1646, *1650, *1653, *1657, *1661.
91. John Steevens, 1643, 1647, 1651, *1655, *1659.
92. Peter Jarvis, 1645.
93. William Walker, 1646, 1650, 1653, 1657, 1661.
94. James Starling, 1648,² last half of *1660, *1664, *1668,
1669.
95. Thomas Langdell, 1649.
96. Thomas Gillingwater *1652, *1656, *1660.².
97. William Jarman, 1652, 1656, 1660.

1. 1648: removed from office at his own request.

2. Removed from office 1648 by order of Parliament (presumably for refusing the new oath prescribed for magistrates in towns.) He was replaced by No. 96, Gillingwater, who was in turn removed from office in 1660 and replaced by Starling (94).

98. John Jennings, *1654, *1658, *1665.
99. Thomas Ewyn, 1654, 1658.
100. John Purkys, 1655, 1659.
101. Samuel Plume, *1662, *1666, first half of *1670.
102. John Harrison, first half of 1660.¹
103. Henry Symond, from Aug. 11th 1660, 1666, 1670.
104. Ruben Robinson II, *1663.
105. John Hart, 1663.
106. Francis Gourney, 1664, 1666, 1672, 1676.
107. Thomas Horsenail, 1665, *1669, *1673.
108. Philip Ralling, *1667, *1671, *1675, *1679, *1683, *1689, *1691.
109. Samuel Pond, 1667, 1671, 1675, 1679, 1686, 1689, 1692, *1698.
110. Robert Jennings, second half of *1670, *1674, *1678, *1682,
part of *1686.
11. Anthony Gratiano, 1672, 1674.
112. Abell Hawkes, 1673, 1677.
113. Sir William Wiseman, Baronet, *1676, *1680, 1684.
114. Anthony Bramston, Esquire, *1677, *1681.
115. William Vernon II, 1678, 1682.
116. John Cockerell, 1680, *1684, *1693, *1697, *1701.
117. Christopher Jaggard, 1681.
118. John Pond, 1683, part of *1686, Mayor in 1687, *1692,
*1700.
119. Michael Cooper, *1685.
120. John Wasse, 1685.
121. Thomas Coe, Mayor, 1688.

1. Removed.

Appendix 5

BURGESSES IN PARLIAMENT

This list is based on Members of Parliament, Part I, "Parliaments of England, 1213-1702" (1879) but supplemented by information from the court books of the borough. References are given to those local sources only.

1. 21st January, 1510 - 23rd February, 1510

No returns found; no local information.

2. 4th February, 1511

(a) Sir Richard FitzLewes¹.

(b) Thomas Intelsham, gentleman.¹

3. 5th February, 1515 - 22nd December, 1515

(a) John Strangman, gentleman¹.

(b) not known.

4. 15th April, 1523 - 13th August, 1523

(a) John Boosum, gentleman¹.

(b) Thomas Wyburgh/Wyborough, gentleman, bailiff of Maldon.¹

5. 3rd November, 1529 - 4th April, 1536

(a) Thomas Tey, esquire, of Layer de la Haye (Essex)¹.

(b) Edward Peyton, esquire, of Wicken (Cambridgeshire).¹

6. 8th June, 1536 - 18th July, 1536

(a) William Harris, gentleman, of Creeksea (Essex)¹.

(b) John Raymonde, gentleman (residence uncertain).¹

7. 28th April, 1539 - 24th July, 1540

(a) John Edmond, gentleman, born at Cressing¹.

(b) William Benham, gentleman, born at Stanway (Essex).¹

8. 16th January, 1542 - 28th March, 1544

(a) Edward Burye (name barely legible)¹.

(b) Henry Dawes, son of John Dawes of Maldon.¹

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1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/2. This court book records the admission of M.P.'s to the freedom of the borough without fine upon their election to represent the borough in Parliament.

9. 23rd November, 1545 - 31st January, 1547
No returns found; no local information.
10. 4th November, 1547 - 15th April, 1552
 - (a) Sir Clement Smyth of Woodham Walter^{1.}
 - (b) Henry Dower, gentleman.
11. 1st March, 1553 - 31st March, 1553
 - (a) Sir Walter Mildmay of Apethorpe (Northamptonshire)^{2.}
 - (b) first, Anthony Browne, esquire, who subsequently accepted election as an M.P. for Preston (Lancashire), then ...
 - (c) Henry Fortescue, esquire.
12. 5th October, 1553 - 5th December, 1553
 - (a) Anthony Browne, esquire, of South Weald (Essex)^{3.}
 - (b) John Raymon(d), gentleman.
13. 2nd April, 1554
 - (a) Thomas Hungate, esquire
 - (b) Edmund Tyrell, esquire, of Boeches in Rawreth (Essex).
14. 12th November, 1554
 - (a) Anthony Browne, esquire^{3.}
 - (b) John Wiseman, esquire, of Great Canfield (Essex).
15. 21st October, 1555
 - (a) Sir Henry Ratcliff (or Radclyffe)^{4.}
 - (b) Richard Weston, esquire, of Skreens, Hatfield Broad Oak.^{5.}

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1. In the 1541 lay subsidy Clement Smyth, esquire, was assessed at £50 in land and fees in the parish of Woodham Walter with Middlemead hamlet. (P.R.O., ^{E.}N.179/108/228.)
 2. Elder son of Thomas Mildmay of Moulsham (Essex) whose career in the royal service is described in DNB.
 3. Reader of the Middle Temple, 1553, one of the justices who led enquiries and trials of protestants in Essex, 1553-1558.
 4. Younger son of Henry Radclyffe, 2nd Earl of Sussex (amongst whose properties were New Hall, Boreham, and Woodham Walter).
 5. An associate of Anthony Browne; reader of the Middle Temple, 1555.

16. 20th January, 1558

- (a) Edmund Tyrell, esquire, of Beeches in Rawreth
- (b) Roger Appleton, esquire, who died and was replaced by ...
- (c) Henry Golding, esquire.^{1.}

17. 23rd January, 1559 - 8th May, 1559

- (a) Sir Henry Ratcliff
- (b) Henry Golding esquire.

18. 11th January, 1563 - 2nd January, 1567

- (a) John Lathom, gentleman
- (b) Richard Argall, gentleman.

19. Elections made by the borough, 1571:

- (a) Peter Osborne, Esquire
- (b) Gabriel Crofts, esquire.^{2.}

20. 8th May, 1572 - 9th April, 1583

- (a) Thomas Gent, esquire, Recorder of Maldon
- (b) Vincent Harris, esquire, of the Friars' Mansion, Maldon, who resigned in 1575 and was replaced by ..
- (c) Edward Sulyard, esquire.^{3.}

21. 23rd November, 1584 - 14th September, 1585

- (a) Edward Lewkenor, esquire, of Denham near Bury St Edmunds
- (b) William Wiseman, esquire, of Maldon.^{4.}

22. 15th October, 1586 - 23rd March, 1587

- (a) John Butler, esquire
- (b) Edward Lewkenor, esquire.

1. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/5 f.28r. Election, 30th October 1558.

2. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/6 f.118r for these two elections.

3. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/6 f.73v.

4. J.P. and alderman of Maldon 1578-1581. The pedigree of the Essex Wisemans, in a reliable MS volume made between 1630 and 1640 says of William, son of John Wiseman of Felsted, that, "he was of Maldon in Essex."

23. 12th November, 1588 - 29th March, 1589
- (a) John Butler, esquire
 - (b) William Vernon, esquire, of Little Beeleigh, Maldon.
24. 19th February, 1593 - 10th April, 1593
- (a) Thomas Mildmay, esquire, of Moulsham (Essex)^{1.}
 - (b) Edward Lewkenor, esquire.
- (Election held 29th February, 1593.^{2.})
25. 24th October, 1597 - 9th February, 1598
- (a) Thomas Herrys, esquire, of the Friars' Mansion, Maldon
 - (b) William Wiseman, esquire.
26. 27th October, 1601 - 19th December, 1601
- (a) William Wiseman, esquire
 - (b) Richard Weston, esquire.^{3.}
27. 19th March, 1604 - 9th February, 1611
- (a) Sir Edward Lewkenor, who died 1605 and was replaced by ..
 - (b) Theophilus, Lord Howard of Walden, who entered the House of Lords as Baron Howard de Walden in 1610 and his place was taken by ..
 - (c) Sir Robert Rich;^{4.}
 - (d) William Wiseman, esquire, who died in 1610 and his place was taken by ..
 - (e) Sir John Sammes of Langford (Essex).^{5.}
28. 5th April, 1614 - 7th June, 1614
- (a) Sir John Sammes^{6.}
 - (b) Charles Chibborne, esquire, Recorder of Maldon.

1. Son of Sir Thomas Mildmay of Moulsham and nephew of Sir Walter Mildmay of Apethorpe.

2. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/8 ff.105v - 106r.

3. Not the judge who ruled in favour of ship-money but the equally important courtier who was created Earl of Portland in 1633.

4. Later 2nd Earl of Warwick and Lord High Admiral of England.

5. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/19 f.33r.

6. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/19 f.70r (election, 9th March 1614).

29. 16th January, 1621 - 8th February, 1622

- (a) Sir Julius Caesar, Master of the Rolls and High Steward of Maldon
- (b) Sir Henry Mildmay of Great Waltham, Master of the King's Jewel House.^{1.}

30. 12th February, 1624

- (a) Sir Arthur Harris of Creeksea and Woodham Mortimer (Essex)
- (b) Sir William Masham, Baronet, of High Laver.^{2.}

31. 17th May, 1625 - 12th August, 1625

- (a) Sir Arthur Harris, who was also elected a knight of the shire of Essex 3rd May, 1625, decided to serve for the county and was replaced by ...
- (b) Sir William Masham, Baronet, 4th July, 1625;^{3.}
- (c) Sir Henry Mildmay.

32. 6th February, 1626 - 15th June, 1626

- (a) Sir William Masham^{4.}
- (b) Sir Thomas Cheeke of Pirgo in Hornchurch, Essex (who took his oath to the borough 11th January, 1626).^{4.}

33. 17th March, 1628 - 10th March, 1629

- (a) Sir Henry Mildmay^{5.}
- (b) Sir Arthur Harris.^{5.}

1. Third son of Humphrey Mildmay of Danbury and a cousin of Thomas Mildmay who was M.P. in 1593. See also below under 1640.

2. See D. Brunton and D.H. Pennington, Members of the Long Parliament (1954) pp.120-121.

3. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/19 f.201v.

4. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/19 f.207r. Sir Thomas Cheeke was a professional M.P., serving for Yarmouth (Isle of Wight) in 1614, Boston in 1621, for Essex in 1624, Berealston in 1625 and later, in the Short and Long Parliaments, for Harwich. He was uncle to Lord Rich. (Brunton and Pennington, op. cit. p.124)

5. Election date: 28th February, 1628. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/19 f.342v.

34. 13th April, 1640 - 5th May, 1640
- (a) Sir Henry Mildmay, High Steward of Maldon¹.
 - (b) John Porter, esquire, Recorder of Maldon.¹
35. 3rd November, 1640 - 20th April, 1653
- (a) Sir Henry Mildmay².
 - (b) Sir John Clotworthy of Holborn (Middlesex).²
36. Parliaments of 1653 - 1658
- No returns; no local information.
37. 27th January, 1659 - 22nd April, 1659
- (a) Colonel Sir Henry Mildmay of Graces
 - (b) Colonel Joachim Matthews, Recorder of Maldon 1652-1659.
38. 25th April, 1660 - 29th December, 1660
- (a) Henry Mildmay of Graces, whose election was declared void and he was replaced by the election of
 - (b) Edward Harris, esquire, of Great Baddow;
 - (c) Tristram Conyers, esquire, of Walthamstowe the Middle Temple, Recorder of Maldon, 1659-1663.
39. 8th May, 1661 - 24th January, 1679
- (a) Sir John Tyrell
 - (b) Sir Richard Wiseman of Willingale, Baronet.
40. 6th March, 1679 - 12th July, 1679
- (a) Sir William Wiseman, Baronet, of Rivenhall, alderman of Maldon³.
 - (b) Sir John Bramston, Knight of the Bath, of Skreens, High Steward of the Borough, 1661-1688.³

1. Election date: 16th March, 1640. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/20 f.100r.

2. "Among the many scoundrels in the House it would be hard to find two members for a constituency more unattractive than the members for Maldon." (Brunton and Pennington, op. cit. p.125.) Clotworthy was "disabled" in March 1648 and a new election was ordered but he was reinstated 26th June, 1648. (Commons Journals.)

3. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/21 f.169v.

41. 17th October, 1679 - 18th January, 1681

(a) Sir William Wiseman, Baronet, of Rivenhall¹.

(b) Sir Thomas Darcy, Baronet.¹

42. 21st March, 1681 - 28th March, 1681

(a) Sir William Wiseman

(b) Sir Thomas Darcy.

43. 19th May, 1685 - 2nd July, 1687

(a) Sir John Bramston of Skreens².

(b) Sir Thomas Darcy.²

44. 22nd January, 1689 - 6th February, 1690

(a) Sir Thomas Darcy³.

(b) Charles Mountagu, esquire (later first Earl of Halifax).³

1. Ibid. f.185r.

2. Ibid. f.235. In his Autobiography Sir John Bramston gives a long account of his electioneering with the Duke of Albemarle and how he and his rival Wiseman were elected. (Autobiography pp.172-4.)

3. E.R.O., D/B 3/1/21 ff. 306v - 307.

Appendix 6

ALIENS LISTED IN SUBSIDY RETURNSG = assessed on goods W = assessed on wages⁵ PT = poll tax

	<u>1524</u>	<u>1525</u>	<u>1544</u>	<u>Description in subsidy</u> <u>returns</u>
Lewes Rivers	£4G	£4G		Frenchman
Henry Cowper	£5G			Dutchman
Peter Johnson	£33G			Dutchman
Adrian Johnson		£3G		Dutchman
Henry Pygghyll	53/4G	53/4G		Servant with Peter Johnson
John Dutchman	40/-G	40/-G		(Not an alien in 1525)
Thomas Hilles	40/-G	40/-G		Scot
Francis Mylys	PT	20/-G		Alien, 1524; Dutchman, 1525
John Tyeman	PT			Alien
Lawrence Fayger		PT		Dutchman
Henry Heere		£5G		Dutchman
James King		£3-9-4G		Dutchman, servant with Adrian Johnson
William Payne		34/8W		Dutchman, servant with Adrian Johnson
John Willes			PT	Alien
Cornelis ...			PT	Alien, servant with Ralph Pereson
Cornelius Peterson			40/-G	Alien, aged 35
Cornelius Mantell			20/-G	Alien
John Arnout			PT	Alien, servant with Robert Pyke
Walter Stone			PT	Alien

Appendix 6 continued ...

	<u>1544</u>	<u>Description</u>
Lambert Lygyt	PT	Alien, servant with Katherine Johnson
Henry Stephen	PT	Alien, servant with Thomas Bardene
Richard Franck	£15G	Alien
John Harrys	PT	Alien, servant with Richard Franck
Henry Johnson	PT	- ditto -
Crispin Stone	PT	Alien, servant with William Jones
Herman Honerucke	PT	Alien, servant with Thomas Lawes
John Strucke	PT	- ditto -
Anthony Rowland	£2G	Alien, servant with Stephen Gull
John Johnson	PT	Alien, servant of Richard Rogers
Abell Lucas	PT	- ditto -
Nicholas Pynson	PT	- ditto -

Table 1.1

Table 1.1. Lay Subsidy Assessments (Maldon) 1524 (P.R.O., E.179/108/148)

	Assessed on WAGES					Assessed on GOODS								Assessed on LANDS					ALL
	Poll Tax	20s £5	40s £10	Total	£1 53s	£2 4d	£3 25	£6 29	£10 19	£20 39	£40 99	£100+	Total	£2 5	£3 29	£6 59	Total		
All Saints'	2	14	6	3	25	2	14	8	3	2	2	1	2	34	1	1	2	61	
St Peter's		20	4		24		2	7	3	6	3	5	26		1		1	51	
St Mary's		24	10		34	2	16	13	2	1	2	3	40					74	
Beeleigh		5	1		6			1			1		2					8	
MALDON	2	63	21	3	89	4	32	29	8	9	8	9	3	102	1	2	3	194	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
VALUATION (to nearest £)	0	63	52	30	145	4	65	100	49	101	212	520	585	1,636	2	8	10	1,791	

Table 1.2

Table 1.2. Lay Subsidy Assessments (Maldon) 1525 (P.R.O., E.179/108/170)

	Assessed on WAGES				Assessed on GOODS								Assessed on LANDS						
	Poll Tax	20s	40s £5	£10	Total	£1 53s	£2 4d	£3 £5	£6 £9	£10 £19	£20 £39	£40 £99	£100+	Total	£2 £5	£3 £9	£6 £9	Total	ALL
All Saints ⁺		4	23		27		9	9	3	2	2	2	1	28					55
St Peter's	1	4	1		6	6	9	4	3	5	3	3		33	1		1	2	41
St Mary's		2	8		10	11	15	10	2	2	2	1	1	44					54
Beeleigh		4			4			2			1			3					7
<hr/>																			
MALDON	1	14	32	nil	47	17	33	25	8	9	8	6	2	108	1		1	2	157
<hr/>																			
		£	£		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
<hr/>																			
VALUATION (to nearest £1)	-	14	53	-	67	17	61	60	35	92	187	319	332	1,103	2		7	9	1,199

Table 1.3

Table 1.3. Lay Subsidy Assessments (Maldon) 1543-44 (P.R.O., E.179/108/244)

	Assessed on WAGES					Assessed on GOODS								Assessed on LANDS						
	Poll Tax	20s £5	40s £10	Total	£1 53s	£2 4d	£3 5s	£6 8d	£10 £19	£20 £39	£40 £99	£100+	Total	£2 £5	£3 £9	£6 £19	Total	ALL		
All Saints'	6			6	14	8	9	4	6	5			46	1	1		2	54		
St Peter's	4			4	13	5	10	4	5	3			40	2			2	46		
St Mary's	4			4	14	6	12	5	7	9	3		56			1	1	61		
Beeleigh					1	1		1		1			4					4		
MALDON	14			14	42	20	31	14	18	18	3		146				5	165		
VALUATION (to nearest £1)				NIL	£ 42	£ 40	£ 132	£ 97	£ 227	£ 392	£ 145		£ 1,075	£ 6	£ 3	£ 18	£ 27	£ 1,102		

Table 1.4

HEARTH TAX ASSESSMENTS(a) Maldon 1662 (E.R.O., Q/RTh 1)Distribution of households and numbers of hearths, 1662:

Parish	Households	Hearths	Average number of hearths:
		(total)	Households
All Saints'	49	223	4.5
St Peter's	52	192	3.7
St Mary's	56	207	3.6
All	157	622	3.9

Note: exempted households not returned in 1662.

Number of hearths in relation to households, 1662:

Parish	Number of hearths per household (Total = householders)					
	1	2	3-5	6-9	10+	
All Saints'	7	8	17	13	4	49
St Peter's	4	15	24	8	1	52
St Mary's	7	7	34	7	1	56
All	18	30	75	28	6	157

Table 1.4 continued ...

(b) Maldon 1671 (E.R.O., Q/RTh 5)Distribution of households and numbers of hearths, 1671:

Parish	Households		Hearths	Average number of hearths to households
	Taxed	Exempt	(Total)	
All Saints'	50	27	(77) 251	3.2
St Peter's	52	22	(74) 254	3.4
St Mary's	51	23	(74) 223	3.0
All	133	72	(225) 728	3.2

Note: 7 vacant hearths in vacant houses have been omitted.

Number of hearths in relation to households, 1671:

Parish	Number of hearths per household (Total = householders)					
	1	2	3-5	6-9	10+	
All Saints'	30	8	23	13	3	77
St Peter's	25	16	24	8	1	74
St Mary's	26	11	30	4	3	74
All	81	35	77	25	7	225

Table 1.4 continued ...

(c) Maldon 1673 (E.R.O., Q/RTh 8/6)Distribution of households and hearths, 1673:

Parish	Households		Hearths		Average number of hearths to households
	Taxed	Exempt	All (Total)		
All Saints'	49	19	(68)	237	3.4
St Peter's	53	20	(73)	215	2.9
St Mary's	47	13	(60)	202	3.4
All	149	52	(201)	654	3.2

Number of hearths in relation to households, 1673:

Parish	Number of hearths to households (Total = households)					
	1	2	3-5	6-9	10+	
All Saints	23	8	22	12	3	68
St Peter's	22	17	24	8	1	72
St Mary's	16	6	31	3	3	60
Vacant houses			2			
All	61	31	79	23	7	201

Table 2
A Comparison of some Urban Assessments in
the Lay Subsidy, 1523-4

<u>Place</u>	<u>Number of taxpayers</u>			<u>Total</u>	<u>Per Capita</u>
	(a)	(b) Assessed at		<u>Valuation</u>	<u>Valuation</u>
	All	less than..		£	£
		(b) £3	(c) £2		
Nottingham	295	205	139	1,301	4.4
Hadleigh*	291	194	112	1,823	6
Dunwich	222	150	76	1,078	4.8
Sudbury	219	132	98	681	3
Aylesbury	202	135	54	1,004	4.9
Lavenham	197	135	103	3,778**	19***
Maldon	194	50	34	1,791	9.2
Thaxted	194	101	74	1,097	5.6
High Wycombe	175	96	62	1,118	6.3
Chelmsford****	138	44	30	1,040	7.5
Coggeshall	118	65	34	699	5.9

* Suffolk.

** One assessment was for £1,000.

*** £14 per capita if the single £1,000 assessment is not counted.

**** Including the adjacent hamlet of Moulsham.

Table 3

Four Rankings of some towns from the
evidence of the lay subsidy,
1523-1524

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
By number of taxpayers	By per capita valuation	By% of taxpayers under £3	By% of taxpayers under £2
Nottingham	Lavenham	Maldon (25%)	Maldon (17%)
Hadleigh	Hadleigh	Chelmsford (32%)	Chelmsford (22%)
Dunwich	Maldon	Thaxted (52%)	Aylesbury (27%)
Sudbury	Nottingham	H. Wycombe (55%)	Coggeshall (29%)
Aylesbury	H. Wycombe	Coggeshall (55%)	Dunwich (34%)
Lavenham	Thaxted	Sudbury (60%)	H. Wycombe (36%)
Maldon	Dunwich	Hadleigh (66%)	Hadleigh (38%)
Thaxted	Chelmsford	Aylesbury (66%)	Thaxted (38%)
H. Wycombe	Aylesbury	Dunwich (68%)	Sudbury (45%)
Chelmsford	Coggeshall	Lavenham (69%)	Nottingham (47%)
Coggeshall	Sudbury	Nottingham (69%)	Lavenham (52%)

Table 4

Admissions of Freeman

- Table 4.1 Admissions of Freeman, 1501-1550, 1561-1580 and 1611-1660.
- 4.2 (a) Origins of Freeman 1501-1660 (as percentages).
 - 4.2 (b) Origins of Freeman corrected for under-registration.
 - 4.3 Methods of Admission to Freedom, 1501-1660.
 - 4.4 Growing proportion of Freeman admitted by right of descent or marriage.
 - 4.5 Freeman's Admission Fees.

Note

1. Honorary Freeman (gentry, clergy, M.P.'s, Recorders and High Stewards) have been omitted from this table.
2. Records of admissions are either incomplete or missing for the years 1550-1560, 1580-1611.
3. Sixteenth century registers probably do not include all freemen who inherited the franchise.
4. Sources: E.R.O., D/B 3/1/2 (1501-1550)
/5 (1557-1566)
/6 (1567-1592)
/19 (1606-1637)
/20 (1637-1664)
/21 (1665-1690)

TABLE 4.1 Admissions of Freemen at Maldon, 1501-1550, 1561-1580 and 1611-1660

Methods of Admission	1501 1510	1511 1520	1521 1530	1531 1540	1541 1550	1561 1570	1571 1580	1611 1620	1621 1630	1631 1640	1641 1650	1651 1660	TOTALS
<u>MALDON-BORN</u>													
By fee	4	13	5	4	9	1	7	3		6	13	2	67
After apprenticeship		1				1	4	1	4	3	1	5	20
In right of parentage	2	4	9	4	8	2	13	16	37	20	12	26	153
In right of marriage	3	2		1		2	1		2		7	3	21
	9	20	14	9	17	6	25	20	43	29	33	36	261
<u>ESSEX-BORN</u>													
By fee		9	17	5	31	20	30	11	18	16	12	7	176
After apprenticeship			2				2	6	5	5	4	5	29
In right of parentage	1	1	1	4	3	1	1					1	13
In right of marriage		2	2		2	2	1	3	9	13	4	5	43
	1	12	22	9	36	23	34	20	32	34	20	18	261
<u>OUT-OF-COUNTY</u>													
By fee		3	10	9	10	15	15	5	2	13	12	2	96
After apprenticeship								1					1
In right of parentage				1									1
In right of marriage			4				1	1	2	1	3	1	13
		3	14	10	10	15	16	7	4	14	15	3	111
<u>TOTALS</u>	10	35	50	28	63	44	75	47	79	77	68	57	633

Table 4.2

(a) Origins of Freeman admitted 1501-1660

(Shown as percentages)

	<u>Maldon-born</u>	<u>Essex-born</u>	<u>Born out of Essex</u>	
1501-1550	37	43	20	(100 = 186)
1561-1580	26	48	26	(100 = 119)
1611-1660	49	38	13	(100 = 328)
1501-1660	41	41	18	(100 = 633)

(b) Origins of Freeman admitted 1501-1660

(percentages corrected for under-registration)*

	<u>Maldon-born</u>	<u>Essex-born</u>	<u>Born out of Essex</u>	
1501-1550	40	41	19	(100 = 194)
1561-1580	28	46	25	(100 = 123)
1611-1660	49	38	13	(100 = 328)
1501-1660	47	37	16	(100 = 702)

*Note: only 42 men are recorded as free by descent between 1501 and 1580 and that is certainly due in part to under-registration of Maldon men who took up inherited freedom. There are 69 more than 42 recorded for 1611-1660 (when all types of admission were recorded) and that is 9.3% of the total of 633 freemen. A correction of the Maldon-born freemen of 1501-1580 by 10% has therefore been made.

Table 4.3

Methods of Admission to Freedom, 1501-1660

(1) By inheritance	167*	or	26%
(2) By fee	339	or	54%
(3) By apprenticeship	50	or	8%
(4) By marriage	77	or	12%
	633		100%

* Uncorrected; possibly some 10% "light" through under-registration.

Table 4.4

Growing Proportion of Freeman admitted by right ofDescent or Marriage

	<u>Admission by fee</u>		<u>Admission by right</u>	
	<u>or after apprenticeship</u>		<u>of marriage or descent</u>	
1611-1620	27	57%	20	43%
1621-1630	29	37%	50	63%
1631-1640	43	59%	34	41%
1641-1650	42	62%	26	38%
1651-1660	21	37%	36	63%
1661-1670	45	38%	75	62%
1671-1680	33	30%	78	70%
1681-1690	21	18%	96	82%
1611-1650	141	52%	130	48%
1651-1690	120	30%	285	70%

Table 4.5

Freemen's Admission Fees

	<u>To each</u>	<u>To each</u>	<u>To the</u>	<u>To the</u>	<u>Total</u>
	<u>Bailiff</u>	<u>Sergeant</u>	<u>Recorder</u>	<u>Common Box</u>	
Foreigners	12d	4d	8d	30s	32s
Strangers, born					
out of the realm	12d	4d	8d	30s 3d	32s 3d
Sons and daughters					
of Freemen	12d	4d	8d	18d	3s 6d
Apprentices and					
covenanted servants	4d	2d	4d	6s 8d	7s 6d

(From the borough custumal of 1555, paras 20 and 52. E.R.O., D/B

3/1/2)

Table 5.1

Decenners and Freemen of 1570:decrease, 1570-80.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Decrease</u>		(of whom were dead....)
		<u>Annual</u>	<u>Cumulative</u>	
1570	287			
1571	251	36	36	(2)
1572	230	21	57	(6)
1573	209	21	78	(8)
1574	194	15	93	(6)
1575	(not known)			
1576	176	18	111	(4)
1577	157	19	130	(7)
1578	143	14	144	(5)
1579	136	7	151	(7)
1580	106	30	181	(5)
	—	—		—
Difference,				
1570-80...	181	Total	181	Total 50

Table 5.2

Decenners and Freeman of 1580:increase, 1570-80.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Annual</u>	<u>Increase</u> % (100 = 294)	<u>Cumulative</u>
1570-80	106		36.0	
1571-80	119	13	4.4	13
1572-80	125	6	2.0	19
1573-80	131	6	2.0	25
1574-80	153	22	7.3	47
1575-80	(not known)			
1576-80	184	31	10.5	78
1577-80	196	12	4.0	90
1578-80	208	12	4.0	102
1579-80	221	13	4.4	115
1580	294	73	24.4	188

Table 5.3

Decenners and Freeman of 1576:(i) increase, 1570-76.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of 1576</u> <u>residents</u>	<u>Increase</u>	
			<u>Annual</u>	<u>Cumulative</u>
1570	176	51		
1571	203	59	27	27
1572	221	64	18	45
1573	232	67	11	56
1574	275	80	43	99
1575	(not known)			
1576	343	100	68	167

Decenners and Freeman of 1576:(ii) decrease, 1576-80.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of 1576</u> <u>residents</u>	<u>Decrease</u>	
			<u>Annual</u>	<u>Cumulative</u>
1576	340	100		
1577	291	85	49	49
1578	256	75	35	84
1579	237	70	19	103
1580	182	54	55	158

Table 6

Burials during Plague Years1603-4 & 1625-6

	<u>1603</u>	<u>1625</u>			
January	1	11			
February	-	10			
March	1	9			
April	4	9			
May	1	9			
June	-	6			
July	2	6			
August	10	5			
September	20	10			
October**	26	6	**Weekly burials, October		
November	17	12	1603		
December	8	13	1st week	...	11
			2nd week	...	7
			3rd week	...	3
			4th week	...	3
			Oct. 29th to Nov. 4th		7
	<u>1604</u>	<u>1626</u>			
January	5	11			
February	6	5			
March	12	8			
April	21	15			
May	11	9			
June	8	14			
July	17	8			
August	19	3			
September	18	2			
October	7	4			
November	4	2			
December	2	3			

Table 7

5-Year Moving Averages of Baptisms and Burials, 1601-1645

	BAPTISMS	BURIALS
1601	60	37.8
1602	52	59.4
1603	51.4	64.6
1604	51.8	68
1605	47.8	72.2
1606	48.8	62.2
1607	50	46.8
1608	48	52.8
1609	47	51.4
1610	46.8	56.4
1611	47	55.8
1612	44	54.6
1613	43.8	50.4
1614	43.2	56.8
1615	43.6	53.2
1616	43.8	56
1617	44.8	54.4
1618	44.4	52
1619	44.8	44.8
1620	51.6	43.6
1621	50	40.8
1622	53	46.2
1623	51.4	57.6
1624	49.8	68.4
1625	46.6	68.2
1626	49.6	72.2
1627	48.4	67.8

Table 7 continued

1628	50.8	55.6
1629	51	47.4
1630	50.4	46.6
1631	49.2	46
1632	49.6	42.2
1633	50	40.6
1634	51.4	39.4
1635	53.8	44
1636	50.6	53.4
1637	47.4	65.6
1638	46.2	69
1639	46.8	71
1640	46.8	75.2
1641	50	69.2
1642	51.2	60.6
1643*	48	56.4
1644*	47.6	61
1645*	43	53.6

*Baptism figures for these 3 years involve the use of untrustworthy post-1644 aggregate figures.

Table 8 The Survey of Maldon, 1609.

E.R.O., D/B 3/3/421

A. Number of houses listed:	149		
B. Owners -			
non-resident:	27	(owning 80* houses) *54% of the houses	
owner-occupiers:	29	(owning 57 houses and admin- istrators of 12)	
non-resident occupiers:	10		
	66	owners	
C. Occupation -			
owner occupied:	31*		
tenanted:	108	(73% of the 149 houses tenant occupied)	
empty (or occupied by non residents):	10		
	149	houses	
D. Tenants:	109+ **		
E. Manors+ (number of tenements credited to each) -			
Little Maldon:	1	Earl's Maldon:	22
The King:	9	Beeleigh Fee:	11
East Greenwich:	6	The Borough:	62
Langford:	7	Capital estates:	10
Unknown to the surveyors:	21		
F. Valuation of holdings:			
Valuation	Number of	Valuation	Number of
per annum	tenements	per annum	tenements
£6	3	£2	29
£5	3	£1	35
£4	10	10s	1
£3	7	5s	1
		Unknown:	60.

* 31 houses occupied by 29 owners (as in B). John Nash and Thomas Hutt were seized of 2 premises each.

** Item 79 had 2 tenants; item 113 (Table III, 26) had "sundry persons" as inmates.

Table 9

Investment in Maldon Property by Residents and OutsidersLandcheap Evidence: 1566-1658***

<u>Number of</u> <u>Transactions</u>		<u>Transactions</u> <u>with</u> <u>Non-Residents</u>		<u>Transactions</u> <u>with</u> <u>Residents</u>		<u>Uncertain</u> <u>Location</u>
		(a)	(b)	(a)	(b)	
1566-1598	90	21	17	67	71	4
1601-1624	87	17	19	74	56	8
<u>1626-1658</u>	<u>105</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>88</u>	<u>58</u>	<u>37</u>
1566-1658	282	53	48	229	185	49
100% = 564		18%		73%		9%

*** Account rolls of the borough chamberlains of these years:

(1) 1566-15981566, '70, '72, '73, '74, '75, '76, '78, '81, '84, '86, '89,
1590, '91, '92, '93, '97 and 1598.(2) 1601-16241601, '03, '04, '06, '07, '08, '11, '13, '14, '15, '17, '18, '19,
1620, '21, '22, '23, '24, 1625.(3) 1626-16581626, '27, '28, '29, '30, '33, '36, '38, '39, '40, '41, '42,
1643, '44 (nil), '46, '47, '48, '51, '52, '53, '54,
1656 (nil), 1658.

(a) - Residents and Non-Residents as Purchasers.

(b) - Residents and Non-Residents as Vendors.

Table 10

Owners of Maldon Property:Residents and Non-Residents, 1574-1667**

	GRANTORS		RECIPIENTS	
	<u>Maldon men</u>	<u>Outsiders</u>	<u>Maldon men</u>	<u>Outsiders</u>
1574-1599	41	28	45	24
1600-1649	33	39	49	23
1650-1667	11	11	5	17
	<hr/>		<hr/>	
1574-1667	85	78	99	64
	(163)		(163)	

Maldon residents: 184 - 56%
 Outsiders: 142 - 44%
 All cases: 326 - 100%

Table 11.

House Prices at Maldon, 1561-167011.1 Range of Prices

Price	1561	1571	1581	1591	1601	1611	1621	1631	1641	1651	1661	All
Ranges	1570	1580	1590	1600	1610	1620	1630	1640	1650	1660	1670	
£200							2		1		2	5
£100-£99				3	1		3	5			3	15
£70-£99	1	1		3		1	4	1	3	2	4	20
£60-£69	1	1	1	1			1		1	2	2	10
£50-£59		2	2	1		2		3	1	2	6	19
£40-£49		2	3	3	4	8	1	4	3	4	2	34
£35-£39		1	2			1	6	2		1	1	14
£30-£34	2	1	5	2	2	3	3	4			5	27
£25-£29		1	2		1	1			1	3	3	12
£20-£24	1	9	9	4	2	9	7	5	4	2	4	56
£15-£19	1	3	6	1	5	10	7	1	4	2	7	47
£10-£14		3	1	1	3	7	4	4	1	2	2	28
£5-£9	4	3	3	4		5	4		1	2		26
£2-£4		1				2		1	1	1		6
Number of Transactions	10	28	34	23	18	49	42	30	21	23	41	319

Total

Valu- £	267.3	733.55	1186.75	964.70	570.5	1191.8	2040.75	1478.33	235.25	1305.15	
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ation

All 10806

Average

Valu- £	26.76	26.19	34.94	41.9	31.6	24.7	48.6	49	39.6	10.2	31.8	33.8
---------	-------	-------	-------	------	------	------	------	----	------	------	------	------

ation

Table continued (House Prices at Maldon, 1561-1670)

11.2 Summary of Prices

Highest prices:	£400 (x 1) and £544 (x 1)
Average price:	£33.87
Median price:	£22.4
Mode prices:	(1) £20 (x 24)
	(2) £40 (x 18)
	(3) £24 (x 16)
	(4) £16 (x 15)

£30-£49 price range: median price of £37.5

£10-£29 price range: median price of £19

Number of years - 80 out of 110.

Notes on the compilation of this table

1. Prices obtained by the conversion of landcheap taxes.
2. Only those transactions have been used which provide levies of landcheap in single payments and without remissions.
3. Landcheaps for years before 1561 are available but not in sufficient quantities for warrant of an extension of this table backwards towards 1500.

Table 12

Leading Occupations

(The trades included in each of the following categories are listed at the foot of this table.)

(1)

<u>Admissions of</u> <u>Freemen</u> <u>1561-1600</u>	<u>Corporation Places</u> <u>1561-1595</u>	<u>Apprentices</u> <u>1566-1600</u>
1. Leather (27)	1. Leather (143)	1. Leather (122)
1. Food & Drink (27)	2. Clothing (121)	2. Clothing (57)
3. Clothing (25)	3. Food & Drink (119)	3. Textiles (33)
4. Maritime (12)	4. Mercantile (106)	4. Food & Drink (26)
5. Textiles (11)	5. Agriculture (77)	5. Building (19)
6. Metal (10)	6. Textile (75)	6. Metal (18)
7. Agriculture (9)	7. Maritime (64)	7. Maritime (15)
8. Mercantile (7)	8. Building (29)	8. Professional (9)
9. Building (6)	9. Professional (24)	6. Agriculture (9)
9. Professional (6)	10. Metal (14)	10. Mercantile (7)
<u>1601-1640</u>	<u>1606-1640</u>	<u>1601-1640</u>
1. Clothing (49)	1. Clothing (172)	1. Clothing (53)
2. Leather (29)	2. Leather (152)	2. Leather (51)
2. Food & Drink (29)	3. Textiles (103)	3. Textiles (29)
4. Agriculture (20)	4. Gentry (102)	4. Building (18)
5. Textile (19)	5. Food & Drink (89)	4. Metal (18)
6. Professional (17)	6. Professional (66)	6. Professional (7)
7. Metal (15)	7. Agriculture (45)	7. Food & Drink (6)
8. Gentry (12)	8. Building (44)	8. Maritime (4)
9. Maritime (8)	9. Metal (36)	9. Agriculture (1)
10. Building (6)	10. -	10. -

Table 12 continued

<u>1641-1670</u>	<u>1641-1680</u>	<u>1641-1660</u>
1. Food & Drink (38)	1. Food & Drink (238)	1. Leather (16)
2. Leather (32)	2. Leather (123)	1. Metal (16)
3. Professional (27)	3. Building (115)	3. Food & Drink (14)
4. Clothing (25)	4. Clothing (100)	4. Building (13)
4. Agriculture (25)	5. Professional (90)	5. Professional (8)
6. Gentry (23)	6. Gentry (85)	5. Agriculture (8)
7. Maritime (19)	7. Textiles (64)	7. Clothing (7)
8. Metal (18)	7. Agriculture (64)	8. Textiles (5)
9. Building (14)	9. Maritime (36)	9. Mercantile (2)
10. Textile (12)	10. Metal (22)	10. Maritime (1)
	(2)	

Ranking by scores obtained in .1 above.

<u>1561-1600</u>	<u>1601-1640</u>	<u>1641-1680</u>
1. Leather (3)	1. Clothing (3)	1. Food & Drink (5)
2. Clothing (4)	2. Leather (6)	1. Leather (5)
3. Food & Drink (8)	3. Textiles (11)	3. Professional (13)
4. Textiles (14)	4. Food & Drink (14)	4. Clothing (15)
5. Maritime (18)	5. Professional (18)	5. Building (16)
		5. Agriculture (16)

(3)

<u>1561-1680</u>
1. Leather (14)
2. Clothing (25)
3. Food & Drink (27)
4. Textiles (50)
5. Agricultural (56)
6. Building (57)
7. Professional (57)

Table 12 continued

Clothing: linendraper; tailor; hosier; haberdasher.

Textiles: clothier; draper; sherman; fuller; weaver.

Food & Drink: fishmonger; brewer; innkeeper; miller; cook; baker;
grocer; butcher; cheesemonger; maltster; oatmeal maker;
salt refiner.

Building: bricklayer; painter; joiner; cooper; chairmaker;
wheelwright; glazier.

Leather: glover; shoemaker; collar maker; tanner; saddler; currier.

Metal: fletcher; ironmonger; brazier; cutler and locksmith;
blacksmith.

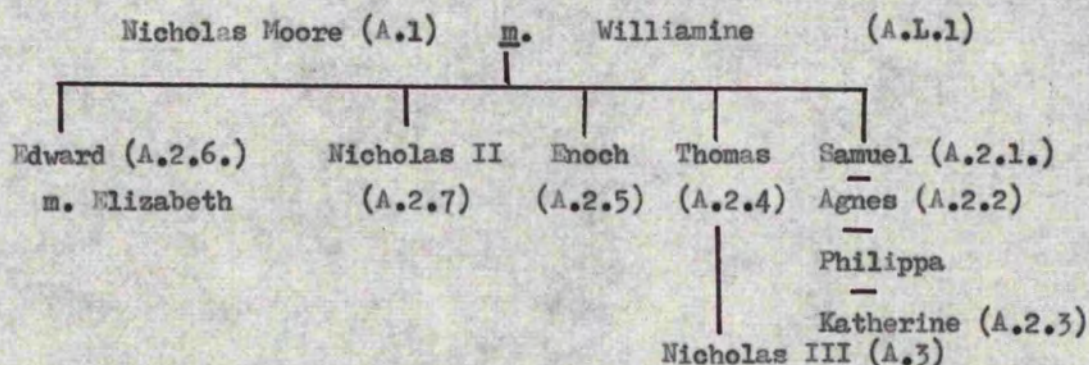
Mercantile: merchant; coal merchant; wholesaler.

Professional: scrivener; clerk; barber; barber-surgeon; apothecary;
carrier.

Maritime: fisherman; mariner; shipwright; hoyman.

Agriculture: farmer; husbandman; yeoman; gardener.

Table 13

The Moore FamiliesA. The Moore family, descended from Nicholas Moore.

- A.1 Nicholas Moore I: shoemaker; born at Plympton, Devon;
free 1560; died c.1594. Will, E.R.O.,
D/ABW 26/62.
- A.1.1 Williamine Moore: deceased 1603= will, E.R.O. D/ABW 26/143.
- A.2.1, 2 and 3: children born before 1560.
- A.2.4 Thomas Moore: born before 1560; free 1590 (without
payment, as son of A.1); dead, or living
outside the borough, by 1632.
- A.2.5 Enoch Moore: living outside the borough from 1637.
- A.2.6 Edward Moore: born after 1560; free 1610; a glover;
deceased 1619/20; will, E.R.O., D/ABW
26/298.
- A.2.7 Nicholas Moore II: shoemaker; born after 1660 and probably
the youngest son; free 1621; head burgess
of the corporation 1622-1645; alderman
1646; died 1646.
- From his brother Edward (A.2.6) he acquired
in 1619/20 a house in All Saints' parish,
10 acres called Reeve's and 8 acres
called Fildeman's in Bradwell-juxta-Mare,
and 6 acres called Myller's, copyhold of

Table 13 continued

the manor of "Walton within the Sooke"
in Essex.

B. An entirely unconnected Moore family also resident in Maldon

- | | | |
|-------|----------------|---|
| B.1 | William Moore: | born at Halstead, Essex; free 1623 as
the husband of Elizabeth Smith/Reynolds,
the daughter of a freeman butcher. |
| B.2.1 | John Moore: | butcher; free 1654; son of B.1. |
| B.2.2 | Thomas Moore: | freeman, 1661; son of B.1. |
-

Table 14

The Welles Families

A.

- A.1. John Welles, tailor. Freeman. Dead by 1576.
- A.2. William Welles, tailor. Son of A.1. Free 1579.
- A.3. Mary Welles. Daughter of A.1. Married Walter Elliot of Tolleshunt Major, Essex (D/B 3/1/34 f.16v, 1580).

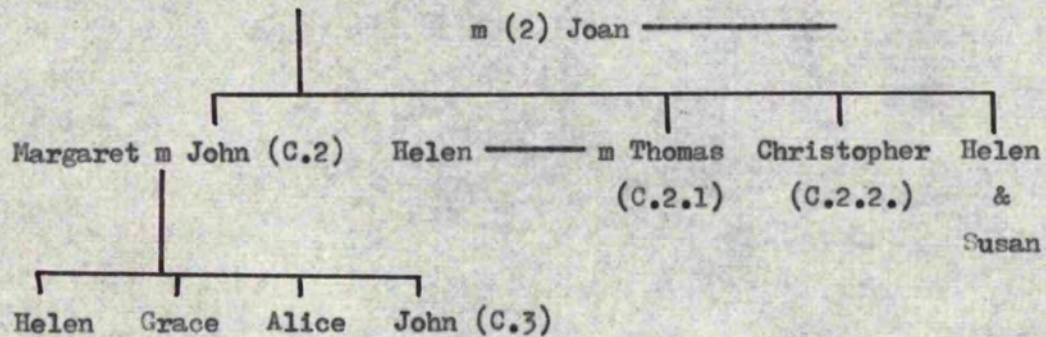
B.

- B.1. Robert Welles, baker. Born at Brentwood. Free 1576 (by fee).
- B.2. Thomas Welles, baker. Son of B.1. Born out of Maldon pre-1576.

C.

The Welles family whose case is discussed in Chapter 3

Thomas Welles (C.1.) m (1) Thomasine Pike (C.1.1.)
m (2) Joan —————

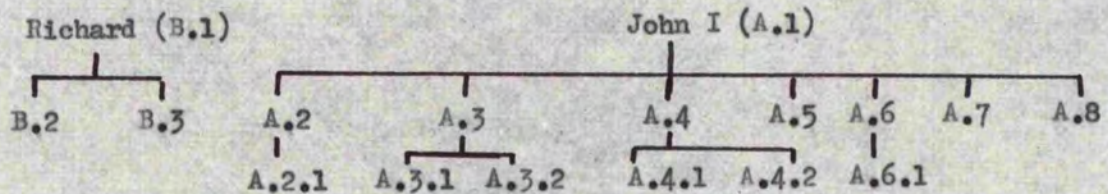


- C.1. Thomas Welles I. Born at Little Totham. Free 1565 (without fee) by marriage to C.1.1. Born c.1542 (stated to 23 at admission to freedom; died 1605 (will D/ABW 41/59) aged c. 63. Head burgess 1569-1576, 1586 and 1592-1595. Candidate 1594 for office of bailiff.
- C.1.1. Thomasine Welles. Daughter of Alderman John Pike of Maldon.
- C.2. John Welles I. Eldest son of C.1. Glover. Died 1607 (will D/ABW 41/94).

Table 14 continued

- C.2.1. Thomas Welles II. Son of C.1. Yeoman. Owner of Little Portland Meadow (4½ acres) from 1605-1613 (father's will and D/B 3/1/34 f.102v), Head burgess 1614-1625, a bailiff in 1626 and again in 1630. Died 30 November 1631 and buried in St. Mary's churchyard.
- C.2.2. Christopher Welles. Younger son of C.1. Lived at Messing, Essex. Listed as an extra-burghal freeman. Landowner in Maldon: sold Taynterfield (2 acres) to John Soan 1634 (D/B 3/1/34).
- C.3. John Welles II. Son of C.2. and grandson of C.1. A minor at C.2.'s death in 1607. No further record of him.
-

Table 15

The Maldon FamiliesA.

- A.1 John Maldon I. Born at Chelmsford c.1562 (D/B 3/3/397/13); free c.1584. Linendraper. Head burgess 1590-1621. Then he moved out of the town but he was still living in 1632. His relationship to B.1 is not certain: possibly B.1's son but it is also possible they were brothers: the two daughters of one Denise Manfield apparently married Richard and John Maldon (? ie. A.1 and B.1) before 1595 (D/ABW 26/69).
- A.2 James Maldon I. Free 1608 as son of A.1. Haberdasher. Head burgess from October 15, 1613; alderman 1631 and 1633; bailiff 1632. Moved out of the borough in 1634.
- A.3 Samuel Maldon I. Free 1613 as son of A.1. Haberdasher; head burgess 1619-1650. Still a resident freeman in 1652.
- A.4 Thomas Maldon I. Free 1624 as son of A.1 but by then he was a resident of Chelmsford.
- A.5 Elisha Maldon I. Free 1624 as son of A.1. Haberdasher; head burgess 1631 and 1632. Died 1633.
- A.6 James Maldon II. Apparently a brother of James I (A.2) but very much the youngest son of A.1. Sizer of Emmanuel College; matriculation at Cambridge in 1631; B.A. 1635; M.A. 1638. Rector of Stowe Maries by 1646 and of Cold Norton by 1650. Freedom as a local clergyman in 1654.

Table 15 continued

B.2 and B.3. William and Richard Maldon. Sons of B.1 at his freedom. Neither thereafter recorded at Maldon.

C.

C.1 John Maldon IV. Of Bradwell-juxta-Mare. Owner of the Upper House near the new Moot Hall in Maldon from 1605 (D/B 3/1/34 f.83r) but his relationship with any of A or B or with C.2 is not known.

C.2 Henry Maldon. Of Bradwell-juxta-Mare. Cheesemonger. Freeman of Maldon, 1617. Head burgess 1618-1626 and ordered to be removed from the corporation then as he had moved to Chelmsford.

C.3 John Maldon V. Son of C.2 at his father's freedom, 1617. No subsequent information about him.

Table 15 continued

- A.7 John Maldon II. Probably a younger son of A.1. Sizer of Emmanuel College (cf. A.6); matriculation 1623; B.A. 1627; M.A. 1631. Curate of Great and Little Oakley, Essex. 1634 and also free 1634. Vicar of Little Oakley 1642-1654 and of Tillingham near Maldon, 1657-1666. Married, 1664, Sarah, daughter of Alderman Bridge of Harwich. Buried 1666 at Tillingham. (Venn).
- A.8 Mary Maldon. Married Thomas Colthirst, merchant of London who became a freeman of Maldon 1611 in right of marriage.
- A.2.1 John Maldon III. Free 1634 as son of A.2 (on his father's removal from the borough). Haberdasher; head burgess 1641-1645. Died December 26th 1645.
- A.3.1 William Maldon I. Son of A.3. Born c.1620 at Maldon. Educated at Maldon Grammar School by John Danes. Sizer of Christ's College; matriculation 1636 aged 16; B.A. 1640. Ordained deacon at Norwich in 1640, (See Peile, J., Biographical Register I p.441.) Freedom 1652. Not known to be resident in Maldon.
- A.3.2 Elizabeth Maldon. Married John Beckwith, shoemaker of Maldon, who obtained his freedom 1656 in right of marriage.
- A.4.1 Thomas Maldon II. Son of A.4 and born before 1624 (when he is named at his father's freedom). No subsequent references to him at Maldon.
- A.4.2 Mary Maldon. Married Richard Perkin, tailor of London, who obtained freedom of Maldon by right of marriage with her, 1644.
- A.6.1 Elisha Maldon II. Free 1659 as son of A.6. A non-resident freeman.

B.

- B.1 Richard Maldon. Of Writtle. Born at Chelmsford. Freeman of Maldon 1578 (where both these facts are stated). See A.1.

Table 16.1

Impleaded Debts, 1559-1566

	Number of Cases	Total Sum £	Median £	Average £	Higher £	Lower £
1559	10	17.5	1-20	1-7	6-66	0.34
1560	10	84	1	8-4	40	0.29
1561	6	145	2	24-15	100	1-30
1562	25	1,400	16.66	56	300	0-18
1563	46	1,608	2.66	35	470	0-33
1564	16	419	19	26	100	0-15
1565	14	166	4-50	11.89	100	0.60
1566	16	233	1-66	14-6	133	0.40
	143	£4,072	£5.20	£28.4	£470*	£0-15

*Only eight sums were greater than £100. There were fourteen instances of £100.

Table 16.2

Pleas of Debt in the Court of Record,1597-1628

	Number of cases	Total of all sums	Median	Average	Highest	Lowest
		£	£	£	£	£
1597	67	416	3	6	40	0.50
1598	72	1,020	6	14	100	0.50
1599	64	760	5	12	84	0.37
1600	35	576	5	16	100	0.50
1601	66	695	5	11	80	0.50
1602	71	1,061	3	15	200	0.50
1603	67	820	3	12	100	0.50
1604	71	900	3	12	133	0.25
1605	73	997	5	14	220	0.20
1606	33	316	5	10	40	0.25
1607	42	620	5	15	67	0.50
1608	60	1,172	4	20	200	0.20
1609	40	620	5	15	100	0.50
1610	29	234	3	8	50	0.33
1611	36	261	4	7	40	0.33
1612	39	689	5	17	133	0.50
1613	29	763	10	26	200	1.0
1614	45	471	3.25	10	80	0.25
1615	43	333	3	8	67	0.50
1616	41	720	10	17	120	0.66
1617	50	801	6	16	200	0.50
1618	26	422	3.3	16	100	0.45
1619	26	347	6	13.3	67	0.30
1620	26	253	5	10	60	0.60

Continued

Table 16.2 continued

	Number of cases	Total of all sums	Median	Average	Highest	Lowest
		£	£	£	£	£
1621	68	1,422	5	21	240	0.33
1622	109	1,884	3	18	120*	0.30
1623	89	707	3	8	68	0.33
1624	101	1,537	4	15	100**	0.30
1625	73	617	4	9	68	0.50
1626	98	1,052	4	11	100	0.30
1627	83	1,326	3	16	600	0.50
1628	82	840	2	10	100	0.25
		£	£	£	£	£
ALL	1,854	24,652	4	13.3	240*	0.20

* The second highest sum impleaded in 1622. The highest of that year, £1,000, is unparalled in this series.

** The second highest. The highest was £600.

Table 17

The Composition of The Company

- 17.1 Recruitment, 1500-1688.
- 17.2(a) Number of places and duration of membership.
- 17.2(b) Members serving more than 20 years, 1557-1692.
- 17.2(c) Names of long-serving members.
- 17.3(a) Experience of office, 1590-1593.
- 17.3(b) Newcomers to The Company, 1590-1593.
- 17.4 Experience of office by Aldermen.

Table 17.1

Recruitment, 1500-1689

(Number of new members each year, including men commencing a further term.)

<u>Decade</u>	<u>Years</u>											<u>Total</u>	<u>Average</u>
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9			
1500-1509	7	1	1	1	0	0	0	8	0	3	21	2	
1510-1519	0	0	2	1	3	0	2	0	0	1	9	1	
1520-1529	2	0	3	0	1	0	3	4	1	1	15	1.5	
1530-1539	0	*	*	3	2	2	4	2	0	0	13	2	
1540-1549	5	2	2	4	2	1	3	0	4	5	28	3	
1550-1559	3	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*			
1560-1569	5	1	1	8	*	5	2	4	1	1	28	3	
1570-1579	1	3	1	2	4	1	2	1	2	1	18	2	
1580-1589	1	1	3	3	1	1	9	2	0	0	21	2	
1590-1599	7	2	0	2	1	0	2	*	*	*	14	2	
1600-1609	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*			
1610-1619	0	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	3	2	17	2	
1620-1629	1	1	3	3	1	3	4	0	3	1	20	2	
1630-1639	3	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	2	17	2	
1640-1649	3	1	0	4	3	1	3	3	2	0	20	2	
1650-1659	4	0	2	5	2	2	0	0	2	*	17	2	
1660-1669	1	1	17	1	3	0	1	3	1	3	31	3	
1670-1679	1	3	2	2	1	3	1	0	2	0	15	1.5	
1680-1689	2	3	2	1	0	0	0	2	20	2	32	3	

* no list available.

Table 17.2(a)

Number of places and duration of membership

	<u>1501-50</u>	<u>1557-95</u>	<u>1606-50</u>	<u>1651-86</u>	<u>1501-1686</u>
Number of years					
counted*	45	37	45	35	162
Number of members	127	117	96	74	414
Available places	900	888	1,080	840	3,708
Places per member	7	7.5	11	11	9
% of places per					
member	14%	13%	9%	9%	11%

* Years unavailable: 1505, 1506, 1507, 1531, 1532, 1564, 1596, 1597, 1598, 1599, 1600, 1601, 1602, 1603, 1604, 1605, 1659.

Table 17.2(b)

Members serving more than 20 years,1557-1692

1. Number of men serving for 21 - 34 years: 37.
2. Years available: 1557-1595, 37
1606-1692, 85
122 years (inclusive of terminal dates).
3. Number of places available: 2,928 (122 x 24).
4. Number of places occupied by the 37 men serving 21 - 34 years, 977 or 33.3% of 2,928.

Table 17.2(c)

Names of long-serving members

1.	Thomas Eve	27	places 1557-1583 (23 as alderman).
2.	John Stephen I	29	1557-1586 (as head burgess).
3.	Edward Legge	26	1557-1582 (as head burgess).
4.	Thomas Spigurnell	21	1559-1581 (14 as alderman).
5.	William Vernon	32	1563-1595 (31 as alderman).
6.	Robert Lee	26	1569-1595 (as head burgess).
7.	Thomas Hutt	22	1582-1613 (10 as alderman).
8.	John Clarke II	31	1591-1634 (15 as alderman).
9.	Thomas Cheese	23	1590-1625 (head burgess and town clerk).
10.	John Soan	27	1605-1636 (all as alderman and with 5 years out).
11.	William Francis I	34	1606-1642 (26 as alderman, 3 out).
12.	George Purcas	27	1606-1637 (18 as alderman, 5 out).
13.	Thomas Seares	22	1618-1640 (as head burgess).
14.	Samuel Maldon	32	1619-1651 (as head burgess).
15.	Henry Symonds I	33	1620-1651 (as head burgess).
16.	Nicholas Moore	25	1622-1646 (24 as head burgess, 1 as alderman).
17.	Ruben Robinson I	26	1623-1648 (13 as alderman).
18.	William Norris	25	1623-1647 (as head burgess).
19.	Thomas Plume	28	1624-1653 (27 as alderman, 2 out).
20.	George Gifford II	29	1625-1643 and 1660-1670 (as head burgess).
21.	Samuel Bedell	24	1628-1651 (17 as alderman).
22.	Benjamin Brocas	22	1630-1651 (as head burgess).
23.	John Francis	24	1635-1658 (as head burgess).
24.	Isaac Robient	25	1637-1661 (as head burgess).

Continued

Table 17.2(c) continued

25.	Richard Fulcher	30 places	1638-1667 (as head burgess).
26.	Edward Whitefoot	23	1639-1661 (20 as alderman, 3 out).
27.	John Steevens	23	1640-1662 (20 as alderman).
28.	John Jennings	25	1644-1669 (16 as alderman, 1 out).
29.	Henry Symonds	21	1653-1674 (13 as alderman).
30.	Francis Gournay	23	1654-1677 (16 as alderman).
31.	Robert Jennings	25	1662-1686 (18 as alderman).
32.	Philip Ralling	30	1662-1691 (24 as alderman, 1 out).
33.	Samuel Pond	28	1662-1691 (21 as alderman, 2 out).
34.	Christopher Jaggard	23	1662-1684 (3 as alderman).
35.	Thomas Hutt II	30	1662-1692 (as head burgess).
36.	John Browne	29	1662-1692 (13 as alderman, 1 out).
37.	William Allen	27	1664-1690 (as head burgess, 1 out).

Table 17.3(a)

Experience of office, 1590-1593

Number of men having	<u>1590</u>	<u>1591</u>	<u>1592</u>	<u>1593</u>
7+ years' experience	9	10	14	15
4 - 6 years' experience	6	7	4	2
1, 2, 3 years' experience	3	5	7	7
no experience	5	2	2	2

NB: Richard Josua (alderman) has not been included for 1590 and 1591; he was a "sporadic" member of The Company. However, his replacement for late 1591 has been included for that year. Deaths and replacements account for the totals of 27 men in the 1592 column and 26 in that of 1593.

Comparison of experience of office,
1560-1590, 1592 and 1610-1650

For 1560-1590 the experience of members serving in 1575, 1580 and 1583 have been surveyed and used as a sample. For 1610-1650 a sample has been taken by calculating the experience of members of 1625, 1635 and 1643.

Figures in brackets are the actual number of men; percentages are those men's proportion of the total number of place-holders in the years sampled.

<u>Experience</u>	<u>1560-1590</u>	<u>1592</u>	<u>1610-1650</u>
10 - 30 years	(37) 51%	(10) 43%	(33) 45%
3 - 9 years	(23) 31%	(11) 48%	(30) 41%
1 and 2 years	(13) 18%	(2) 9%	(10) 14%
	(73 men, 100%)	(23 men, 100%)	(73 men, 100%)

Table 17.3(b)

Newcomers to The Company, 1590-1593

- 1590
- a. Thomas Walker (gentleman, from Bolton-by-Bowland).
 - b. Thomas Young (gentleman, origin unknown).
 - c. Christopher Living (butcher, Pleshey, Essex).
 - d. Henry Hart (butcher, Thaxted, Essex).
 - e. Richard Williams (linendraper, Llandawes).
 - f. John Maldon (haberdasher, Chelmsford).
 - g. Thomas Cheese (scrivener, origin unknown).
- 1591
- f. John Spigurnell (innkeeper, Woodham Mortimer, Essex).
 - g. John Clarke (butcher, Feering, Essex).
- 1592
- h. Jasper Sutton (unknown).
 - i. John Brook (yeoman, Bradwell-juxta-Mare, Essex).
- 1593
- j. William Rochell (yeoman, Moutnessing, Essex).
 - k. Thomas Johnjohns (glover, Rayleigh, Essex).
-

Table 17.4

Experience of Office by Aldermen

Numbers of Aldermen who in each of the following years
could claim to have been in office as aldermen

	(a)	(b)	(c)
	10 years or more	5 years to 9 years	2,3, 4 years
1570	2	6	9
1575	5	6	7
1580	4	6	8
1585	1	2	2
1590	1	2	2
1615	2	3	4
1620	2	4	6
1625	3	5	7
1630	5	6	8
1635	4	6	7
1640	2	4	7
1645	2	3	6
1650	2	4	5
1655	2	4	7
1660	4	8	8
1665	1	2	8
1670	nil	4	7
1675	1	5	6
1680	4	6	8
1685	5	6	6
1690	5	6	6

Table 18

Rateable Assessments on the Freemen and the
Corporation, 1619

Rate	Aldermen	Head Burgesses	Others	All
£6 +	1	2	-	3
£5 - £6	7	-	1	8
£4 - £5	1	-	4	5
£3 - £4	-	6	2	8
£2 - £3	-	4	9	13
£1 - £2	-	3	20	23
£0 - £1	-	-	68	68
<hr/>				
	9	15	104	128
Valuation:	£45-66	£46-16	£87-20	£179-04
Per capita				
rates:	£9-06	£3-07	£0-80	

From E.R.O., D/B 3/1/19 ff 84v-87v.

Table 19

Income and Expenditure : Maldon Borough Chamberlains'

				<u>Accounts</u>					
				<u>EXPENDITURE</u>			<u>SURPLUS OR</u>		
<u>INCOME</u>							<u>DEBIT</u>		
£	s	d		£	s	d			
1500									
1									
2									
3	18	7	10	15	9	11		+£2	17 11
4									
1505									
6									
7									
8	14	19	10	6	6	6		+£8	13 4
9									
1510									
11									
12	20	12	2	19	1	8½		+£1	10 5½
13									
14									
1515									
16									
17									
18	22	6	11½	17	8	0		+£4	18 11½
19									
20									
21									
22									
23									
24	23	3	4	21	8	4		+£1	15 0

Table 19 continued

1525

26)	29	10	4	()
----	---	----	----	---	---	--	---

27

28

29

1530

31)	25	4	5	22	17	0	+£2	7	5
----	---	----	---	---	----	----	---	-----	---	---

32)	25	11	5	21	14	0	+£3	17	5
----	---	----	----	---	----	----	---	-----	----	---

33

34)	30	14	4½	()
----	---	----	----	----	---	--	---

1535

36)	22	19	0	19	18	3½	+£3	0	8½
----	---	----	----	---	----	----	----	-----	---	----

37

38

39)	38	8	1½	28	10	3½	+£9	17	10
----	---	----	---	----	----	----	----	-----	----	----

1540

40)	30	12	5	()
----	---	----	----	---	---	--	---

41

42

43)	30	18	0	31	18	10	-£1	0	10
----	---	----	----	---	----	----	----	-----	---	----

44

1545

46)	38	15	3	31	16	9	+£6	18	6
----	---	----	----	---	----	----	---	-----	----	---

47)	17	11	0	25	9	8	-£7	18	8
----	---	----	----	---	----	---	---	-----	----	---

48)	32	14	11½	27	19	10	+£4	15	1½
----	---	----	----	-----	----	----	----	-----	----	----

49)	36	3	3½	30	5	11	+£5	17	4½
----	---	----	---	----	----	---	----	-----	----	----

1550

50)	68	1	8	74	18	10	-£6	17	2
----	---	----	---	---	----	----	----	-----	----	---

51

52)	38	2	0	36	9	0	+£2	2	0
----	---	----	---	---	----	---	---	-----	---	---

53)	59	4	6	53	13	0½	+£5	11	5½
----	---	----	---	---	----	----	----	-----	----	----

54

Table 19 continued

1555	52	13	1½	51	17	4	+	16	9½
56	52	13	1½						
57									
58	127	5	5	105	8	8½	+£21	16	8½
59	73	19	4	64	19	9½	+ £8	19	6½
1560									
61	118	11	0	92	6	4	+£26	4	8
62	210	19	7½	179	15	1	+£31	4	6½
63									
64	98	2	0½	98	1	5	+		7½
1565	87	9	6	()			
66	165	6	11	()			
67									
68	76	16	6	73	1	6	+ £3	15	0
69									
1570	67	19	8	60	4	5	+£7	15	3
71									
72	85	11	3½	58	4	0	+£27	7	3½
73	89	10	3½	65	12	10½	+£23	17	5
74	93	14	3	63	1	2	+£30	13	1
1575	81	14	2	63	5	8	+£18	8	6
76	174	13	7½	137	9	9½	+£37	3	10½
77									
78	88	6	0	58	15	2			
79									
1580							+£57	7	6
81	110	15	11	74	1	10	+£36	14	1
82									
83									
84	92	19	4	87	15	6	+£5	3	10

Table 19 continued

1585							+£14	7	10
86	116	16	4	108	9	10½	+£8	6	5½
87									
88							+£6	11	1
89	90	1	7	84	17	5	+£5	4	2
1590	132	14	1	127	0	7	+£5	13	6
91	(?)117	15	11½	(?)120	7	4	-£2	11	4½
92	131	9	9	120	6	10	+£9	2	11
93	131	9	8	120	19	2	+£10	10	6
94							+	3	0
1595	83	5	4	83	1	2	+	4	2
96							+£5	0	5
97	139	0	5	138	3	9	+	16	8
98	88	17	6	78	10	5	+£10	7	1
99	89	17	2	106	4	5	-£16	7	3
1600							+£5	6	2
1	98	10	9	99	0	5	-	9	8
2							+	7	5
3	58	5	1	56	7	2	+£1	17	11
4	66	6	8	59	9	6	+£6	17	2
1605							+£12	1	4
6	107	8	0	92	14	11	+£14	13	1
7	90	11	0	86	19	5	+£3	11	7
8	79	10	10½	63	6	0½	+£16	4	10
9	98	10	9	99	5	0	-	9	8
1610							+£11	13	10
11	367	13	5	351	7	0	+£16	6	5
12	92	18	6	87	12	5	+£5	6	1
13	181	10	1	166	6	0	+£15	4	1
14	133	9	8	123	14	0	+£9	15	8

Table 19 continued

1615	150	7	8	131	2	3	+£19	6	5
16	107	19	8	100	+£7	
17	82	8	11	74	11	2	+£7	17	9
18	120	9	10	144	17	6	-£24	7	8
19	128	13	3	113	0	10	+£15	13	5
1620	138	16	2	89	13	9	+£49	2	5
21	152	16	9	123	9	9	+£29	7	0
22	110	13	1	100	7	5	+£10	5	8
23	172	11	4	(160	10	7)	+£12	0	9
24	163	15	2	155	9	6	+£8	5	8
1625	128	14	3	127	8	2½	+£1	19	4½
26	105	19	3	103	15	1	+£2	4	2
27	107	7	8	91	0	2	+£16	7	6
28	119	7	1	118	14	9	+	12	4
29	139	18	10	123	10	1½	+£16	8	8½
1630	207	0	8	172	6	2	+£34	14	6
31									
32							+£21	7	0
33	203	6	8	141	16	2	+£61	10	6
34							+£38	8	0
1635	193	19	2	150	14	8½	+£43	4	5½
36	197	3	7½	()			
37									
38	280	17	1	287	7	3	-£6	9	10
39	222	2	10	202	5	6	+£19	17	4
1640	199	7	2	204	1	11	-£4	14	9
41	183	13	0	186	4	3	-£2	11	3
42	188	9	2	185	6	9	+£3	2	5
43	178	19	6	203	15	3	-£24	15	9
44	141	16	1	183	10	0	-£41	13	11

Table 19 continued

1645

46	155	8	2½	160	16	2	-£5	7	11½
47	192	15	10½	185	18	9	+£6	17	1½
48	182	8	10	178	18	9½	+£3	10	0½
49	163	2	0	168	19	6½	-£5	17	6½

1650

51	170	1	7	180	17	3	£10	15	8
52	191	11	7	(-)-140	1	1½	+£51	9	5½ (?)
53	193	8	0	186	1	3½	+£7	6	8½
54	147	5	11½	129	6	6	+£17	19	5½
1655	151	17	6½	122	14	1½	+£29	3	5
56	157	11	4	121	14	4	+£35	17	0
57							+£65	12	11
58	195	13	4	102	2	8	+£93	10	8
59							+£70	17	11
1660	192	17	10	162	9	8	+£30	8	2
61	184	16	1	118	8	3	+£66	7	10
62	246	6	7	201	+£46	6	7
63	225	16	5½	179	1	5½	+£46	15	0

64

1665

66

67

68

+£1 16 2

69

200 0 3

142 6 6

+£57 13 9

1670

71

72

239 19 11

232 15 1

+£5 4 10

73

74

Table 19 continued

1675

76

77

78 267 13 8 279 1 2 -£11 7 6

79

1680

81 154 1 5 157 7 - -£3 5 7

82

83

84

1685

86 190 8 8 131 7 5 +£59 1 3

87

88

89

1690

91

92

93

94

1695

96

97

98

99

1700

1

2

3

4

Table 20

SOURCES OF INCOME

<u>Type of Receipt</u>	<u>Entry in Table C</u>	<u>Details of receipts</u>
Initial Receipts	In hand	Balance carried forward from previous account.
	Arrears	Debts owed at previous audit.
Proper Revenue	Rental	(1) Assize Rental; (2) Ferm Rental; (3) Causeway Account; (4) Leases.
	Freedoms	Fines on entry of new freemen.
	Landcheaps	Tax on land and houses purchased in the borough.
	Water Bailiff	Customary tolls levied at the Hythe.
	Courts	(1) Fines collected by the Serjeants; (2) Licences of Concord (at the discontinuance of pleas of debt); (3) Exemplifications; (4) Amercements; (4) Distraints; (6) Impounding fees; (7) Barrel-sealing fees; (8) Fair profits.
	Customary Tolls	Farmed customs of (1) the Collector of the Wanties; ¹ (2) the two Leather Searchers; (3) the Collector of the Woolpacks.

1. Wanties: from womb, in the sense of belly. A tax on packhorses defined as horses with belly-girths. Sometimes the official was called the Collector of the Packsaddles.

Table 20 continued

Extraordinary	Benevolences.
Revenue	Scot and Lot collections.
	Miscellanea
	(1) Sales of assets; (2) sale of spare building materials and of timber; (3) loans; (4) sale of felons' goods; (5) fees charged for occasional privileges.

Table 21

ASSIZE AND FERM RENTAL CHARGES AT MALDON,1598 & 1677(a) Range of rent charges

		<u>Numbers of rent charges</u>	
		<u>1598</u>	<u>1677</u>
£5 and over	...	1	4
£3 - £4	...	2	-
£2	...	1	2
£1	...	1	4
10s - 19s	...	4	3
3s - 10s	...	2	4
2s	...	4	8
1s	...	16	11
6d - 1s	...	-	11
4d	...	1	9
1d - 4d	...	2	4
<hr/> Number of rent charges:		34	60

(b) Major Rent Increases

Lease of Portman Marsh	£8	£32
Saborne's Farm ^{1.}	£4	£14
Butcher Row area	£4-48d	£8
Oyster dredging lease	£2	£10
<hr/> Totals:		<u>£18-48d</u> <u>£64</u>

1. Saborne's Farm is now called Corporation Farm and is at Purleigh.

Table 22

	1508	1512	1524	1537	1562	1575	1576	1578	1581	1583
I In hand				5						
Arrears	11					38	13	25	65	12
Total for I	11			5		38	13	25	65	12
II Rental	55	35	55	66	6	17	10	26	9	23
Freedoms	5	7	15	7	4	2	13	10	5	4
Landcheaps	5				11	16	11	3	2	10
Water Bailiff	11		10		3	13	7	13	5	12
Courts	11	38	20	19	10	14	14	17	9	38
Customary Tolls	2	3		5	1			3	1	1
Total for II	89	83	100	95	38	61	56	72	31	90
III Benevolences							1			
Scot and Lot					31					
Miscellanea		15* ¹			33		25		3	
Total for III		15			64		26		3	

1. Sale of wood (£2) and felons' goods (£2).

Table 23

CORPORATION FEES

	<u>1535</u>	<u>1562</u>	<u>1575</u>	<u>1615</u>	<u>1624</u>	<u>1646</u>	<u>1681</u>
High Steward				100s	100s	100s	100s
Recorder		20s	40s	40s	40s	40s	40s
Attorney		13/4	13/4	13/4	13/4	13/4	-
Each Bailiff	13/4	40s	40s	40s	40s	40s	40s
Each Chamberlain	5s	6/8	6/8	6/8	6/8	6/8	6/8
Serjeant-at-Mace	13/4	13/4	20s	20s	20s	20s	40s
Second Serjeant		15s	20s	20s	20s	20s	40s
Each Constable	2s	2s	2s	2s	2s	2s	2s
Townclerk (i)	40s	80s	80s	80s	80s	80s	80s
(ii)		6/8	6/8	6/8	6/8	6/8	6/8
(iii)	3/4	10s	13/4	13/4	13/4	13/4	13/4
<hr/>							
Totals	105/4	263/8	283/8	398/8	398/8	398/8	425/4
% of annual income	23%	6%	17%	13%	12%	13%	14%

Note: fees of the town clerk were (i) annual fee; (ii) for keeping the Clerk of the Market and Admiralty Courts; and (iii) for making the chamberlains' annual account roll.

Table 24

Military Expenditure by the Chamberlains of Maldon1638 and 1642 to 1648

	1638	1642	1643	1644	1646	1647	1648	Total
Town defence			212/8		107/10		101/5	421/11
Ammunition			3/10					3/10
Trained Band		36/8	84/-	123/4			377/2	621/2
Cavalry		6/4	10/6	70/-			117/-	203/10
Armaments		81/4		0/7	6/8			88/-
Impressed Men:								
(a) Pay		59/7	88/3	164/9	74/5			387/-
(b) Conduct								
charges		16/-	6/-	52/6				74/6
(c) Equipment		32/3	71/-					103/3
Administration		221/-		26/5				247/5
Gifts to military								
officials			9/6	2/-		25/7	69/6	105/7
Sundries	30/-				12/-		334/-	376/-
Troop move-								
ments						33/-	32/-	65/-
Total spent (in								
shillings)	30/-	453/2	485/9	439/7	95/7	163/11	1030/-	2698/1
Proportion of annual								
income	0.7%	12%	13.6%	15.4%	3%	4.2%	28.2%	10.8%

Table 25

Puritan Groups at Maldon

c.1594

A. Names

The number of each person in this table is that in the chart which forms part B below.

1. John Maldon
2. George Gifford
3. Edward Fannce
4. Thomas Johnjohns
5. John Stephens
6. Richard Williams
7. John Pratt
8. John Jeffrey
9. Thomas Chese
10. Robert Tendring
11. Richard Lamb
12. Jeremy Pledger
13. Widow Rose Johnson
14. Thomas Albert
15. William Rochell
16. Ralph Hawdon
17. John Brook
18. Henry Hart
19. John Clark
20. William Bantoft
21. John Martin
22. Ralph Breeder
23. Anthony Topley

Table 25 continued

- 24. Thomas Purcas
- 25. Richard Scott
- 26. Henry Matthews
- 27. Thomas Cross
- 28. Elias Lufkin
- 29. Thomas Powell
- 30. Richard Floud
- 31. Thomas Stephens

Table 25

B. Diagram of links within the puritan groups

Black circle: associations for prayer and supper.

Open circle: testamentary associations.

V: voters for Mr John Brook, September 1592.

M: links by marriage.

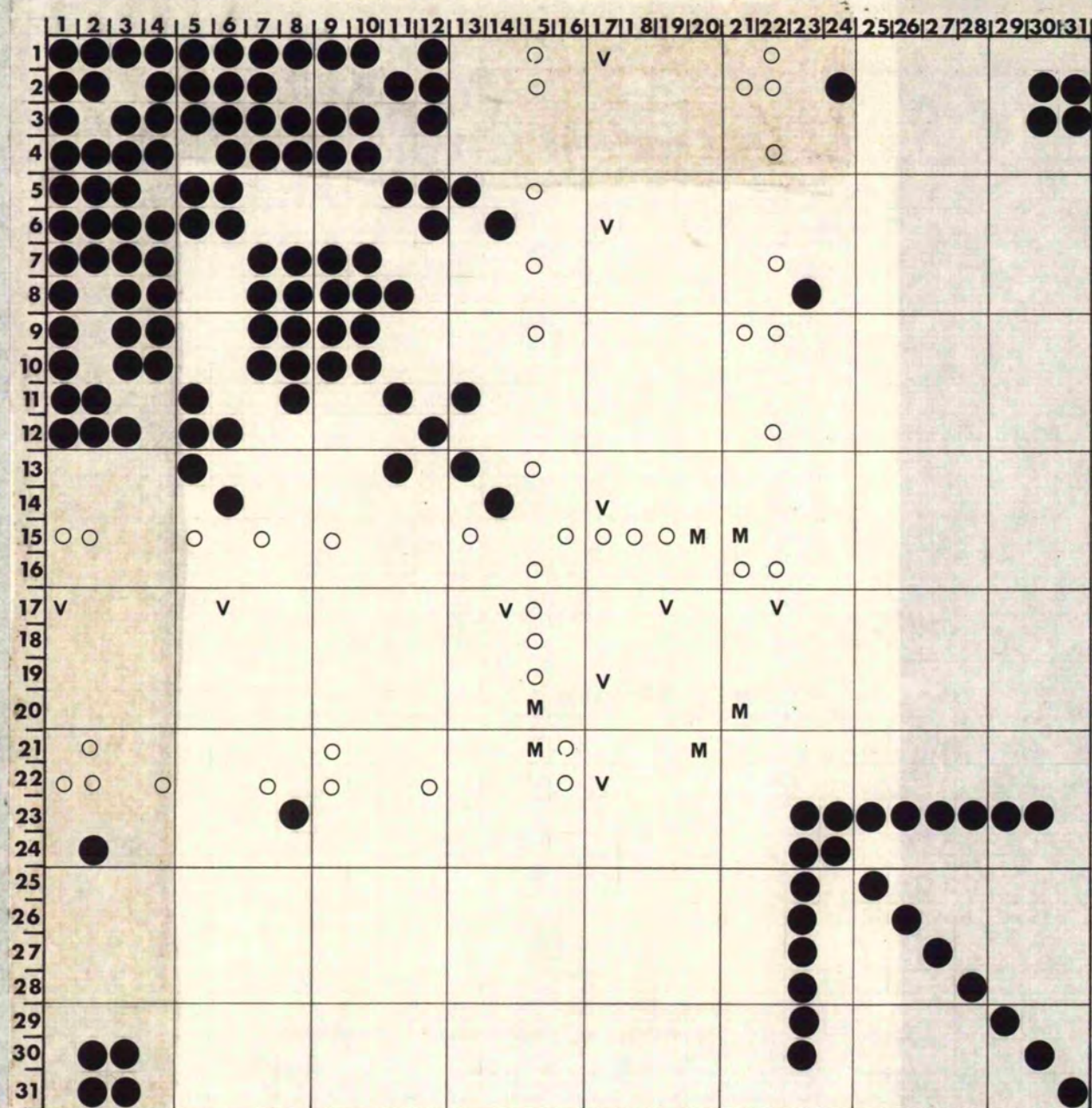


Table 26

Voting by the Corporation, September 5th 1592

(E.R.O., D/B 3/1/8 ff.89v - 90r)

Candidates for an aldermanic place, vacant by the death of Richard

Josua:

1. Thomas Wells, glover; from Little Totham; head burgess for 9 years.
2. Thomas Hutt, clothier; from Bocking; head burgess for 10 years.
3. John Brook, yeoman; from Bradwell-juxta-Mare; freeman in 1592.

For Welles:

4. Thomas Brett, yeoman; from Chignall St James; head burgess 13 years; died in 1593.
5. Christopher Living, butcher; from Pleshey; head burgess 3 years.

For Hutt:

6. Peter Jervis, butcher; from "Woodallon", Norfolk; head burgess 15 years.
7. Robert Lee, painter; from Hatfield Broad Oak; head burgess 23 years.
8. Thomas Preston, linendraper; birthplace unknown; head burgess for 7 years.

For Brook:

9. Thomas Walker, Gentleman; Bailiff; from Bolton-by-Bowland; member of the corporation for 3 years.
10. Ralph Breeder, haberdasher; Bailiff; from "Ayson" (?Harleston?), Suffolk; member of the corporation 7 years.
11. Andrew Momford, collarmaker; from Westminster; head burgess 11 years.
12. John Stephens, origin and profession unknown; head burgess 7 years.

Table 26 continued

13. Bryce Smith, shoemaker; from East Dereham, Norfolk; head burgess for 6 years.
14. Thomas Albert, grocer; possibly of Maldon; head burgess for 7 years; aged 37 in 1594.
15. Richard Williams, linendraper; from Llandawes, Denbigh; head burgess 3 years; aged 56 in 1594.
16. John Maldon, haberdasher; from Chelmsford; head burgess from 1590; aged 30 in 1594. (A member of the corporation since the age of 26/27.)
17. John Clark, butcher; from Feering; head burgess for 2 years.

Not warned:

18. Edward Frende, head burgess for 7 years.
19. Henry Harte, butcher; from Thaxted; head burgess for 3 years.

Absent ("on his urgent business"):

20. John Spigurnell, inn keeper; from Woodham Mortimer; head burgess from 1590.

Not named:

21. William Vernon, merchant; alderman; member of The Company for 29 years by 1593.
 22. William Bantofte, merchant; alderman; member of The Company for 21 years by 1593.
 23. George Frende; alderman; member of The Company for 23 years.
 24. William Browning, merchant; alderman; member of the corporation for 16 years; son-in-law of William Vernon.
-

Table 27

CHILDREN OF FREEMEN AND TESTATORS27.1 Recorded Children of Freeman (at admission of parent)

Column A: number of male parents within each decade.

Column B: number of sons;

Column C: number of daughters;

Column D: number of all children mentioned;

Column E: average number of sons per freeman;

Column F: average number of male and female children per freeman.

<u>Date</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>F</u>
1515-24	8	8	11	19	1	2.3
1525-34	18	38	35	73	2	4
1535-44	14	14	12	26	1	1.9
1557-66	27	29	34	63	1	2.3
1567-76	20	30	29	59	1.5	2.9
1611-20	9	11	13	24	1.2	2.6
1621-30	22	29	34	63	1.3	2.9
1631-40	25	22	33	55	0.8	2.2
1641-50	20	25	23	48	1.2	2.4
1651-60	18	14	19	33	00.77	1.8
1661-70	15	20	19	39	1.3	2.6
1671-80	11	14	22	36	1.3	3.3
1681-90	4	11	8	19	2.7	5

27.2 Recorded Children of Testators, 1501-1680

Column A: number of wills made by males;

Column B: number of sons recorded in wills;

Column C: number of sons per male testator;

Column D: number of daughters recorded;

Column E: number of daughters per male testator.

<u>Date</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>E</u>
1501-1550	22	6+	0.27	7	0.3
1551-1600	54	57	1.05	53	0.98
1601-1650	57	56	0.98	37	0.6
1651-1680	42	41	0.97	46	1.1

175 wills

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Public Record Office

State Papers

- S.P.12/80 Certificate of vagabonds arrested, April 1571.
 /70 Expenses for increasing borough armaments, April 1570.
 /178 Depositions against the vicar of All Saints' (Mark Wiersdale), April 1595.

Exchequer: lay subsidy returns

- E.179/108/147 Colchester 1524.
 /148 Maldon 1524.
 /149 Dunmow Hundred (including Thaxted) 1524.
 /152 Barstable and Chelmsford Hundreds 1524.
 /154 Lexden Hundred, Witham and Winstree Half-Hundreds (including Witham and Great Coggeshall) 1524.
 /161 Thaxted 1525.
 /170 Maldon 1525.
 /172 Hinckford Hundred (including Braintree and Bocking) 1525.
 /174 Witham and Great Coggeshall 1525.
 /176 Braintree and Bocking 1525.
 /206 Maldon 1526.
 /228 Dengie Hundred 1541.
 /244 Dengie Hundred 1544.
 /267 Dengie Hundred 1545.

Exchequer: Chantry Commissioners' certificates

- E.301/19/31 Certificates 1547.
 /20/49 Valuation of Maldon religious guilds 1549.

Exchequer: Port Books

E.190/587/9 and E.190/589/9 (Port of Maldon 1568).

Prerogative Court of Canterbury

Wills deposited in the Principal Probate Registry, Somerset House, London, during the time this study was being prepared and now in the Public Record Office.

British Museum

- Harley MS 595 Report by the Bishop of London on the jurisdiction within his diocese, July 1563. (Folios 60-78.)
- Harley MS 1541 Notes taken "In Maulden-Church called All Saints" about 1638. (Folios 52v - 53v.)

Westminster Abbey

(These muniments concern only the ecclesiastical peculiar jurisdiction of the Dean of Westminster in St Mary's parish, Maldon.)

WAM 8124 and 38408 Visitation Charge and expenditure, 1566.

WAM 8125 Letter from stipendiary curate, 1596.

WAM 9769, 9770, 9875, 13238 and 9771 Grants of offices of Commissary, Vicar General and Registrar of the peculiar of St Mary's parish, seventeenth century.

WAM 8132, 8133, 8134 and 8136 Surveys of Keton's and Cowpe's prebendal estates in Maldon. Seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Westminster Public Library

Wills, inventories, probate acts, administrations of estates, together with stray notes at Visitations of St Mary's parish, formerly part of Westminster Abbey muniments. There are twenty seven wills and inventories of Maldon inhabitants, in seven collections styled Wykis, Bracy, Maldon, Smith V and Act Books I, III and V.

Bodleian Library

MS Bodley 73 Miscellaneous notes and extracts about the Carmelite Order by Dr John Bale c.1525.

MSS Top. Essex 33771 - 33782 Clark Papers. Twelve volumes of notes on Maldon compiled by Dr Andrew Clark, Rector of Great Leighs, Essex, 1904-1907.

Essex Record Office, Chelmsford

Calendars of Assize and Quarter Sessions Rolls.

Q/RTh Hearth Tax returns.

Diocesan Records

D/CT Tithe apportionments and maps, 1838-1859.

Probate Records: Bishop of London's Consistory Court

D/ABR Registers of wills 1553-1561, 1564-1570 and 1660-1858.

D/ABW Separate wills 1441-1858.

Probate Records: Archdeaconry of Essex

D/AER Registers of wills from 1400.

D/AEW Separate wills.

Archdeaconry of Essex

D/AEA Act books 1560 and 1563-1640.

D/AEV Visitations 1565, 1580-1641 and 1662-1672.

D/AED Depositions in ecclesiastical causes 1576-1592, 1600-1613 and 1626-1642.

Manorial and other collections

D/DA T209 Conveyance of Great and Little Maldon manors 1692.

T639 Conveyances of orchard ground 1660 and 1701.

T640 Deeds 1545, 1562, 1567 and 1587.

D/DBr P1 Map of parts of Maldon and Woodham Mortimer 1759.

D/DCf M35 English translation of the custumal of Stansgate Priory 1524.

D/DCf T11 Surrender of Langford manor 1875.

T13 Deeds of Butt Field 1800, 1825 and 1871.

D/DGe M135 Valuation of the estates of Sir Thomas Darcy 1545.

D/DMb M33 Court rolls of Beeleigh Abbey manor 1674-1699.

M37 Rentals of Beeleigh Abbey manor 1674 and 1685.

M25 Court rolls 1571-1670.

P5 Survey of lands of Beeleigh 1759.

D/DQs 41, 42 and 44 Volumes of pedigrees based on Herald's'

Visitations compiled in 1634, c.1650 and 1630-1640.

D/DQs 133/1 Memorandum on the discipline of the corporation 1598.

134 Letters patent for the repair of St Mary's church,
18 July 1628.

137/6 Charities Commission: report of the town clerk on
Maldon charities 1897.

D/DU 65/72 Extent of the Essex estates of John de Vere, late
Earl of Oxford, during the minority of Edward, Earl
of Oxford 1563.

T/A 40 Transcript of Essex portions of Bishop Henry Compton's
Census 1676 at the William Salt Library, Stafford.

T/A 401/2 Transcript of account book of Holy Trinity Guild,
Saffron Walden, sixteenth century.

Essex Record Office: Maldon Borough Records

Charters

D/B 3/13/1 and 2	1290 A.D.
/3	1330
/4 and 5	1377/8
/6	1400
/7	1416
/8	1454
/9	1525
/10	1554 (first charter of incorporation)

D/B 3/13/11	1555 (second charter of incorporation)
/12	1559
/13	1592
/14	1604
/15	1630

All the above except /10 and /11 are inspeximi of previous royal charters.

Books

D/B 3/1/1 1384-1449.

D/B 3/1/2 1457-c.1550. Registrum Goldborne, containing Courts of Election, enrolled deeds, memoranda of freemen's admission, oaths of officers, additional customs, fragments of chamberlains' accounts and (1547-1553) some early apprenticeship indentures.

D/B 3/1/3 The White Book. Begins as a chartulary; continues as a custumal and also contains copies of oaths, memoranda of cases concerning borough liberties, leases of borough property and contributions of armour. Begun in 1555, continued haphazardly to 1760.

D/B 3/1/4 Admiralty Courts, 1574-1639. (The latter courts were enrolled by Dr Isaac Dorislaus and bear his signature.)

The following books contain a medley of Corporation business, of Quarter and Petty Sessions, Courts of Election, Record and (occasionally) Pie Powder; lists of freemen and decenners, admission of freemen and elections to parliament:

D/B 3/1/5	1557-1566.
/6	1566-1583.
/7	1572-1593.
/8	1583-1595.
/9	1596-1604.

D/B 3/1/10 1605-1623.

/11 1623-1636.

/12 1655-1670.

/13 1675-1681.

/14 1681-1692.

The following books contain mostly Quarter Sessions memoranda, admission to freedoms, catalogues of freemen and Courts of Election:

D/B 3/1/20 1631-1664.

/21 1666-1690.

/22 1674-1678.

/23 1678-1696.

Specialised books for the Court of Record:

D/B 3/1/33 1565-1651. Enrolment of apprentices' indentures.

/34 1574-1660. Transfer of title to lands and tenements inherited by women (and land held in wardship).

/35 1661-1741. Deeds enrolled.

/37 1667-1769. Apprentices' indentures.

Chamberlains' Accounts

In this study they are listed under the reference MCA and year. They are not collected in one class in the borough archives but have been scattered among miscellaneous rolls (and were not sorted at the official cataloguing by Miss L. Redstone for the National Register of Archives). A handlist of the surviving account rolls has been prepared by W.J. Petchey and is in the Essex Record Office for the use of students wishing to consult particular rolls. That handlist has redated a considerable number which are mis-dated on their outer covers.

Miscellaneous Rolls

These are the remnants of the town clerks' filing system but no longer preserve any order. They include letters received

by the Bailiffs and drafts of letters sent out; notes of court business and corporation resolutions; bills and jottings relating to expenditure; papers preparatory to sessions of courts and drafts of replies to conciliar orders.

Full references to those cited in this study are given in the footnotes and they are also fully calendared in the binders of the Essex Record Office catalogue.

Court Rolls

The end of a series of medieval court records. Those used were:

D/B 3/3/59 1498-1501.

/60 1500-1502.

/61 1501-1503.

/62 1502-1504.

/63 1503-1504.

/64 1511-1513.

All Saints' Parish Church, Maldon

Registers of baptisms, marriages and burials for All Saints' parish: transcripts of 1598 by Robert Palmer for the period 1558-1598; continued as first-hand registrations to 1669.

Registers of baptisms, burials and marriages for St Peter's parish: also begun as transcripts by Robert Palmer, covering the period 1556-1598; continued down to 1695 or (burials and marriages) 1687.

Dr Plume's Library, Maldon

Transcripts of the registers of All Saints', St Peter's and St Mary's parishes.

Notebooks and sermons collected by Dr Thomas Plume c.1660-1704.

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