

**The Impact of the English Civil War on the Economy of London, 1642-1650,
by Ben Coates.**

Abstract.

The purpose of this thesis is to ask to what extent and in what ways the economy of London was affected by the English Civil War. This will be placed in the context of the evolution of London's economy and society in the 16th and 17th centuries. Comparisons with the impact of the Civil War on the economy of other parts of England will be made. The focus will be on the short term effects of the Civil War.

In the first part of thesis the impact on the economy of London of Parliamentary taxation, loans and contracts for Parliament's war effort will be assessed, as well as the policies of economic blockade pursued by the belligerents. Subsequently the impact of disruption brought about by the English Civil War on the major props of the London economy will be examined, namely London's role in the internal and external trades of England, and manufacturing in London.

It will be argued that the Civil War caused a major economic crisis in London partly because the economy of the metropolis rested on its interrelationship with the rest of England, and also because of its function as the capital as the centre for the social and economic networks of the kingdom. The Civil War disrupted those networks. However the impact of the war was limited because the disruption of the national economic networks was partial, and because different aspects were disrupted at different times.

The Impact of the English Civil War on the Economy of London, 1642-1650

**Thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
at the University of Leicester.**

by

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Abbreviations and conventions

Place of publication is London unless otherwise stated. Dates are given in the old style except that the year is taken to begin on 1 January.

Barts.	St Bartholomew's Hospital, East Smithfield, Archives.
BL	British Library.
Add. MS	Additional manuscript.
E	Thomason Tracts, pamphlets and newsbooks.
669	Thomason Tracts, broadsides.
Harl. MS	Harleian manuscript.
OIOC	Oriental and India Office Collections.
Bodl.	Bodleian Library.
<u>CCAM</u>	M. A. E. Green, (ed.), <u>Calendar of the Proceedings of the Committee for Advance of Money, 1642-1654</u> , (3 vols., 1888).
<u>CCCD</u>	M. A. E. Green, (ed.), <u>Calendar of the Proceedings of the Committee for Compounding, 1643-1660</u> , (5 vols., 1889-1892).
<u>CCMEIC</u>	E. B. Sainsbury, (ed.), <u>A Calendar of the Court Minutes etc. of the East India Company, 1635-71</u> , (11 vols. Oxford, 1909-1938).
CH	Clothworkers' Company Hall Archives.
<u>CJ</u>	<u>Journal of the House of Commons.</u>
CLRO	Corporation of London Record Office.
Jour.	Journal of the Court of Common Council.
Rep.	Repertory of the Court of Aldermen.
<u>CMSB</u>	W. J. Hardy, (ed.), <u>Middlesex County Records. Calendar of the Session Books</u> , (21

Abbreviations

vols., typescript, 1911-23, consulted at the Greater London Library).

Calendar of State Papers Colonial.

Calendar of State Papers Domestic.

Calendar of State Papers Venetian.

L. Stephens and S. Lee, (eds.) Dictionary of National Biography, (63 vols., 1885-1900).

Economic History Review.

English Historical Review.

C. H. Firth and R. S. Rait, (eds.), The Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, 1642-1660, (3 vols., 1911).

Guildhall Library.

Greater London Record Office.

Historical Journal.

Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts.

Journal of British Studies.

J. F Larkin, (ed.) Stuart Proclamations, Volume II, Royal Proclamations of Charles I, 1625-1646, (Oxford, 1983).

Journal of the House of Lords.

The Mariner's Mirror.

J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner, The Oxford English Dictionary, (2nd edition, Oxford, 1989).

Past and Present.

J. R. Powell and E. K. Timings, Documents Relating to the Civil War, 1642-1648, (Naval Record Society, 1963).

Public Record Office.

Admiralty.

Audit Office.

Chancery.

Exchequer.

High Court of Admiralty.

CSP Col

CSPD

CSPV

DNB

EcHR

EHR

Firth & Rait

GL

GLRO

HJ

HMC

JBS

Larkin

LJ

MM

OED

P&P

Powell & Timings

PRO

Adm

AO

C

E

HCA

Abbreviations

SP	State Papers.
Rushworth <u>Collections</u>	J. Rushworth, <u>Historical Collections of Private Passages of State</u> , (8 vols., second edition, 1721-2).
<u>TRHS</u>	<u>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society.</u>
<u>VCH</u>	<u>Victoria County History.</u>
WAC	Westminster City Archive Centre.
Whitelocke, <u>Memorials</u>	B. Whitelocke, <u>Memorials of English Affairs</u> , (4 vols., Oxford, 1853).

Preface

This thesis is a revised version of that which I originally submitted in October 1995. It was then referred by the examiners for alterations. Because of the constraints of the word limit, draft chapters which dealt with the service sector, and the social consequences of the economic impact of the civil wars, had to be omitted. I hope to be able to present my findings in the omitted chapters elsewhere at a later date.

Any doctoral student's first debt of gratitude must be to his supervisor; in my case Professor Peter Clark. I thank him for his encouragement, patience and criticism. Professor Clark is responsible for the creation and continued success of the Urban History Centre at Leicester University, without which I would probably never have embarked on this thesis. Its continuance is a major achievement in the climate of financial stringency which has afflicted Higher Education since the 1980s.

I must also thank my examiners, Dr Vanessa Harding and Dr Paul Griffiths, for their unfailing encouragement and assistance in the re-drafting of this thesis, which has undoubtedly immeasurably improved it from the text with which they had previously to cope. A great number of people who have worked at the Centre for Urban History have provided me with help and support while I have been working on this project, especially Dr Yoh Kawana and Phil Knowles with whom I have enjoyed innumerable discussions about my work. My thanks are also due to Dr Ian Roy, Professor John Miller, Dr Richard Hoyle and Professor Henry Roseveare for all their ideas and assistance. I would also like to thank Dr Stephen Porter for generously sharing his own work on the economy of Civil War London with me. I must also record my considerable debt to the staff at the various record officers and libraries listed in the Bibliography, especially the Public Record Office and the Guildhall. I would particularly like to thank David Wickham, archivist of the Clothworkers' Company, for all his help and hospitality. Finally I must thank Mrs Rosalind Collier, who also happens to be my mother, for her untiring efforts to teach me to write and think for as long as I can remember. All the faults, omissions, mistakes and misconceptions are, of course, entirely my own work.

Financially this thesis was supported by the Economic and Social Research Council, who granted me a research studentship from 1991 to 1994, and by the unfailing generosity of my grandparents, Mrs Pam Cohen and the late Mr Leo Cohen, both financially and otherwise.

1. London on the Eve of the English Civil War

An analysis of the impact of the English Civil War would be impossible without a close examination of the pre-war condition of the economy of London. Did the war affect an economy which was already in crisis, or one which was fundamentally strong and prosperous? There is no single answer to this question, partly because London's economy was so diverse, with some parts growing more strongly and some clearly declining. It was originally intended to include the entire metropolis in this study, but this has proved impractical in terms of the permitted word limit, it was therefore decided to focus on London's closely interrelated trading and manufacturing sectors. This means that very little attention will be paid to the 'west end', dominated by the Royal Court, the law and the landowning elite, that is to say, the service sector. Although this sector was interconnected with the other parts of the economy it was also relatively discrete, in a number of respects the impact of the war on the service sector was distinct and therefore deserving of fuller consideration than is possible here.¹

(i) Demography and Social Structures

The development of the economy of London needs to be placed in its demographic context. Throughout the early modern period it dwarfed all other English cities and was growing very fast. How fast is still a matter for debate, but the combined population of the City of London and Southwark grew from between 56,000 and 69,000 in the mid sixteenth century to about 145,000 in 1631. By 1642 London extended beyond the City boundaries, Westminster had grown to form a continuous urban area with the City, and new suburbs were growing up to the east in Tower Hamlets and to the north and north west in Holborn and Finsbury.² Michael Power calculated that in the first three decades of the century the

¹ The 'west end' however will be included in the discussion of the impact of taxation. The reason for this is that the accounts of the receipts of the excise lump the whole of the metropolis together. This makes it necessary to include the 'west end' in the discussion of the other taxes if comparisons are to be made with the impact of the excise.

² V. Harding, 'The Population of London, 1550-1700: a review of the published evidence', *London Journal*, 15, (1990), 111-24. The figure for the population of the City and Southwark in the mid sixteenth century is taken from Dr Harding's estimate for the population of the 113 parishes derived from the Chantry certificates, while that for 1631 is taken from her estimates derived from 1631 population returns for the

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number of baptisms more than doubled in the eastern suburbs to an average of 1,400 per year. Using a multiplier of thirty-six people per baptism this would suggest a population of about 50,000. Smuts used baptism registers to estimate the population of the West End parishes at between 40,000 and 60,000 on the eve of the Civil War.³

At the beginning of the seventeenth century the population of London was perhaps 200,000, by 1650 it was about 400,000, by which time at least half of all Londoners were living in the suburbs. In the same period London's share of the national population grew from 4.9 per cent to 7.7 per cent.⁴ As there were substantially more deaths than births in the early modern capital, to make up the deficit and continue to grow, early modern London needed to receive large numbers of immigrants every year. Beier and Finlay estimated that London attracted an annual net inflow of 7,000 people every year. What motivated these people to come to London? Were they predominantly 'subsistence' immigrants, pushed out of provincial England by overpopulation resulting from England's rapidly rising population, or were they 'betterment' immigrants attracted to London by increasing economic opportunities? And how well were London's social and economic structures able to cope with this increase?⁵

Recent work on London has tended to focus primarily on issues of poverty, disorder and social stability rather than the development of the metropolitan economy. Considerable debate has arisen between rival 'optimistic' and 'pessimistic' interpretations of London society. The 'pessimists' argue that London society was characterised by great problems of poverty, vagrancy and disorder which the institutions of metropolitan government were unable to tackle. The 'optimists' have argued that, on the contrary, early modern metropolitan society was characterised by a wide diffusion of wealth, that the extent of poverty was limited, and that social institutions were remarkably inclusive and sophisticated.

twenty five wards plus Jeremy Boulton's estimate of 25,718 for the population of Southwark at that date. (J. Boulton, Neighbourhood and Society: a London suburb in the Seventeenth Century, (Cambridge, 1987), 19 table 2.3.)

³ M. J. Power, 'East London Housing in the Seventeenth Century', in P. Clark & P. Slack, (eds.), Crisis and Order in English Towns, 1500-1700: Essays in Urban History, (1972), 237; R. M. Smuts, 'The Court and Its Neighbourhood: Royal Policy and Urban Growth in the Early Stuart West End', JBS, 30, (1991), 118.

⁴ E. A. Wrigley, 'A Simple Model of London's Importance in Changing English Society and Economy, 1650-1750', in his People, Cities and Wealth: The Transformation of Traditional Society, (Oxford, 1987), 133; E. A. Wrigley & R. S. Schofield The Population History of England, 1541-1871: A Reconstruction, (1981), 532 table A3.3.

⁵ A. L. Beier & R. Finlay, 'Introduction: the significance of the metropolis', in A. L. Beier & R. Finlay, (eds.), London 1500-1700, the Making of the Metropolis, (1986), 9; see P. Clark, 'The Migrant in Kentish

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On the pessimistic side, W. G. Hoskins, the great pioneer of early modern English urban history, used the 1520s subsidy returns to argue that two thirds of the inhabitants of early modern English towns lived close to, or below, the poverty line and had no reserves on which to fall back in difficult times. Clark and Slack suggested that the bulk of London immigrants in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were destitute 'subsistence' migrants, hoping for casual work or charity. They emphasised the extent of poverty, and the high mortality in early modern London,⁶ describing the metropolis as the, 'graveyard of pauper England'.⁷

A. L. Beier used the records of the Court of Bridewell Hospital to suggest that the growth of London led to an increase in social problems in the capital between 1560 and 1625. In the intervening period the number of vagrants dealt with by the Court increased twelvefold. Immigrants to London, he felt, were predominantly young, unused to labour discipline, and easily susceptible to the vagrant life style. By 1600 London streets were filled with young men begging, hawking goods and committing petty crimes.⁸

In the late 1970s this 'pessimistic' interpretation of early modern London society came under attack from Valerie Pearl. She emphasised the basic stability of seventeenth century London society, which she attributed to the wide degree of participation in London's structures of government. She estimated that three-quarters of the adult male householders of the City were freemen; and argued that householders exercised a wide degree of control over their communities, through participation in the government of the City's wards and parishes. She also emphasised the sophistication of London's poor relief institutions. The parishes of the City not only provided doles for the poor, they also paid for the redemption of goods from pawn, helped with rents, paid for medical care, and for the education of poor children. A rates in aid system was operated by the City magistrates under which richer parishes subsidised the poor relief of poorer parishes. Pearl's work, however, concentrated on the City and rarely touched on the generally poorer suburbs.⁹

towns 1580-1640', in Clark & Slack, Crisis and Order, 134-150 for discussion of 'subsistence' and 'betterment' migrants.

⁶ W. G. Hoskins, 'English Provincial Towns in the early sixteenth century', in P. Clark, (ed.), The Early Modern Town: A Reader, (1976), 101; P. Clark & P. Slack English Towns in Transition, 1500-1700, (Oxford, 1976), 64-5; P. Clark & P. Slack, 'Introduction' in Clark & Slack, Crisis and Order, 35.

⁷ Ibid. 35-6.

⁸ A. L. Beier, 'Social problems in Elizabethan London', in J. Barry, (ed.), The Tudor and Stuart Town, A Reader In English Urban History, (1990), 125-8, 131, 137, first published in the Journal of Interdisciplinary History, 9, (1978-9).

⁹ V. Pearl, 'Change and Stability in Seventeenth Century London', London Journal, 5, (1979); V. Pearl, 'Social Policy in Early Modern London', in H. Lloyd-Jones, V. Pearl & B. Worden, (eds.), History & Imagination: Essays in Honour of H. R. Trevor-Roper, (1981), 115-131.

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In their introduction to a collection of essays on early modern London published in 1986, Beier and Finlay attached great importance to the prosperity and dynamism of the London economy and stressed factors such as the higher wage rates in encouraging immigration. However, they also argued that many migrants were driven by poverty, and that the benefits of London's economic success were very unevenly distributed.¹⁰ They suggested that it was impossible to generalise about whether London as a whole was growing richer or poorer, but that, 'it seems beyond dispute that poverty was growing faster than the population of London'.¹¹

Pearl's 'optimistic' arguments were taken up and extended by Rappaport in his study of sixteenth century London. He used the records of the London livery companies' internal taxation, which affected a considerably wider section of the community than national taxation, to argue that at least half of all London householders possessed some surplus wealth. He used surveys of poverty in the City to suggest that the poor constituted only a tenth of the population. In his study of early seventeenth century Southwark, Jeremy Boulton came to similar conclusions, showing that there was a substantial section of Southwark society which, although not paying national and local taxation, was nevertheless economically self sufficient, able to pay for their own burials and sometimes keep servants.¹²

Rappaport criticised Beier's work on vagrancy, on the basis that the figures from Bridewell represent a very small proportion of London's population. In 1624-5 the total number of vagrancy cases dealt with by Bridewell was only 815 in a population of perhaps a quarter of a million. Bridewell, after all, was only one of a number of methods of punishing vagrants by the early seventeenth century, they could also be brought before the Sessions of the Peace or dealt with by the constables. Changes in the number of vagrants who appear in Bridewell's records may only reflect changes in the way vagrants were dealt with rather than changes in their numbers. It is therefore very risky to try to quantify the extent of vagrancy in London from the records of the hospital alone.¹³

Rappaport emphasised the strength of London's provisions for alleviating poverty. The poor relief given by the London parishes was increasingly supplemented by the City hospitals and livery companies in the sixteenth century. In 1547 Christ's was founded to provide for orphans, and St Bartholomew's and St Thomas' were refounded for the sick

¹⁰ Beier & Finlay 'Introduction', 17.

¹¹ Ibid. 18.

¹² S. Rappaport, Worlds Within Worlds: Structures of Life in Sixteenth-Century London, (Cambridge, 1989), 168, 170, 276-284; Boulton, Neighbourhood and Society, 105--115.

¹³ Rappaport, Worlds Within Worlds, 5; I. Archer, The Pursuit of Stability, Social relations in Elizabethan London, (Cambridge, 1991), 208.

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and maimed, while in 1553 Bridewell was established as an early workhouse in which poor children were apprenticed, and vagrants and other disorderly people were punished. The sixteenth century also saw a major expansion of the amount of relief given by the livery companies to their poor members; whereas in the Middle Ages they had done little more than administer almshouses, by the end of the sixteenth century they gave pensions and distributed doles of money and winter fuel. They were also administering an ever growing number of charitable endowments established by wealthier members, although these were usually only available to their members or their widows. Additionally Boulton has emphasised the ways that the poor were able to make ends meet through what might be called their 'informal' economy, for example by taking in lodgers.¹⁴

Michael Power argued that even in the dearth years of the 1590s social crisis was successfully contained by the London authorities. There was only one major disorder in this period, and crime did not seem to rise until 1597-8, indicating a resilience in London's social structures. His study of mortality, nuptiality and fertility in the 1590s also shows that the impact of the crisis was slow to develop, only becoming manifest in the third year of dearth, and even then its impact was much less than the crisis in Cumberland and Westmoreland at this time. Mortality, though, is a very crude indicator of economic crisis, the fact that it increased at all indicates the severity of the problems of the 1590s.¹⁵

In 1991 the arguments of the 'optimists' came under powerful criticism from Ian Archer in his study of Elizabethan London. He argued that as London expanded it was the extra mural parishes and the suburbs with their predominantly poor inhabitants which grew fastest, suggesting that the proportion of the population in poverty was increasing. He criticised Rappaport's use of the surveys of the poor, which only covered a section of the poor. He pointed out that it is important to distinguish between the relatively small number receiving regular relief, and the much larger number who needed support in times of economic crisis. He also argued that, taking into account inflation, per capita spending on poor relief declined by nine per cent between the 1570s and the 1590s in the City. Nevertheless Archer agrees that social stability was maintained even in the worse years of the 1590s and, given his persuasive critique of the emphasis placed by the revisionists on the formal institutions of the City in providing social cohesion, his study also suggests that the underlying economic and social structures of London were remarkably resilient.¹⁶

¹⁴ Rappaport, Worlds Within Worlds, 168, 171-2, 178, 195-201; Archer, Pursuit of Stability, 120; Boulton, Neighbourhood and Society, 84-5.

¹⁵ M. J. Power, 'A 'Crisis Reconsidered: Social and Demographic Dislocation in London in the 1590s', London Journal, 12, (1986), 134-143.

¹⁶ Archer Pursuit of Stability, 12-13, 152-153, 182, 257-60.

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The key to the growth of London was migration, but little work has been done on migrants to London except on those apprenticed to the livery companies, almost all of whom were young men. Steven Smith has estimated that 5,600 apprentices were enrolled in the livery companies annually between 1630-1660, of whom over eighty per cent were immigrants. This group made up just one section of London's immigrants and they lived overwhelmingly in the City.¹⁷

It is not known how many of the apprentices stayed in London. In the middle years of the sixteenth century only forty one to fifty per cent of the apprentices enrolled were ever made free, and between seven and ten per cent died before their term ended. This leaves a maximum of fifty two per cent of each year's apprenticeship intake unaccounted for. Various explanations have been offered for this shortfall. Work on the Carpenters' Company has suggested that the expansion of London created plenty of work so many apprentices decided to break off their apprenticeship early. This may not be true of trades outside the construction industry. Rappaport has argued that London was the vocational training centre of England and that many of the apprentices who did not become free served out most of their term, deciding to return home to practice their trades and forgo enfranchisement, for which a fee was payable.¹⁸ Archer takes a much more pessimistic view of the relationship between apprentice and master, contending that the high failure rate was generally the result of a breakdown in relations; the apprentice either returned home or took to a life of petty crime and vagrancy in London.¹⁹

The only systematic study of migrants to the suburbs is David Cressy's work on a sample of 108 male deponents at the Church Courts from the parishes of Whitechapel and Stepney from 1580 to 1640. He has shown a preponderance of immigrants in the population of the eastern suburbs; of 104 in his sample for whom the place of birth was recorded, only fourteen were born in the London or Middlesex and only nine were resident in their parish of birth. Like the apprentices of the London livery companies they seem to have migrated long distances. Sixty nine per cent were born in parishes more than fifty miles from London. Their median age at arrival was nearly twenty seven, whereas the average age of freemen entering apprenticeship in the mid sixteenth century was roughly nineteen years. This suggests that immigrants in the suburbs were not particularly young, but were of an age when most of their contemporaries were setting up households.²⁰

¹⁷ S. R. Smith, 'The Social and Geographical Origins of the London Apprentices, 1630-1660', Guildhall Miscellany, 4, (1973), 197, 204.

¹⁸ Ibid. 198; Rappaport, Worlds Within Worlds, 76, 311-5.

¹⁹ Archer, Pursuit of Stability, 217-8.

²⁰ D. Cressy, 'Occupations, Migration and Literacy in East London, 1580-1640', Local Population Studies, 5, (1970), 54, 57, 59.

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The debates about the early modern metropolis have been primarily concerned with the social control, about how, and to what extent, the elites retained control over London. Archer and Rappaport are concerned with the formal governmental and quasi-governmental structures of London, such as the livery companies and wardmotes, rather than the informal social structures and the economy as such. Where the economy has been invoked it has been as an explanatory device, rather than a subject explored in its own right. A major weakness of most recent work on pre Civil War London has been its failure to integrate discussion of London's social structures with any clear understanding of the economic foundations of metropolitan growth.²¹

An older generation of historians, most notably F. J. Fisher, undertook a considerable amount of research into the economy of the sixteenth and seventeenth century metropolis, although much of it is scattered among unpublished theses, articles and essays. It is evident that a major transformation of the London economy took place in the century or so before the Civil War which was the foundation for London's demographic growth and underpinned its social stability.²²

The explanation for the growth of London's economy lies in changes in the economy and society of England which increased the centralisation of economic and social functions in the capital. In this period the yeomen and landowners of England were becoming increasingly prosperous, largely as a result of rapid increases in agricultural prices. This created increased demand for consumer goods which benefited the economy of the City of London in two main ways. Firstly the trading sector was stimulated. Foreign trade was stimulated by increased demand for imports. This period saw a massive expansion in the scale and scope of England's overseas trade led by the import sector, the vast majority of which was dominated by London merchants. There was also a major expansion in English internal trade, centred on London and dominated by metropolitan wholesalers, and London retailers benefited by growing numbers of wealthy visitors to the capital. Secondly London's manufacturing sector expanded as consumer industries located in London benefited from increased demand, and because the ship building industry grew with the increased scope of international trade. The economy of London was very diverse; although the domestic trade, overseas trade and manufacturing sectors were interrelated, the

²¹ Rappaport, Worlds Within Worlds, 76-117; Archer, Pursuit of Stability, 9-14; although A. L. Beier & R. Finlay, (eds.), London, 1500-1700, The Making of the Metropolis, (1986), especially the essays by Dietz, Beier and Chartres, has been a notable exception to this trend.

²² See F. J. Fisher, 'London's Export Trade in the Early Seventeenth Century', in his London and the English Economy, 1500-1700, P. Corfield, & N. Harte, (eds.), (1990), first published in ExHR, 2nd Series, 3, (1950); A. M. Millard, 'The Import Trade of London, 1600-1640', (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University

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strength of the metropolitan economy across such a wide range of sectors gave it considerable resilience and the flexibility to respond to challenges. Nevertheless the increasing recession which affected a broad cross section of the London economy from 1639 demonstrates its vulnerability to political turmoil despite the diversity.²³

(ii) The Economy: The Trading Sector

The foundation of the economy of the City was its dominant position in England's internal and external trade. Unfortunately English international trade is very poorly documented in the seventeenth century, a period for which there is no set of continuous statistics. A great deal can be learnt from port books which record foreign trade in some detail, but they have survived only for certain years and must therefore be used cautiously for interpreting trends. Although there are port books for imports and exports for 1640, by this time the growing political crisis was already sapping economic confidence and trade was in recession. For the 1630s the books are very fragmentary. Records of imports survive for 1635 but none are extant for exports between 1633 and 1640. It is clear that for most of the 1630s trade was booming, enabling the government of Charles I to increase the rent for the great custom farm in 1638. It seems likely that in 1640 exports were significantly lower than in the middle to late 1630s, but how much lower is impossible to establish with any precision.²⁴

Nevertheless, the major trends in London's overseas trade are evident. The seventeenth century saw a considerable expansion in England's overseas trade, which transformed the country into the greatest trading nation in Europe by the beginning of the eighteenth century. Not only did the range of imported and exported goods grow but the geographical scope of English trade increased as merchants began to develop global commercial networks for the first time. These changes took place primarily in London and had a major impact on its economy. Many of them were already apparent by 1642. Indeed, Fisher argued that, 'the later years of the century saw little more than the intensification of trends already apparent before the Civil War.'²⁵

In the sixteenth century English exports were dominated by the 'old draperies', the traditional heavy woollen cloth which was generally sold in northern Europe. They were usually exported undressed to the Netherlands to be finished. In the early sixteenth century

of London, 1956); J. L. Archer, 'The Industrial History of London, 1603-1640', (Unpublished MA thesis, University of London 1934).

²³ Beier & Finlay, 'Introduction', 11-17.

²⁴ Fisher, 'London's Export Trade', 119, 121 table 1; A. M. Millard, 'Analysis of Port Books recording Merchandises Imported into the Port of London', (PRO Library, Kew), table 1.

²⁵ Fisher, 'London's Export Trade', 129.

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exports of the old draperies grew very rapidly until the collapse of trade in 1551. In the Elizabethan period exports recovered to levels which were higher than at any period before the 1540s but there was no further growth.²⁶

Despite the fact that total exports of old draperies failed to grow in the Elizabethan period, an increasing proportion of the trade accrued to the London economy. In the mid 1540s over half the trade was in the hands of alien merchants but by the end of the century, this had fallen to only five per cent. The vast majority was in the hands of the members of the Merchant Adventurers' Company. In the first decade and a half of the seventeenth century overseas trade developed along similar lines to those in the previous century. The conclusion of peace with Spain in 1603 led to a boom in London's overseas trade. Exports of old draperies increased from 100,000 shortcloths annually at the end of the 1590s to perhaps 130,000 by 1614, the level obtaining before the 1551 crash.²⁷

The early Jacobean boom in old drapery exports came to an end with the crisis sparked by the Cockayne project in 1614. This project was an ill-fated attempt to improve England's trade by forbidding the export of all undyed cloths. The intention was to encourage dyeing and finishing in England so that more of the profits of the cloth trade would benefit the home economy. In fact it only succeeded in interrupting exports and soon had to be abandoned. The interruption of English exports stimulated the textile industries of Germany and the Netherlands to expand to fill the gap, a trend which continued in the early years of the Thirty Year's War when currency manipulations in Germany and Poland drove up the price of English cloths, pricing them out of the market. The growth of rival industries meant that the old prosperity could not be restored. Barry Supple has argued that in the years leading up to the Civil War, the old drapery industry was clearly in decline, punctuated by severe depressions. By 1640 only 87,427 shortcloths were exported, compared with over 130,000 on the eve of the Cockayne project.²⁸

The period between the end of the early Jacobean boom and the Civil War saw the reorientation of London's overseas trade, from being export oriented to being import-led. Trade was no longer concentrated in northern Europe but diverted towards southern Europe and the Mediterranean and new non-European trade routes. Imports increasingly consisted

²⁶ F. J. Fisher, 'Commercial Trends and Policy in Sixteenth Century England', in his London and the English Economy, pp 82-3.

²⁷ C. Clay, Economic Expansion and Social Change: England 1500-1700, (2 vols. Cambridge, 1984), ii, 'Industry, Trade and Government', 183-4; R. Brenner, Merchants and Revolution: Commercial Change, Political Conflict, and London's Overseas Traders, 1550-1653, 8-9; Fisher, 'London's Export Trade', 119, 121 table 1; J. D. Gould, 'Cloth Exports 1600-1640', ExHR, 2nd Series, 24, (1971), 251.

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of raw materials and semi-manufactured items rather than manufactured goods. An increasing proportion of exports consisted of a new range of cloth textiles known as the new draperies rather than the traditional old draperies.²⁹

The new draperies were a range of lighter, more colourful woollen cloths originally developed in the Netherlands in the early sixteenth century and subsequently introduced into England by Protestant refugees. They were fully finished in England and their principal markets were in southern Europe and the western Mediterranean. Fisher argued that by the eve of the Civil War, new drapery exports almost equalled the old. This may be an exaggeration. Stephens has shown that at this time the old draperies may have amounted to 57.5 per cent of London's cloth exports. The old draperies were still the largest single sector, perhaps half of all exports, but their dominance has clearly been lost.³⁰

Did the growth of the new drapery exports sufficiently compensate for the decline in the old? Unfortunately the two commodities paid customs in different ways: old draperies paid 6s 8d for each notional shortcloth while all other commodities paid five per cent of their value. To compare the two it is necessary to assign a value to the shortcloth, but it is not evident what this should be.³¹

Gould offers two sets of estimates of the cloth exports of London and the out-ports in the early seventeenth century, one valuing the shortcloth at £6 13s 4d and the other at £8. On the first assumption he estimated London's exports in 1640 at £1 million and according to the second at £1.2 million. He compared this figure with estimates of London exports in the Jacobean period of either £1.1 million or £1.3 million, for the higher and lower value respectively. He therefore argued that cloth exports fell slightly in early seventeenth century London.³²

Gould's conclusions are misleading, his statistics only refer to the cloth trade. If all exports are included then, if the higher value for shortcloths is used, exports fell from £1,415,524 to £1,394,274, but if the lower value is used, exports rose from £1,238,972 to £1,277,705. Gould's estimates for the Jacobean period are based on English old drapery exports for 1614, the peak of the Jacobean boom, whereas in 1640 London's trade was in a slump. Had he been able to make comparisons with figures from the mid or late 1630s the result would probably have been different. Imports fell nearly forty per cent between 1638

²⁹ Fisher, 'London's Export Trade', 121, 123; J. D. Gould, 'The Trade Depression of the Early 1620s', *EcHR*, 2nd series, 7, (1954), 90; Clay, *Economic Expansion*, 119-121; B. Supple, *Commercial Crisis and Change in England, 1600-42*, (Cambridge, 1970), 124.

³⁰ B. Dietz, 'Overseas Trade and Metropolitan Growth', in Beier & Finlay, *London 1500-1700*, 123.

³¹ Fisher, 'London's Export Trade', 122, 126-7; W. B. Stephens, 'Further Observations on English Cloth Exports, 1600-1640', *EcHR*, 2nd Series, 24, (1971), 254.

³² Fisher, 'London's Export Trade', 120; Gould, 'Cloth exports 1600-1640', 249.

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and 1640. At the end of the 1590s when trade was also depressed, exports were between about £800,000 to £945,000, which suggests London's export trade rose in the early seventeenth century.³³

The figures for notional shortcloths may not give a true representation of the value of old drapery exports. The duty was designed to represent the amount of English wool used in production and was, as a result, identical for 'white' cloth, undressed and undyed, as for 'coloured' cloth, although the latter was worth more than the former. In 1614 it was estimated that dying and dressing added fifty to 100 per cent to the value of the cloth. This is important as in the early Stuart period English cloth was increasingly exported dressed. The proportion exported undressed from London fell from nearly three-quarters in the early Jacobean period to about a third by 1640. It is likely that the average value of the shortcloth was higher in 1640 than in 1614, which considerably mitigated the impact of the decline in the volume of exports.³⁴

In the markets of northern Europe the cheaper English cloths were undercut by native industries but more expensive fabrics were still able to find a market. Exports of Spanish cloth grew from nothing in the early 1620s to 13,517 cloths in 1640. It was a high quality fabric which was finished in the west country and cost nearly twice as much as traditional western broadcloth. Although Spanish cloths were new to the English cloth industry they were counted as old draperies in the customs records, but despite their higher value they paid less customs than the traditional old draperies because it was only partly made from English wool. Cloth made with Spanish wool was rated lower in terms of the notional shortcloth because customs were paid as imported wool, which makes shortcloths an even more misleading measure of cloth exports.³⁵

It was the transformation of London's import trade which was the real engine of change. During the Elizabethan period its total value was around £1 million, although it fell below this level in the 1590s. During the early Jacobean boom, imports rose to about £1.25 million, and the growth continued even after exports began to fall, reaching £1.75 million in 1628. In the 1630s imports grew even faster, reaching over £2 million in 1633 and £3,174,959 by 1638. There followed a decline of forty per cent to £1,927,122 in 1640, although even this was higher than any time before the 1630s.³⁶

The nature of London's import trade changed dramatically. At the beginning of the

³² Gould, 'Cloth exports 1600-1640', 249-252.

³³ Fisher, 'London's Export Trade', 121 table 1; Millard, 'Analysis of Port Books', table 1.

³⁴ Supple, *Commercial Crisis and Change*, 31, 257, 265; E. Kerridge, *Textile Manufactures in Early Modern England*, (Manchester, 1985), 166.

³⁵ Clay, *Economic Expansion*, 147; Kerridge, *Textile Manufactures*, 33, 37-9.

³⁶ Millard, 'Analysis of Port', table 1. Millard's valuations are based on the 1604 Book of Rates.

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century three quarters of imports came from northern Europe, but by 1633 this had fallen to only thirty two per cent. Meanwhile imports from southern Europe and the Mediterranean grew from eighteen per cent in 1601-2 to thirty one per cent. Even more dramatic was the growth of the East Indies trade from virtually nothing in 1601-2, to a third by 1633. In the early 1630s imports from America and the West Indies were still very small, only about three per cent of the total, but in the 1630s they rose substantially because of the growth of the tobacco trade. In 1633 a total of 423,226 lb. of tobacco was imported, rising to 3,769,321 lb. in 1638, an increase of just under nine fold.³⁷

Robert Brenner has argued that the growth of the Mediterranean trade was driven by demand for imports; those merchants trading with Spain were said to sell their new drapery exports at, or below cost price, and made profits on the goods they purchased in exchange. Yet the Levant Company occasionally complained of a lack of goods to import in return for its cloth exports. Nevertheless, imports did dominate the beginnings of England's extra-European trade. The East India Company was, from its beginning, concerned primarily with imports, while trade with Virginia quickly became dominated by tobacco imports.³⁸

At the beginning of the Elizabethan period manufactured goods made up half of all imports into London, by 1640 they formed a quarter. Imports of raw materials and semi-manufactured goods rose at the same time from a quarter of the total to slightly over half. Luxury goods became increasingly important. By the 1630s imports of wines, silks, sugar, raisins, currants, pepper and tobacco accounted for forty three per cent of imports, twice the proportion of the 1560s, imports of basic metal and linen goods from the Netherlands and Germany fell substantially.³⁹ The trade was increasingly in the hands of native merchants. In 1614 forty two per cent of imports other than wines were by aliens but by 1640 this was only thirteen per cent.⁴⁰

Valuing the shortcloth at £6 13s 4d, the total trade at the beginning of the century can be estimated at £1.8 million. Assuming that the increased proportion of cloths exported fully finished in 1640 makes the £8 value more appropriate for this date, the total value of London's overseas trade at the beginning of the 1640s was about £3,321,395. This would indicate that in the first forty years of the century London's overseas trade rose by over eighty per cent. However, between these two dates there were numerous fluctuations. Total

³⁷ Ibid. table 28. For the imports of tobacco see tables 11 and 13.

³⁸ H. Taylor, 'Trade, Neutrality and the "English Road", 1630-1648', *EcHR*, 2nd Series, 25, (1972), 238; Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution*, 11; Dietz, 'Overseas Trade', 123; R. Davis, 'England and the Mediterranean, 1570-1670', in F. J. Fisher, (ed.), *Essays in the Economic and Social History of Tudor and Stuart England in Honour of R. H. Tawney*, (Cambridge, 1961), 124.

³⁹ Dietz, 'Overseas Trade', 126; Millard, 'Analysis of Port Books', table 5.

⁴⁰ Ibid. table 1.

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trade may have risen to more than £2.5 million by 1614 and perhaps to over £5 million in 1638, if exports and imports had both fallen by similar proportions by 1640, although it should be stressed that this last figure is very speculative. How much of the proceeds of trade accrued to London's economy is impossible to calculate precisely, but in the Jacobean period a fifth was added to the official value of overseas trade to allow for merchants profits and shipping charges, suggesting that London earned at least £644,000 from foreign trade in 1640. In fact, the total value of foreign trade to the metropolitan economy was considerable larger than this because it attracted a number of industries to the capital, particularly those involved in processing imports, and because this figure excludes the earnings of London wholesalers distributing imports around the country.⁴¹

Fisher found that in 1640 London re-exports amounted to as much as all other exports except textiles, although they were less than a tenth of the total. This may be a major underestimate of the extent of the re-export trade as he argued that a large part of the trade was conducted directly, and so would not appear in the customs records. How great this trade was is difficult to tell but it certainly seems to have been substantial.⁴²

Largely because of England's neutrality in the Thirty Years War, London's shipping broke into the port-to-port carrying trade in the Mediterranean and Southern Europe and Spanish colonial trade, from which their Dutch competitors were excluded. From 1632 Spanish silver was shipped to Dover to pay for the Spanish Army in the Netherlands. Two-thirds was then sent to the Mint where it was coined and then remitted to the Netherlands through London bills of exchange.⁴³

In 1641 the respected diplomat Sir Thomas Roe stated, in a speech to the Long Parliament, that, 'It is a general opinion, that the trade of England was never greater'.⁴⁴ Despite this he feared that the future prosperity of English trade was dependent on the continuance of war in Europe. The freight rates of English shipping were higher than those of the Dutch. If peace were to be made between Spain and the Netherlands the English would find it difficult to hold their position.⁴⁵

It is vital that domestic traders and wholesalers are not overlooked when considering London's trade. This group is often neglected by historians who tend to be more interested

⁴¹ Fisher, 'London's Export Trade', 119, 121 table 1; Millard, 'Analysis of Port Books', table 1; R. Grassby, The Business Community of Seventeenth Century England, (Cambridge, 1995), 237.

⁴² Fisher, 'London's Export Trade', 128; Clay, Economic Expansion, 165.

⁴³ Fisher, 'London's Export Trade', 128; Taylor, 'Trade, Neutrality and the "English Road"', 239, 253, 255; J. S. Kepler, The Exchange of Christendom, (Leicester, 1976), 37.

⁴⁴ J. Thirsk, & J. P. Cooper, (eds.), Seventeenth Century Economic Documents, (Oxford, 1972), 41.

⁴⁵ Ibid. 43-4; Clay, Commercial Expansion, 185.

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in the better documented and more glamorous overseas trades, but merchants concerned with internal trade played a very important part in London's commercial community. In the Jacobean period perhaps half of London's aldermen were primarily concerned with domestic trade.⁴⁶

Apart from the coastal trade there are no statistics for London's domestic trade, but it is clear that it too increased rapidly in this period. The Elizabethan and early Stuart periods saw major improvements in England's internal communications. The late sixteenth century saw the introduction of the private coach and the long four-wheeled goods wagon. By the 1630s road carriers had built up a vast network for distributing goods to and from London, and about 200 towns had at least twice weekly services with the metropolis. River transport was improved with the introduction of the pound lock, the improvements to the Thames and the Lea rivers being of particular importance. At the same time the tonnage of English coastal shipping expanded rapidly.⁴⁷

A large proportion of imports into London were re-distributed to provincial markets. In 1628 over 1,836 tons of grocery wares were shipped from London to provincial ports. Londoners were marketing new imports such as tobacco on a national scale. Shammas has suggested that the mass consumption of tobacco in England may have begun as early as the 1630s.⁴⁸ Many sections of London's manufacturing industry (such as the pewterers) serviced nation-wide markets. The coastal trade records show that London shipped significant quantities of ironmongers' wares, soap, paper and glass to provincial ports. Although many of these goods may have been imports, by the early seventeenth century they were increasingly likely to have been manufactured in London. At the same time the growth of the manufacturing sector ensured that the London economy was also reliant on internal trade for raw materials.⁴⁹

The health of England's internal trade was vital to the economy of London. It was crucial to overseas trade as cloth exports needed to be brought from their place of manufacture to London, while imports needed to be distributed to provincial shopkeepers, and so did the high quality consumer goods in which London specialised. Any interference with London's domestic commercial networks would have a knock-on effect on

⁴⁶ R. Lang, 'London's Aldermen in Business: 1600-1625', Guildhall Miscellany, 3, (1969-1971), 244.

⁴⁷ Clark & Slack, English Towns in Transition, 66; D. Palliser, The Age of Elizabeth, England under the later Tudors, 1547-1603, (Second Edition, 1992), 314-17; E. Kerridge, Trade and Banking in Early Modern England, (Manchester, 1988), 9.

⁴⁸ T. S. Willan, English Coasting Trade 1600-1750, (Manchester, 1938), 143; C. Shammas, The Pre-industrial consumer in England and America, (Oxford, 1990), 78-80.

⁴⁹ J. Hatcher & T. C. Barker A History of British Pewter, (1974), 262; T. S. Willan, The Inland Trade, (Manchester, 1976), 30-1; Willan, English Coasting Trade, 97, 99, 143.

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international trade.

As the national economy became more integrated in the early modern period, London became increasingly important as a centre of distribution within the emerging national market,⁵⁰ especially in the case of textiles. Metropolitan wholesalers supplied the drapers and chapmen of provincial England. One contemporary estimate from the early seventeenth century suggests that the home market accounted for sixty one per cent of total cloth production. It is therefore likely that London's domestic textile trade was considerably larger than the export trade. If this is correct, then, given that textiles were by far the greatest export, distributing English manufactures in the home market was of greater importance to the metropolitan economy than the export trade.⁵¹

Internal trade was also vital for more basic reasons, London's fast growing population needed ever growing quantities of food, fuel and other essentials. Grain was brought from Kent, East Anglia and the Thames Valley, but much of London's meat came from Wales or northern England. The geographical radius of London's food supplies was expanding; in the Elizabethan period most coastal shipments of butter to London had come from Suffolk, but by 1638 the largest source was the north east.⁵² By 1638 coastal shipments of cereals totalled 95,714 quarters. Chartres has estimated that by 1650 some 61,000 cows were consumed in London every year.⁵³ By the seventeenth century London had become dependent on Newcastle coal for domestic and commercial heating. Shipments of coal to London grew from nearly 50,000 tons a year in the 1580s, to nearly 300,000 tons a year on the eve of the Civil War.⁵⁴

London's economy was extremely vulnerable to short-term fluctuations. Merchants were generally severely under-capitalised in the early stages of their careers. Even those of gentry origin had little start-up capital. Profits were low in the seventeenth century, and, because of problems with business accounting, merchants would have found it difficult to determine whether their ventures were making a profit or not, rendering them very vulnerable in times

⁵⁰ Kerridge, Trade and Banking, 5-32.

⁵¹ Kerridge, Textile Manufactures, 215-6; M. Spufford, The Great Reclothing of Rural England: Petty Chapmen and their Wares in the Seventeenth Century, (1984), 69-70, 73-4, 76, 79-80; J. A. Chartres, Internal Trade in England, 1500-1700, (1977), 10.

⁵² F. J. Fisher, 'The London Food Market, 1540-1640', in his London and the English Economy, 62, 63, 66.

⁵³ *Ibid.* 62; J. A. Chartres, 'Food Consumption and Internal Trade', in Beier & Finlay London 1500-1700, 183.

⁵⁴ J. Hatcher, The History of the British Coal Industry, Vol. 1, Before 1700: Towards the Age of Coal, (Oxford, 1993), 40-1.

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of economic crisis.⁵⁵

Credit was ubiquitous and all merchants and tradesmen found themselves caught up in extensive webs of debt and credit. Tradesmen were reluctant to write off bad debts, and any chain of credit was only as strong as its weakest link. Fixed capital made up a small proportion of total investments, most of which consisted of circulating goods and money. This meant that disinvestment was easy in times of economic crisis. The result was that cash flow was very important in the early modern economy and every merchant's nightmare was a wave of bankruptcies, one triggering another. These factors must have made for a very unstable business community. It is significant that many livery company pensioners were formerly wealthy and senior members who had fallen on hard times.⁵⁶

Supple has argued that in this period economic activity was not rhythmical, instead economic crisis was the result of extraneous problems, including those arising from political upheavals such as war, currency manipulation and trade stoppages. It has already been noted that the Cockayne project and the currency manipulations of the early years of the Thirty Years War caused severe slumps in London's exports. Dearth at home had a major impact by depressing domestic markets. Archer used the decline in receipts from Blackwell Hall in the 1590s to suggest that domestic demand for cloth fell during the years of dearth. The picture of London's trade in the early Stuart period is broadly one of growth and prosperity but there was also a fundamental fragility. London's economy could easily be disrupted by difficulties experienced either by her trading partners abroad or in the domestic market: any problems in access to either could clearly have a traumatic effect.⁵⁷

(iii) *The Economy: The Manufacturing Sector*

Manufacturing played a crucial part in the economy of London, probably employing a majority of the working population even in the inner-City parishes. It was also marked by great diversity.⁵⁸ Most of those employed in London's occupational sector were involved in providing clothing, housing, food, and drink for the local population. Tailors and other trades involved in producing clothes constituted the largest single occupational sector in London. Tailors alone made up perhaps a fifth of the work force. Nevertheless the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries was a time of growth for London's manufacturers

⁵⁵ R. Grassby, 'The Rate of Profit in Seventeenth Century England', *EHR*, 84, (1969), 731-8, 747-51; R. G. Lang, 'Social Origins and Social Aspirations of Jacobean London Merchants', *EHR*, 2nd Series, 27, (1974), 40.

⁵⁶ Grassby, *Business Community*, 82-98; Supple, *Commercial Crisis and Change*, 8-10

⁵⁷ Supple, *Commercial Crisis and Change*, 9; Archer, *Pursuit of Stability*, 10.

⁵⁸ A. L. Beier, 'Engine of Manufacture: the trades of London', in Beier & Finlay, *London 1500-1700*, 147, 150; Hatcher & Barker *History of British Pewter*, 115, 262.

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producing for national market, which had an economic significance far greater than the proportion of the population it employed.⁵⁹

The Elizabethan and early Stuart periods witnessed considerable growth in England's manufacturing sector, reflected in the decline in imported manufactures and increase in imported raw materials.⁶⁰ Much of this expansion took place in London. The growth of manufacturing had been encouraged by the government's policy of encouraging import substitution in the later sixteenth century. New industries such as glass and paper manufacturing were a source of prosperity. Tudor government had been particularly concerned to encourage domestic production of strategic items such as armaments. Although the Weald was the centre of the production of artillery, the eastern suburbs of London became centres for the production of small arms.⁶¹

The growing tendency of members of the landed elite to spend at least part of the year in Westminster encouraged the development of the luxury sector of London's industry. As Fisher argued, London developed into the major centre of conspicuous consumption in England, which stimulated increased consumer spending among the elite and fuelled London's consumer industries. London particularly developed specialisations in high-skilled crafts, such as the manufacturing of clocks, watches and spectacles. The range and quality of goods that could be purchased in London may well have itself become a factor encouraging the gentry to visit London.⁶²

One of the best examples of the importance of the demand for luxury goods on London industry is the growth of the silk industry. Although there are some signs of the production of silk fabrics in the Middle Ages, the industry seems to have only become firmly established in London in the Elizabethan period. In the 1620s the silk throwers alone were estimated to be employing up to 8,000 people, and in 1629 they were incorporated by Royal Charter. The rise of the industry is reflected in the expansion of imports of raw silk in London from 9,920 lb. in 1560 to 322,168 lb. in 1638. By the 1630s the growth of the domestic industry was causing a reduction in imports of silk fabrics.⁶³

⁵⁹ Archer, 'Industrial History of London', 9, 12, 16, 19, 51.

⁶⁰ Millard, 'Import Trade of London', 238, 316-8; idem, 'Analysis of Port Books', table 5.

⁶¹ J. Thirsk, Economic Policy and Projects, The Development of a Consumer Society in Early Modern England, (Oxford, 1978), 16-17; Dietz, 'Overseas Trade', 129; E. S. Godfrey, The Development of English Glassmaking, (Oxford, 1975), 251-2; Clay, Economic Expansion, 214; Archer, 'Industrial History of London', 14.

⁶² F. J. Fisher, 'The Development of London as a Centre for Conspicuous Consumption in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', in his London and the English Economy, 114; L. Stone, The Crisis of the Aristocracy, 1558-1641, (Oxford, 1965), 388.

⁶³ W. M. Stern, 'The Trade, Art, Mystery of Silk Throwers of the City of London in the seventeenth Century', Guildhall Miscellany, 5, (1955), 25-8; Millard, 'Import Trade of London', 234-5, appendix table 3; idem, 'Analysis of Port Books', table 13.

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The consumer goods in which London specialised were distributed throughout the country. The growing prosperity of the yeomen and gentry of England in this period meant that the demand for consumer goods was expanding rapidly. This is illustrated by the case of the pewter industry. The remarkable spread of pewter tableware was noted by contemporaries, and London was the most important centre for manufacturing pewter in the country. The metropolitan industry expanded seven-fold from the early sixteenth to the mid seventeenth century. As exports of pewter were stagnant through out this period, the source of growth was the domestic market, from where pewterers also received their raw materials.⁶⁴

The growth of London's industrial sector was encouraged by the changing nature of her trade. The old drapery trade had had relatively little direct impact on employment in London as cloths were manufactured in the provinces and mostly finished in the Netherlands. By the eve of the Civil War cloth was more likely to be finished at home, often in London, and overseas trade had been re-orientated towards imports, many of which were processed and packaged in London, creating new industries such as sugar refining and tobacco cutting.⁶⁵

The increasing importance of native merchants helped stimulate demand for English shipping, and the development of longer distance trade led to demands for larger merchant ships. Surveys of English shipping in the 1580s and 1620s show that the nation's shipping increased from 67,000 tons to 115,000, ships over 200 tons increased from eighteen to more than 145. Much of this expansion was concentrated in London. London's shipping increased faster than the national average, by 163 per cent, her share of the nation's shipping increased from seventeen per cent to twenty seven per cent.⁶⁶

The rapid growth of shipping led to the development of hamlets to the east of the City where the industry was concentrated. Shadwell contained four docks and thirty two wharves, eight of which had timber yards attached, spread over 400 yards of river front. These hamlets became centres for ancillary industries such as rope making. According to the parish registers of Stepney in 1606, occupations in river and sea trades constituted roughly two thirds of the population of Limehouse, seventy per cent of the population of

⁶⁴ K. Wrightson, English Society, 1580-1680, (1982), 121, 130-6; Hatcher & Barker, History of British Pewter, 115-8, 138, 262.

⁶⁵ Clay, Economic Expansion, 147; Dietz, 'Overseas Trade', 132.

⁶⁶ K. R. Andrews, Ships, Money and Politics: Seafaring and Naval Enterprise in the reign of Charles I, (Cambridge, 1991), 16-7; R. Davis, The Rise of the English Shipping Industry in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, (1962), 6, 10.

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Ratcliff and ninety per cent of the population of Shadwell.⁶⁷

The high cost of land in the centre of the City pushed some industries towards its periphery; the feltmakers complained that they were unable to live in the City because of the high cost of housing. The 1638 tithe assessment returns suggest that rents in the central parish of St Olave Jewry averaged £25 per annum; in St Mary Maudlin Milk Street the average was £36 10s. In St Botolph Aldgate in the extra-mural ward of Portsoken house-rents averaged £6 13s 4d, while tenements averaged £3 6s 8d. The rents of the suburbs to the east and the north were probably as low as the outer wards.⁶⁸

Rents in back alleys, however, tended to be lower than in main streets, even in central London. In St Michael Cornhill houses on the main street averaged £23 6s while those in alleys averaged £3 16s. Those industries such as brewing which needed large premises would have been deterred from the central parts of the City, but such industries represented only a small section of manufacturing, most of which was conducted in small workshops. Beier found that in the intramural parishes manufacturing remained the largest single occupational sector in the seventeenth century, although the proportion was substantially greater in the extra-mural parishes. Industry tended to be more prominent in the suburbs and extra-mural parishes of London because merchants preferred inner-City parishes, rather than because of any particular advantages these areas had for manufacturing.⁶⁹

Industry in early modern London generally required little capital and was dominated by craftsmen with little or no surplus wealth, although some industries such as brewing or ship building were capital intensive and did produce small numbers of wealthy inhabitants. As a result, in the extra mural parishes of the City, Southwark, and the eastern and northern suburbs, wealth was not nearly as widely diffused as it was in the City. In Southwark about thirty one per cent of the householders were assessed for the poor rate, but a survey conducted in 1618 listed twenty six per cent of the householders as poor.⁷⁰

Although Southwark, Tower Hamlets and the northern suburbs had distinct social and administrative structures, economically they were closely interrelated. The health of industrial and trading sectors was mutually interdependent. To a large extent the City,

⁶⁷ Dietz, 'Overseas Trade', 129; M. J. Power, 'The Urban Development of East London, 1550-1700', (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, London University, 1971), 181-2; Population Study Group of the East London History Group, 'The Population of Stepney in the Early Seventeenth Century', East London Papers, 11, (1968), 84; Andrews, Ships, Money and Politics, 16-7; Davis, Rise of the English Shipping Industry, 224; M. J. Power, 'Shadwell: The Development of a London Suburban Community in the Seventeenth Century', London Journal, 4, (1978), 38.

⁶⁸ Archer, 'Industrial History of London', 71-2.

⁶⁹ Ibid. 72, 132; Beier, 'Engine of Manufacture', 150 table 14.

⁷⁰ Boulton, Neighbourhood and Society, 108, 115.

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Southwark and the northern and eastern suburbs formed one economic structure and any general economic crisis in the City would also cause an economic crisis in those parts of the suburbs.

(iv) The Growing Crisis. 1639-1642

The economy of London felt the impact of the growing political crisis before the Civil War. Confidence was vital to the economy and, as the crisis over the Scottish Prayer Book developed, many took fright. The result was a flight of capital. When Charles I's ministers tried to borrow money from London financiers in early 1639 they were informed, even by sympathetic aldermen, that they had little chance of success because merchant strangers had called in their debts and were sending capital overseas. It was reported that the Dutch alone had called in debts amounting to £200,000 from London merchants.⁷¹

In the summer of 1640 the Government seized first the merchants' bullion in the Mint, then pepper belonging to the East India Company. In fact, the seizures were both quickly converted into loans but the collapse in confidence sent panic through the English economy. In the spring of 1641 the clothiers complained that London merchants would neither buy their cloth nor pay their debts. In August 1641 the East India Company found that sales of their goods were very poor and the company decided that it would have to export pepper to Italy.⁷²

In autumn 1641 the Irish rebellion sent another wave of alarm through London's merchant community. It was reported in February 1642 that London merchants had £120,000 of debts in Ireland. In the same month Essex and Suffolk clothiers complained that cloth exports had ceased because of the political crisis.⁷³ Nehemiah Wallington described May 1642 as, 'a dead time (of trading)'.⁷⁴ On 4 June 1642 Giles Greene, the chairman of Parliament's customs committee, reported to the Commons that receipts from customs had fallen by more than one-quarter in the previous year.⁷⁵

Receipts of customs for the export of old draperies in the port of London by English merchants from 25 June 1641 to 24 June 1642 totalled nearly £28,691, indicating exports equivalent to 86,073 shortcloths in that period, slightly less than in 1640. This suggests that no recovery had taken place in old drapery exports between the calling of the Long

⁷¹ V. Pearl, London and the Outbreak of the Puritan Revolution. City Government and National Politics, 1625-43, (Oxford, 1961), 96, 97, 99.

⁷² Supple, Commercial Crisis and Change, 125-9; CCMEIC 1640-3, 185-6.

⁷³ HMC Egmont MSS., vol. i, part 1, 164; Supple Commercial Crisis and Change, 130.

⁷⁴ BL Add. MS. 40883, f. 29.

⁷⁵ V. F. Snow, & A. S. Young, (eds.), Private Journals of the Long Parliament, June to September 1642, (New Haven, 1992), 25.

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Parliament and the beginning of the war. Subsidy receipts for exports of all other commodities for the same period by English merchants from the port of London totalled £26,993, suggesting that a total of £539,857 worth of goods, other than the old draperies, were exported, which is more than ten per cent less than in 1640. As three quarters of the 'other exports' were new draperies, this indicates that exports of those commodities were continuing to fall in the immediate run up to the Civil War.⁷⁶

The state of crisis in English trade is evident from George Warner's correspondence with his factors in 1642. Warner was a member of the Merchant Adventurers' who also imported luxury goods from Italy. In February 1642 he told his factors in Leghorn, 'I fear the silk will come but to a dead market as has been this great while'.⁷⁷ In the following month he complained about, 'the hazards of bad debts which hath in my time never been the half of what it is now', and that 'the times be very desperate'.⁷⁸ In May he wrote of the, 'still great discontent betwixt King and Parliament which makes trade here very dead and the times such as we know not whom to give credit to'.⁷⁹

In the first two years of the 1640s the London economy was already depressed, but the extent of the crisis should not be exaggerated. By 1641-2 receipts of fees from the cloth market at Blackwell Hall had fallen only slightly from the peak of 1637-8, so the crisis in the cloth trade may have been confined to the export sector and left the larger domestic trade relatively unaffected. Equally, although receipts in the Chamberlain's accounts for apprenticeship enrolments fell in 1639 and remained low in 1640, they rose in 1641.⁸⁰ However the worsening political crisis in the first half of 1642 deepened the problems of the London economy. The year to Michaelmas 1642 saw a substantial reduction in apprenticeship enrolments, while receipts of pickage for the St Bartholomew's Day Fair fell by about a fifth.⁸¹

The economy of London was growing strongly in the hundred years or so before the English Civil War, despite periods of depression such as the 1590s and 1620s, because of

⁷⁶ PRO E 122 230 6, f. 7; PRO E 122 230 9; Fisher, 'London's Export Trade', 120, 122 table 4. For 1640 export figures see *ibid.* 122 table 1.

⁷⁷ PRO SP 46 85 1, f. 82.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.* ff. 83-v.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.* f. 89v.

⁸⁰ D. W. Jones, 'The "Hallage" Receipts of the London Cloth Markets, 1562-c.1720', *ECHR*, 2nd Series, 25, (1972), 569; CLRO Cash Books, vols. 1 2, 1 3 and 1 4. See Figure 2, p. 160 and Figure 8, p. 202 below.

⁸¹ CLRO Cash Books, vols. 1 2, 1 3, and 1 4. See Figure 4, p. 168 below. Pickage was a toll paid for setting up a stall at a fair, *OED*.

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the expansion of its commercial networks both within England and without. The economy of London and the economy of provincial England were inextricably intertwined. This made London very vulnerable to any problems in the national economy. This vulnerability was increased by structural weaknesses in London's economy and society such as the small-scale and under-capitalisation of most economic activity, and the high levels of poverty. During the early 1640s the economy of England was affected by fears about growing political crisis, as a result the economy of London was already in recession when the Civil War started.

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The prosperity of London was dependent on the health of the national economy. It is therefore essential to understand how the Civil War affected the English economy in order to understand its impact on London. This is complicated by the fact that the impact of war varied between regions. Some parts of the country, such as the eastern counties, saw virtually no fighting until 1648, whereas others, the midlands for example, saw almost constant warfare from 1642 to 1646.

The Civil War has traditionally been interpreted as a disaster for the English economy, at least in the short term. In his pioneering work Cunningham argued that the whole period from 1640-60 was one of economic depression. This interpretation was also supported by Lipson and Scott in their work on the early modern English economy and by James in her pioneering analysis of social problems in the English Revolution.¹

The pessimistic interpretation of the economic impact of the Civil War has been challenged since the Second World War. Charles Wilson has suggested that the physical destruction brought about by war was quickly made good. Donald Coleman and Alan Everitt argued that the extent of disruption caused by the Civil War was limited, and of little long term effect.² In his study of poor relief in Warwickshire, Beier stated that during the war, 'dislocation in the county appears slight and ephemeral, for military conflict was sporadic and of limited effect in 1642-5 and 1649'.³ Christopher Hill has argued that, 'the actual fighting was not very devastating, at least in comparison with what was going on in Germany at the same time'.⁴

The rejection of the pessimistic interpretation of the economic impact of the Civil War has never been universal. The older view was endorsed by Brian Manning in his highly influential thesis on neutralism in the 1950s.⁵ In the 1970s the work of Ian Roy and John Morrill began to reveal the full impact of the fighting on English society, and the

¹ W. Cunningham, The Growth of English Industry and Commerce in Modern Times, (2 vols., 6th edition, Cambridge, 1921), i, 191-2, 201-6; W. R. Scott, The Constitution and Finance of English, Scottish and Irish Joint-Stock Companies to 1720, (3 vols., Cambridge, 1910-12), i, 230; E. Lipson, The Economic History of England, (3 vols., sixth edition, 1956), iii, 129, 313-7; M. James, Social Problems and Policy During the Puritan Revolution, (1930), 35-78.

² C. Wilson, England's Apprenticeship, 1603-1763, (1965), 133; D. C. Coleman, The Economy of England, 1450-1750, (Oxford, 1977), 106-110; A. M. Everitt, The Local Community and the Great Rebellion, (1969), 24-6.

³ A. L. Beier, 'Poor Relief in Warwickshire, 1630-1660', P&P, 35, (1966), 85.

⁴ C. Hill, The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas During the English Revolution, (1972), 23.

⁵ B. S. Manning, 'Neutrals and Neutralism, in the English Civil War', (Unpublished DPhil thesis, Oxford University 1956), 387, 390, 391-2, 394, 400-11.

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pessimistic interpretation has again become prevalent in recent years.⁶

Ian Roy has argued that strategies of economic warfare were used widely. Plunder was used as an instrument of policy. In July 1644 parliamentary forces were encouraged to plunder Blandford as punishment for the town's royalism. Essential draught animals were seized and crops trampled by the cavalry, either to punish communities which were seen to be sympathetic to the other side or to deprive the enemy of resources. In April 1644 the King issued a proclamation ordering the inhabitants of Oxfordshire and surrounding counties to bring their stores of corn and other foodstuffs to Oxford. In the case of refusal, on the approach of the enemy, the royalists would seize what stores they could take with them and destroy the rest. On a wider level both sides tried to cut off the trade of the enemy to starve them of resources. Royalists attempted to re-route the cloth trade of the west country through Bristol and Exeter. The disruption of the economy was more than a by-product of the war. It came to be seen as a means to victory.⁷

Roy has qualified this argument by suggesting that the worse impact was confined to regions which saw fighting.⁸ The work of Anthony Fletcher on Sussex supports this argument. He contrasted the western part of the county which saw fighting in 1642 and 1643, with the more peaceful east; 'on eastern estates such as Hertmonceaux and Halland the pattern of rural life was hardly affected', but 'for those unfortunate enough to find themselves in the midst of the campaigns at Chichester and Arundel the war brought severe personal hardship through the destruction of property'.⁹

(i) Taxation, finance and Property Destruction

Perhaps the most disruptive aspect of war is the uncertainty and loss of confidence that it creates. Already before the fighting began there were complaints that the political crisis was leading to a collapse in confidence and a flight of capital. Scott suggested that the war led to a general reluctance to invest. Although there seems to have been some recovery in confidence after the end of the first Civil War the continued political uncertainties in the latter years of the decade led to a further crisis of confidence. However unfortunately

⁶ I. Roy, 'The English Civil War and English Society', in B. Bond, & I. Roy, (eds.), War and Society: A Yearbook of Military History, 1, (1975); I. Roy, 'England turned Germany? The Aftermath of the Civil War in its European context', TRHS, 5th Series, 28, (1978); J. Morrill, The Revolt of the Provinces. Conservatives and Radicals in the English Civil War, 1630-1650, (1976), 84-8.

⁷ Roy, 'England turned Germany?', 136-9; D. Underdown, Revel Riot and Rebellion: Popular Culture and Politics in England 1603-1660, (Oxford, 1985), 153; Rushworth, Collections, v, 664.

⁸ Roy, 'England turned Germany?', 144.

⁹ A. Fletcher, A County Community in Peace and War: Sussex 1600-1660, (1975), 270-271.

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confidence is the most difficult aspect of the economy to quantify or assess.¹⁰

More readily quantified is wartime taxation. The war led to a massive increase in direct taxation. In Warwickshire the parliamentary assessment exceeded the demands of pre-war ship money by a factor of ten. In Kent the assessment represented an income tax of 2s 6s in the pound and in Buckingham 2s. Royalist counties were taxed even higher, about 4s in the pound in Cornwall. Additionally both sides introduced an excise tax on a wide variety of goods. Everitt has argued that, at least in parliamentary regions, the level of wartime taxation was not sufficiently high to have a major impact on the economy, and the parliamentary excise was not effective outside London and a few other towns until the end of the decade.¹¹ However Holmes found that landlords in the eastern association paid between about a fifth and a third of their incomes from rents in taxes, and Hughes has shown that in Warwickshire small landholders were forced to sell stock to pay taxes.¹² The difficulties both sides encountered in collecting taxes suggests that they were not easily afforded. Military force was frequently used to collect taxes. In the Isle of Ely approximately a fifth of the monthly assessment for the Eastern Association was collected by the soldiers.¹³

The Civil War was not characterised by fixed frontlines. Instead the country was controlled by garrisons from which soldiers sought to control the surrounding countryside. Cavalry garrisons in particular had a wide radius of operation. In the frontier areas between garrisons many found themselves paying taxes to both royalists and the parliamentarians. In Leicestershire the two sides collected on consecutive days. In the first winter of the war the cloth towns of north Wiltshire were forced to pay both sides, Chippenham paid three contributions to the local parliamentary forces and two to the local royalists, plus a fine of £200 for helping the parliamentarians.¹⁴

Taxation was not the only burden imposed by the warring armies. It is essential to take into account plunder and free quarter. The royalists were the most notorious plunderers of the war but parliamentary soldiers were also guilty. In December 1645 parliamentary

¹⁰ Scott, Joint Stock Companies, 230-2; Lipson, Economic History of England, 316.

¹¹ M. J. Braddick, Parliamentary Taxation in the Seventeenth Century: Local Administration and Response, (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 1994), 136; C. Clay, 'Landlords and Estate Management in England', in J. Thirsk, (ed.), The Agrarian History of England and Wales, Vol. 5, 1640-1750, part 2, Agrarian Change, (Cambridge, 1985), 121; Morrill, Revolt of the Provinces, 85; Everitt, Local Community, 24-6.

¹² C. Holmes, The Eastern Association in the English Civil War, (1974), 137; A. Hughes, Politics, Society and Civil War in Warwickshire, 1620-1660, (Cambridge, 1987), 262-3.

¹³ Holmes, Eastern Association, 137, 139.

¹⁴ D. Pennington, 'The War and the People' in J. Morrill, (ed.), Reactions to the English Civil War, 1642-1649, (1982), 122; Underdown, Revel Riot and Rebellion, 147, 150, 151; Hughes, Politics, Society and

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soldiers in Winchester fired on their own officers when they tried to restrain them from plundering.¹⁵ Morrill found that in Cheshire free quarter amounted to £120,000, far more than was raised through taxation, while a further £90,000 was lost through plunder, and he has suggested that this was far from untypical. He is supported by the work of Ann Hughes on Warwickshire, who calculated that charges of quartering soldiers and losses through plunder rarely amounted to less than half as much again as the burdens of taxation. Moreover free quarter could hit those who were below the level of taxpayers.¹⁶

In theory free quarter should have been repaid to the householder, but Clive Holmes found that, although the free quarter taken the Army of the Eastern Association within the counties of the association was generally repaid after about a year, many householders living outside it who had its soldiers quartered on them seem to have had to wait much longer, if indeed they received their money back at all.¹⁷

Free quarter and disorderly soldiers remained a problem after the first Civil War was over. Many of Parliament's forces remained in service until at least 1647, and growing arrears of pay meant that they were forced to live off the land. Morrill found evidence of systematic plundering by Parliamentary provincial forces in thirty counties after the war. Free quarter continued after the second Civil War. In 1650 the Earl of Bridgewater's steward reported that nothing could be received from his estates in Shropshire for the previous two years because of the quartering of soldiers. After the war was over the gross rents of the Verney family exceeded pre-war levels because of rising agricultural prices, but their net income was substantially lower because of continued high taxation and quartering.¹⁸

The Civil War left the Long Parliament with a vast accumulation of debts. The early part of the war effort was predominantly financed by the propositions: voluntary subscriptions of money and plate which Parliament promised to repay with eight per cent interest at some unspecified date in the future. In some parts of the country the amount of money raised on the propositions exceeded receipts from the assessment. In the late 1640's and early 1650's Parliament used sales of confiscated lands to clear its debts, but Habakkuk

Civil War, 256-7, 262-3; M. Bennett, 'Leicestershire's Royalist Officers and the War Effort in the County, 1642-1646', Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society, 59, (1984-5), 48-9.

¹⁵ Underdown, Revel Riot and Rebellion, 151.

¹⁶ Morrill, Revolt of the Provinces, 56, 85-86; Hughes, Politics, Society and Civil War, 157.

¹⁷ Holmes, Eastern Association, 154.

¹⁸ Hughes, Politics, Society and Civil War, 256; J. Morrill, 'Mutiny and Discontent in English Provincial Armies, 1645-7', in his The Nature of the English Revolution, Essays by John Morrill, (1993), 333-4, 346, 348, 357, first published P&P, 56, (1972); Clay, 'Landlords and Estate Management', 125; J. Broad, 'Gentry Finances and the Civil War: The Case of the Buckinghamshire Verney's', EcHR, 2nd Series, 32, (1979), 192-3.

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has argued that the methods employed to achieve this end effectively cheated many creditors of the full amount to which they were entitled. Scott suggested that the scale of public borrowing in this period took capital away from more productive investments, but this is impossible to establish with any certainty, it is possible that the general economic malaise of the period meant that alternative investments were simply not available.¹⁹

The devastating effect of the fighting on rural England has been well established, crops were destroyed, animals seized, land lay untilled, tenancies were vacated and rents were uncollected.²⁰ Economic dislocation was not confined to the war zones. Lawrence Stone found that even landowners like the Earl of Salisbury, who supported Parliament and whose estates lay mainly in territory controlled by Parliament, suffered substantial falls in his revenues. By 1644-5 the arrears of rents on the Earl of Salisbury's estates had more than trebled to £12,187, a total in excess of one year's income before the war. Stone concluded that in total the war must have cost the Earl of Salisbury £30,000, or three times his pre-war income.²¹ The evidence suggests that even in counties untouched by the fighting, landowners suffered a sharp reduction in their rental incomes.²² Christopher Clay argued that during the Civil War English landed society 'suffered from unprecedentedly high taxation, from falling rents, from damage to their property, from interruption of their income as a result of sequestration and other causes',²³ suggesting that although few landed families were ruined by the Civil War many suffered from considerable financial hardship which had considerable long term effects.²⁴

In a recent survey of property destruction during the Civil War, Stephen Porter found evidence for destruction in at least 150 towns and fifty villages. He estimated that about 11,200 houses were destroyed in the Civil War, and that roughly 55,000 people were made homeless. This was little more than one per cent of the population, but Porter argued that major destruction was concentrated in the large and middle sized towns. It was difficult to defend a village and there was, therefore little damage. He estimated that at least a tenth

¹⁹ Morrill, Revolt of the Provinces, 85; H. J. Habakkuk, 'Public Finance and the Sale of Confiscated Property during the Interregnum' ExHR, 2nd Series, 15, (1962-3), 86; Scott, Joint Stock Companies, 230-2.

²⁰ Pennington, 'War and the People', 119; Hughes, Politics, Society and Civil War, 257, 265; E. Hopkins, 'The Bridgewater Estates in North Shropshire During the Civil War', Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society, 56, (1957-60), 309.

²¹ L. Stone, Family and Fortune, Studies in Aristocratic Finance in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, (Oxford, 1973), 148-152.

²² D. Gardiner, (ed.), The Oxinden and Peyton Letters, 1642-1670, (1937), 9, 67-8; Broad, 'Gentry Finances and the Civil War', 187.

²³ Clay, 'Landlords and Estate Management in England', 119.

²⁴ *Ibid.* 153-4.

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of the inhabitants of provincial towns were made homeless by the Civil War.²⁵

The most affected towns were those which were besieged. Two-thirds of Taunton was destroyed during the siege of 1645, but she was comparatively lucky: unlike other provincial towns, such as Birmingham and Bradford, it was not sacked. Suburban housing was destroyed in a number of towns to clear away obstructions from fortifications; one-fifth of Gloucester's housing stock was destroyed for this purpose. The result was rising death rates because of insanitary conditions and food and fuel shortages.²⁶ Mark Stoye found that between a third and a half of the population of Exeter were made homeless by the war, poor refugees from the city were still a major social problem in rural parishes of Exeter for a number of years after the war, and the work of reconstruction took over half a century.²⁷

Most sacked towns recovered rapidly, but in some cases war marked a major turning point in their fortunes. The sack of Bradford destroyed the town's woollen cloth trade and reduced the town's population for at least a century; when Bradford was to revive again in the eighteenth-century it was as a centre of the worsted trade. The Civil War also marked the end of the Reading cloth industry.²⁸

Heavy industry suffered badly during the war. Hatcher found that the war caused considerable disruption to coal mining in the north east, mines were damaged in the fighting and deteriorated because they were unworked, and required large amounts of capital investment after the war to restart production.²⁹ William Rees found considerable evidence of disruption in the metallurgical industry. The Mines Royal and Royal Mineral and Battery Works companies ceased to function during the war, and suffered from considerable arrears of rents from their works in its aftermath. Rees argued that war brought industrial activity in the Black Country to a standstill, and that the number of enterprises in the iron industry fell substantially. The Civil War also brought about destruction to copper mining, and a crisis in the wire production industry. The mining of iron ore suffered a major

²⁵ S. Porter, Destruction in the English Civil War, (Stroud, 1994), 65-7.

²⁶ Roy, 'English Civil War', 30.

²⁷ M. J. Stoye, "'Whole Streets Converted to Ashes': Property Destruction in Exeter during the English Civil War', Southern History, 16, (1994), 77-90.

²⁸ H. Heaton, The Yorkshire Woollen and Worsted Industries from the Earliest Times to the Industrial Revolution, (2nd edition, Oxford, 1965), 214; P. H. Ditchfield & W. Page, (eds.), Victoria County History Berkshire, (1923), iii, 359.

²⁹ J. Hatcher, The History of the British Coal Industry, Vol. 1, Before 1700: Towards the Age of Coal, (Oxford, 1993), 86-8.

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technical and financial setback as a result of war damage and sequestration.³⁰

Heavy industry was particularly vulnerable to wartime property destruction because of the high proportion of fixed capital involved. Other industrial sectors prospered during the war. Masons, glaziers and carpenters were employed by virtually every garrison. There is some evidence that during the war real wages rose. This was partly because of a run of good harvests, but may also reflect a labour shortage resulting from the recruitment of the armies. These figures however, derive from wages in building trades where demand may have been unusually high.³¹

There were also opportunities to provision armies with food, weapons, clothing and equipment. Everitt has argued that contracts for boots and shoes for Parliament's armies gave the Northampton shoemaking industry a vital boost, but there is evidence that supplying armies may not have been entirely profitable. Northampton shoemakers had to wait six years for payment of shoes provided for Essex's army.³²

(ii) The Dislocation of Trade

Scott argued that Charles I's prohibition of trade with London in July 1643 was 'a staggering blow to the wool trade' comparable with the Cockayne project.³³ Studies of the cloth industry in Yorkshire and Wiltshire found that the royalist blockade was very disruptive. Ramsay discovered that because they could not get adequate supplies of cloth, Merchant Adventurers set up clothmaking at Rotterdam, employing Dutch spinners and weavers to use English wool.³⁴

On the other hand many parts of England escaped the fighting, and in some places there are signs that economic activity continued as normal. The great Stourbridge cloth fair in Cambridgeshire continued uninterrupted throughout the war.³⁵ Even in those parts of the country which saw fighting some trade continued. The trade of the Yorkshire clothier, Thomas Priestley with London continued throughout the war.³⁶ Everitt suggested that the contemporary newsbooks give an exaggerated impression of the impact of the war on

³⁰ W. Rees, Industry Before the Industrial Revolution, Incorporating a Study of the Chartered Companies of Mines Royal and of Mineral and Battery Works, (2 vols., Cardiff, 1968), i, 287, 297, 332; ii, 422, 462, 631, 635-6.

³¹ Pennington, 'War and the People', 126.

³² Everitt, Local Community, 14; I. Gentles, The New Model Army in England, Ireland and Scotland, 1645-1653, (Oxford, 1992), 47-8, n. 92.

³³ Scott, Joint Stock Companies, 262.

³⁴ Heaton, Yorkshire Woollen and Worsted Industries, 209-15; G. D. Ramsay, The Wiltshire Woollen Industry In the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, (1945), 111-13.

³⁵ Quoted J. P. C. Roach, (ed.), Victoria County History, Cambridge and the Isle of Ely, (1959), iii, 94.

³⁶ Pennington, 'War and the People', 135.

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internal trade, arguing that attacks on carriers were reported because they were unusual.³⁷ This conclusion has not been borne out by subsequent research. Fairs and markets often proved all too tempting targets for marauding soldiers, and were frequently either cancelled or suffered a major reduction in business. The disruption of local administration meant that bridges and highways fell into disrepair, which also hindered local trade.³⁸

De Lacey Mann argued that the cloth trade between the west country and London was kept open throughout the war, frequently by using devious routes to avoid the armies, yet she also found that the war hastened the decline of the white cloth export industry because disruption of trade stimulated competitive industries in Germany and Holland. She suggested that the uncertainty of war had a longer term impact by stimulating the rise of factors in the cloth trade. Factors had first emerged in the early years of the seventeenth century, but before the war most clothiers had dealt directly with merchants. By the end of the century most of the trade was conducted through factors and merchants, and clothiers no longer had any direct contact with each other. Mann thought that this change took place during the war and may have been caused by it. She suggested that war increased opportunities for intermediaries to undertake the custody and disposal of cloth, presumably because clothiers could no longer be confident of bringing cloth to London at a time when merchants were ready to receive it.³⁹

In his recent study of the cloth industry Kerridge argued that war dammed-up sources of supply from the west for London cloth exports, and as a result stimulated the Dutch industry, exacerbating the existing decline of the traditional undyed broadcloth. On the other hand it is notable that Kerridge found evidence of renewed innovations in the production of Spanish cloth soon after the end of war, suggesting that fighting had little long term impact on those parts of the cloth industry which had previously been doing well. Kerridge placed much greater emphasis on long-term economic trends in changing the cloth trade, arguing that the rise of the factor was part and parcel of the growing sophistication of English commercial networks and the transition from trading at formal public markets to private dealing in inns and warehouses.⁴⁰

³⁷ Everitt, Local Community, 25.

³⁸ Roy, 'England turned Germany?', 138-40; idem 'English Civil War', 29; A. Hughes, 'Coventry and the English Revolution' in R. C. Richardson, (ed.), Town and Countryside in the English Revolution, (Manchester, 1992), 82; R. Hutton, The Royalist War Effort, 1642-6, (1982), 99, 136, 164; J. Morrill, Cheshire, 1630-1660: County Government and Society during the 'English Revolution', (Oxford, 1974), 91-2, 134; Hughes, Politics, Society and Civil War, 257-8.

³⁹ J. De Lacey Mann, The Cloth Industry of the West of England from 1640 to 1880, (Oxford, 1971), 3-4, 65-6.

⁴⁰ E. Kerridge, Textile Manufacture in Early Modern England, (Manchester, 1985), 31-2, 38, 216-8.

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The declining income of landowners had significant repercussions. The Verney's froze almost all payments of debts and interest between 1642 and 1647. They were not particularly unusual in doing so, and John Broad has argued that the result had 'a domino effect on the whole credit system'.⁴¹ Given the importance of consumer spending by the landed elite to the London economy before the Civil War, this might be expected to have had a particular impact on the metropolis. In general tradesmen found it increasingly difficult to receive payment of their debts in the war years. The accounts of the western clothier James Ashe show that before the war he had sold cloth on short credit, usually receiving payment within a month, but in wartime he had to wait anything up to four years for payment. Cunningham argued that the resulting crisis of solvency was the primary explanation for the shift in public sympathy towards bankrupts in the 1640s.⁴²

Maurice Ashley argued that buoyant customs' receipts indicated that the Civil War did not damage England's overseas trade.⁴³ However, as Cunningham had previously argued, this evidence is very misleading. In 1641 the administration of the customs was changed from farming to direct collection, the figures for gross receipts are only available after that date. As a result it is not possible to compare receipts in the 1640s with receipts in the 1630s. Cunningham also drew attention to evidence that the administration of the customs was more rigorous in the 1640s than before, this would have made smuggling much more difficult. Cunningham suggested that the qualitative evidence, specifically the continual complaints about declining exports, may give a more accurate picture of the state of overseas trade.⁴⁴

Scott found that the attacks on English shipping by Prince Rupert's fleet and other privateers in the late 1640s led to sharp rises in marine insurance premiums. Rising costs would have put English shipping at a major competitive disadvantage. Lipson argued that the Civil War enabled the Dutch to entrench themselves even more firmly in the carrying trade of the world, including the trade with England's American and Caribbean colonies.⁴⁵

The war was not the only factor to affect overseas trade. In chapter one it was noted that in the 1630s English trade benefited enormously from the continuing conflict between Spain and the Netherlands. In June 1647, following the initial agreement of peace terms between Spain and the Netherlands at Munster, the Spanish embargo on Dutch trade was

⁴¹ Broad, 'Gentry Finances and the Civil War', 191.

⁴² Broad, 'Gentry Finances and the Civil War', 194, 200; Manning, 'Neutrals and Neutralism', 391-3; De Lacey Mann, Cloth Industry of the West of England, 70; Cunningham, Growth of English Industry and Commerce, 191.

⁴³ James, Social Problems and Policy, 36-7, 56-61; M. Ashley, Financial and Commercial Policy under the Cromwellian Protectorate, (2nd edition, 1962), 60.

⁴⁴ Cunningham, Growth of English Industry and Commerce, 86.

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rescinded.⁴⁶ Hinton has argued that it was the renewed competition from the Dutch which was the primary reason for the crisis in English overseas trade and shipping in the late 1640s, although he agreed that the Civil War was a contributory factor. The most recent surveys of seventeenth century overseas trade by Christopher Clay and Brian Dietz have concurred with Hinton's conclusion that it was the Treaty of Munster, rather than the Civil War, which marked the real turning point in English trade. Nevertheless there is general agreement that in the short term the war was very disruptive to England's international trade.⁴⁷

Studies of provincial towns have found that the dislocation of trade during the war had a major impact on urban economies. Roger Howell argued that the war, and in particular Parliament's naval blockade, had a disastrous impact on the economy of Newcastle. The Corporation and City companies saw a sharp decline in their revenues, while apprenticeship enrolments and freedom admissions fell sharply.⁴⁸ In 1645 the corporation of Hull informed Parliament that they were 'utterly disabled' because of the decline of their trade, the expense of guards and continual work on their fortifications, and the losses of coastal shipping to pirates.⁴⁹

In Exeter, Stephens also discovered evidence of the catastrophic effect of the war on the urban economy. Although royalists tried to encourage cloth exports, Stephens thought that this was thwarted by the parliamentary blockade. He found that the economic disruption in wartime led to a major slump in the receipts for the Topsham Canal and also a sharp fall in freemen's admissions. In the immediate post-war period cloth exports recovered substantially but the import trade did not; in the late 1640s exports again fell as a result of the trade war with France. There was a slight recovery in the period 1650-1 which was reversed by another depression during the first Dutch War.⁵⁰

In his study of Severn Valley towns, Ian Roy found that apprentice registrations fell to only a quarter of pre-war levels and that they suffered increased mortality because of epidemics which flourished in wartime conditions. He suggests that the region's urban economies saw a significant recovery in the immediate post war period, but that this was

⁴⁵ Scott, *Joint Stock Companies*, 232-240; Lipson, *Economic History of England*, 129.

⁴⁶ J. Israel, *The Dutch Republic and the Hispanic World, 1606-1661*, (Oxford, 1982), 345.

⁴⁷ R. W. K. Hinton, *The Eastland Trade and the Common Weal in the Seventeenth Century*, (Cambridge, 1959), 84-5; C. Clay, *Economic Expansion and Social Change: England 1500-1700*, (2 vols. Cambridge, 1984), ii, 'Industry, Trade and Government', 188; B. Dietz, 'Overseas trade and Metropolitan Growth', in R. Finlay & A. L. Beier, (eds.), *London 1500-1700: The Making of the Metropolis*, (1986), 129-30.

⁴⁸ R. Howell, *Newcastle upon Tyne and the Puritan Revolution*, (Oxford, 1967), 159.

⁴⁹ Quoted in R. Bennett, 'War and disorder: Policing the soldiery in Civil War Yorkshire', in M. Fissel, (ed.), *War and Government in Britain, 1598-1650*, (Manchester, 1991), 258.

⁵⁰ W. B. Stephens, *Seventeenth Century Exeter*, (Exeter, 1958), 62-69.

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cut short by persistent political uncertainties, the continued large military presence, and a run of disastrous harvests.⁵¹

In his recent study of Dorchester, Underdown also argued that the war had a catastrophic affect on the urban community. Some were able to profit, including those who worked on the fortifications or produced armaments or were involved in Parliament's financial machinery, but war brought near ruin on many of the most prosperous inhabitants of the town, and increased distress for the poor. Nevertheless, although Underdown argued that although economic problems continued into the late 1640s, by the early years of the next decade Dorchester was making a strong recovery.⁵²

The interruption of trade meant that the war disrupted the economies of towns outside the area of fighting. In 1644 many East Anglian ports protested that their fortunes were impaired by the ban on trade with Newcastle and the royalist privateers. Fletcher has argued that privateers had a significant economic impact on the ports of Sussex.⁵³ The authorities of Rye frequently complained about the attacks of royalist privateers during the war.⁵⁴ In February 1649 the corporation of Ipswich decided to petition the Rump because 'the enemy with diverse pirate shippes begins to bee verry prevalant at sea and hath taken diverse shippes uppon our coastes to the great spoylinge and hinderance of our trade and the impoverishinge of this towne'.⁵⁵

A further dimension of the impact of the war on urban communities is the disruption of urban economic regulation. In his work on Bristol, David Harris Sacks argued that enforcement of economic regulation had deteriorated into disarray. In the post War years the guilds complained about the intrusion of strangers into the City's economic life. After 1645 the local parliamentary regime sought to restore what it considered was the correct order of City life which, led to an attempt to strengthen guild control. Steps were taken to make it easier for the companies to levy fines on offenders, and new companies were established to increase the range of regulation. In Reading there were complaints, particularly from the clothworkers, about increasing numbers of strangers in the town in the period 1645-6 which led to crackdowns on strangers trading there. In 1650 the corporation appointed a marshal who was instructed to report all cases of strangers coming to trade in

⁵¹ Roy, 'England turned Germany?', 142-4.

⁵² D. Underdown, Fire from Heaven: The Life of an English Town in the Seventeenth Century, (1992), 203-221.

⁵³ Holmes, Eastern Association, 137; Fletcher, County Community, 170.

⁵⁴ HMC Thirteenth Report, iv, Rye MSS., 214-15.

⁵⁵ A. Everitt, (ed.), Suffolk and the Great Rebellion 1640-1660, (Suffolk Record Society, 111, 1960), 116.

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the town.⁵⁶

Recent research has increasingly demonstrated how disruptive the Civil War was to the English economy and society, at least in the period 1643-5, even if this disruption had few discernible long-term effects. Although the impact of war was felt most acutely in areas of fighting, it also can be shown to have affected both rural and urban economies which were not directly touched by military action. The war disrupted internal trade and marketing, and substantially decreased income for a very large segment of the population. This would have reduced demand for manufactures and imports. However the impact of the Civil War has generally received less attention from economic historians more concerned with the long-term origins of industrialisation.⁵⁷

(iii) London and the Civil War: an agenda for research

There has recently been a revival of interest in London during the English Revolution. The study of London in this period was pioneered by Valerie Pearl and Robert Ashton, with major contributions from Robert Brenner and Keith Lindley. With the exception of Ronald Herlan's work on poor relief, this work has concentrated on the politics of London. Only Brenner has integrated his account of the evolution of London politics with an interpretation of the dynamic of London's changing economy, but his account is handicapped by an almost total concentration on international trade at the expense of other parts of the economy.⁵⁸ The recent publication of a volume of essays on the Civil war metropolis edited by Stephen Porter is a sign of the growth of interest in this subject, but it is noticeable that most of the contributions again concentrate on the politics of London, the only exception is the editor's own survey of the social and economic implications of the war.⁵⁹

In the same way as Archer did for the Elizabethan period, Lindley has used the economy as an explanatory device. In explaining the shift towards conservatism in London's politics in the 1640s, he has placed considerable emphasis on the disruptive impact of the war on the City's economy but this vital subject has only recently begun to be

⁵⁶ D. H. Sacks, The Widening Gate, Bristol and the Atlantic Economy, 1450-1700, (Berkeley, 1991), 246-7; Ditchfield & Page, Victoria County, History Berkshire, 360

⁵⁷ Clay, 'Landlords and Estate Management in England', 153-4; Rees, Industry Before the Industrial Revolution, i, 297.

⁵⁸ V. Pearl, London and the Outbreak of the Puritan Revolution. City Government and National Politics, 1625-43, (Oxford, 1961); R. Ashton, The City and the Court, 1603-1643, (Cambridge, 1979); Brenner, Merchants and Revolution; K. Lindley 'London's Citizenry in the English Revolution', in R. C. Richardson, (ed.), Town and Countryside in the English Revolution, (Manchester, 1992); idem, Popular Politics and Religion in Civil War London, (Aldershot, 1997); R. Herlan, 'Poor Relief in London during the English Revolution', JBS, 18, (1979).

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studied in its own right.⁶⁰ Without a detailed examination of the response of the London economy to the Civil War, the inter-connection between the economic and the political spheres risks being misunderstood.

How far, and in what ways did the Civil War affect the economy of London in the 1640s? Earlier studies of Newcastle and Exeter demonstrated how the war could have a calamitous short-term impact on English urban communities, but both of these towns were located in the war zones. Did the much wider extent of London's economic networks make it more vulnerable to the repercussions of warfare even though it was not directly touched by the fighting? Equally, did the sheer diversity of London's economy make it less vulnerable to economic disruption, as a crisis in one sector, might be limited to it rather than spreading to infect the whole metropolitan economy? It is also important to ask whether the general tendency to discount the long-term economic effects of the Civil War can also be applied to London.

The impact of the Civil Wars on London can only be comprehended with an understanding of the structure of the City's economy. The first chapter of this thesis has stressed the vital importance of London's trade networks. Any disruption of her connections abroad or with the rest of England would affect the economy of London. The economic impact of the Civil War could not be contained within the warzones because they were economically linked with the rest of the nation and the wider world, and, as these links were mainly through London, the metropolis could not avoid the wartime disruption. Moreover the various sections of the English economy were themselves highly interconnected. London was the principal place where domestic and international trade were joined together, and metropolitan manufacturing was closely dependant on internal trade. The disruption of one sector had a knock-on effect on the others. Hence we would expect a period of war to produce recession in the economy of London.

It is necessary to distinguish between different aspects of the impact of war. My discussion of the impact of war on English society has distinguished several sources of disruption. Some of them, like plunder and free quarter, are irrelevant to London, but the impact of wartime taxation is crucial. Morrill argues that between one-quarter and one-third of Parliament's assessments came from London, but he does not distinguish between what was demanded and what was actually collected. The firm establishment of the excise in London during Civil War, in contrast to most of the rest of Parliamentary England, gives the impact of taxation there an added dimension. O'Brien has argued that eighteenth-century

⁵⁹ S. Porter, (ed.), London and the Civil War, (1996), see especially S. Porter 'The Economic and Social Impact of the Civil War on London'.

⁶⁰ Lindley, 'London's Citizenry', 37.

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England was the most heavily taxed nation in Europe, with the possible exception of the Dutch, which would suggest that high taxation did not necessarily impair economic development. It is important not to simply assume that a major increase in taxation will necessarily cause substantial economic problems.⁶¹

The cost of the disruption of trade is much more difficult to quantify than taxation, but it can be argued that here war struck at the foundations of London's prosperity. It has already been suggested that English internal trade, in particular the cloth trade, was very severely disrupted by the Civil War, and that royalist privateering had a severe impact on port towns outside war zones. With London's position at the centre of England's internal trade in mind, her prominence in overseas trade, and the vital role these two sectors had in the London economy, could the disruption of trade fail to have had a major impact on the metropolitan economy? Is it possible that, given the extent of London's commercial networks the metropolis was more vulnerable to the impact of war than smaller towns which escaped fighting and had smaller economic networks? On the other hand London's economic networks were only partially disrupted. East Anglia and most of the home counties, from which London received much of its grain, remained firmly in Parliament's control throughout the war.

The economic impact of the Civil War should not be seen entirely negatively, for war always creates economic opportunities as well as destroying them. London finance has long been recognised as a vital part of Parliament's success in the Civil War. Habakkuk argued that the moneyed men lost out from the way Parliament repaid its debts, but is this true of all Parliament's creditors? Gentles found that London industry played a crucial part in supplying the New Model Army. Did the London economy as a whole benefit from the demand for munitions and equipment to supply Parliament's armies and navy? London merchants also invested in privateering ventures. Did these various opportunities provide a means to profit from war?⁶²

(iv) Sources and Methods

It must be immediately apparent to anyone familiar with the range of sources available concerning London in this period, that it would not have been possible to use them all effectively within the scope of this study. In selecting sources it was initially decided to focus attention on two particular parts of the metropolis in order to capture some of the

⁶¹ J. Morrill, 'Introduction', in Morrill, *Reactions to the English Civil War*, 19; P. O'Brien, 'The Political Economy of British Taxation, 1660-1815', *EcHR*, 2nd Series, 41, (1988), 4.

⁶² Morrill, 'Introduction', 19; Gentles, *New Model Army*, 41; S. Groenveld, 'The English Civil War as a Cause of the First Anglo-Dutch War, 1640-1652', *IJ*, 30, (1987), 548.

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diversity of contemporary London. The two areas were the City parish of St Olave Old Jewry, and the suburban Palace Ward in St Margaret Westminster. One great and one lesser livery company, the Clothworkers' and the Cordwainers', were also chosen for detailed study. Unfortunately the limitations of the sources made it impossible to establish the impact of the Civil War on such a tightly constricted area, as a result the decision was taken to survey as broad a range of sources as possible. Nevertheless, the sample areas were used to illustrate the impact of taxation, and the initial selection of the Cordwainers' Company became the basis for focusing on the supply of shoes to the armies in the discussion of the impact of contracting for Parliament in chapter five.

To assess the direct impact of the war the first recourse was to the records of Parliamentary administration in London. The major source for this is the collection in the Public Record Office known as the Commonwealth Exchequer Papers or SP 28. The bulk of this collection consists of records gathered by Parliament's Committee for Taking the Accounts of the Kingdom in the process of auditing the war effort, including accounts of taxation, loans to Parliament and warrants and accounts relating to the payment for munitions and supplies. Those parts of the collection which the standard list indicated were related to London, Middlesex and Surrey, were searched for relevant material, together with a substantial proportion of those records relating to national affairs, however this collection is notoriously confused, and contains many gaps, so no guarantees can be given that all the relevant records were utilised.⁶³

Also useful in studying the impact Parliamentary administration are the official records of both houses, and the papers of those committees which have survived in the state papers collection in the Public Record Office. SP 28 can, to a certain extent, be supplemented by material from the Exchequer and Audit Office Papers, many of these records having been initially collected by the Accounts Committee. In addition there are a number of accounts relating to the Civil War period which were drawn up when Exchequer procedure was revived in the 1650s, or after 1660 when the restored administration of the King investigated the alleged corruption of the Parliamentary regime. Much of this material is easier to use than that which has survived in SP 28. It consists largely of carefully produced enrolled accounts, presented by the surviving treasurers and the executors, or executrix's, of those who had not survived. They were frequently compiled a considerable time after the period to which they were related, but where comparison has been possible with similar records from SP 28, they have proved generally reliable. In addition, valuable

⁶³ For a valuable discussion of this collection see D. H. Pennington, 'The Accounts of the Kingdom, 1642-1649', in F. J. Fisher, (ed.), Essays in the Economic and Social History of Tudor and Stuart England in Honour of R. H. Tawney, (Cambridge, 1961), 182-203.

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extra information on Parliamentary administration can also be found in the parochial and municipal records of London.

The policies of the belligerents towards trade during the war, were mainly investigated using the available published sources, such as the collections of Proclamations and Ordinances, and the official records of Parliament and the Privy Council; although more information probably could be found in the relevant manuscript sources, it should be emphasised that this study is concerned with the impact of wartime trade policies, rather than how they came to be formulated. Published records relating to local administration in England were searched for information relating to trade with London, undoubtedly more could be found in the originals, but this would take too long for a study of this nature. The pamphlets and newsbooks of the period, especially the Thomason collection in the British Library, were used extensively for the study of internal trade; the weaknesses of this source have been well rehearsed but I have found that the information they gave frequently corresponds with what can be learned from other sources. The newsbooks also give at least some access to currents of opinion in London, and as such are useful, for example, in tracing the rising anxieties about privateering, which probably, at least partly, correspond to the reality of the dangers at sea. The quantity of this material made it impossible for the entirety to be searched effectively, however a substantial proportion of the newsbooks for the years 1643-5 were consulted.

To establish the trends of the London economy in the 1640s, a wide range of quantitative sources were used, accounts from the customs, tolls from fairs and markets, and receipts for the enrolment of apprentices and freedom admissions and quarterage, (the fees collected by the livery companies from their members). Like all sources these provide a number of problems. Very few port books have survived for the 1640s, and none which give complete coverage of either exports or imports for any year after 1640. Also the records from the majority of the markets of the City have been lost. There is a danger of overemphasising a particular aspect of the overall picture because it can be quantified. The vast majority of quantitative records which do survive relate specifically to the City of London rather than the suburbs. The bias towards the City is a general problem with the sources for London in this period, but, aside from the areas around Westminster, the City was still at the centre of the London economy in this period, the fortunes of the City were therefore of vital importance to the suburbs and the latter could not escape any major problems in the economy of the former.

A further problem with the quantitative sources is that they are very difficult to translate precisely into real changes in the London economy, and in any case, the state was generally uninterested in collecting quantifiable economic data. What data was collected,

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such as that concerning foreign trade, was primarily for other purposes, usually connected with revenue, and therefore needs to be treated cautiously.

Quantitative sources can, at best, be indicators of wider trends, rather than the basis for a precise statistical treatment of the London economy. Receipts from tolls at markets are generally recorded in aggregate totals, which may cover a range of different duties, and which cannot therefore be readily translated into percentage changes in the value of goods being dealt in that particular market, let alone wider trends for the City as a whole. Changes in the total amounts collected may not reflect increases or decreases in economic activity, but changes in the type of economic activity. This data is also rendered unreliable by the fact that an unknown proportion of economic activity took place outside the regulated structures. It might be assumed that the proportion was always constant, but this assumption is unsound. This period saw a general move away from formal markets to private trading, but it can be argued that the receipts from fees can be used to trace economic trends over short periods.⁶⁴

There is also the danger of mistaking a breakdown in regulation for a genuine decline. As has been noted, a number of urban historians have argued that the war witnessed a breakdown in economic regulation. Such a change would lead to a decline in tolls without necessarily implying a decline in the real economy. It is likely that the war caused less administrative disruption in cities like London, which were outside the war zone. In his study of Blackwell Hall, Jones argued that evasion and corruption became more noticeable in times of economic crisis because the governors of Christ's Hospital, to whom the tolls were assigned, tried to minimise their loss of revenue through more thorough supervision of the administration of the Mart. He suggested that the effects of recession could be wrongly attributed to increased evasion.⁶⁵

Although these problems do not make quantitative data worthless, it does limit what can be done with it, precise statistical analysis is not possible and as a result there will be no attempt to exactly quantify the impact of the English Civil War on the London economy as a whole. The limitations of the quantitative data means that it needs to be used alongside qualitative sources. At the same time there are advantages to the qualitative approach. It enables details to be picked out which would otherwise be lost in the statistics, giving a much more subtle overall picture. What contemporaries had to say about the economic situation in which they found themselves can frequently tell us more than a whole battery of the statistics. The views of contemporaries need to be treated cautiously, but the likelihood

⁶⁴ For the decline of formal markets in the cloth trade see Kerridge, *Textile Manufactures*, 216-8.

⁶⁵ D. W. Jones, 'The "Hallage" Receipts of the London Cloth Markets, 1562-v.1720', *EcHR*, 2nd Series, 25, (1972), 577.

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is that those living in London in the 1640s had a good idea of what was happening to the economy of their City.

In looking for qualitative data perhaps the most obvious place to look would be the business papers and other personal records of Londoners. Preference has been given to business correspondence rather than accounts, as the latter are often difficult to interpret and are often more informative about the individual business than general economic circumstances. Unfortunately business records are rare for this period, and in particular for the years of the first Civil War. The records of the courts of Chancery and Admiralty were searched for disputes which would throw light on the economic disruption brought about by the war, but the quantity of material meant that in neither case was it possible to search all the records thoroughly, and it was therefore decided to focus on depositions and examinations.

Inevitably the records of the major public institutions, national and local government and the institutions of economic regulation were mined for signs of economic grievances in London. The records of the Levant Company and East India Company, the only London trading companies whose records survive for this period, were used extensively. The archives of the four major London hospitals and a substantial number of the parishes and livery companies of London were also used. The records of the Middlesex sessions of the peace and the corporation of the City of London in the 1640s were also searched for signs of economic disruption. Also useful for this purpose were the official records of Parliament, the private papers of national politicians and pamphlets, and newsbooks which were used for evidence concerning petitions, and other complaints from Londoners concerning economic affairs.

The weakness of this approach is that the qualitative sources do not always give a balanced picture of the London economy. It is well known that those who are suffering will make more noise than those who are not. And much of the contemporary literature is clearly polemical in nature, more concerned with good propaganda than factual accuracy. It emphasises the experience of the powerful and well organised, less evidence survives for those parts of overseas trade which either did not have a company, or where the company's archive has not survived. Many of these sources were produced by, or for, a relatively restricted sector of London society, namely the better off-tradesmen and merchants of the City who dominated government in the City, parish and companies, and had easier and more frequent access to the law and national institutions like Parliament. As ever, it is difficult to establish the experience of the poorer sections of the community. It may be assumed that any economic crisis which raised problems for the wealthy was likely to have had an even worse impact on the poor, but this is an assumption which needs to be treated

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cautiously.

The central evidential problem with a study of this kind is that it is impossible to quantify the size of the London economy on the eve of the Civil War, or the fluctuations in its fortunes in the 1640s, because the records necessary were never created. None of the sources used for this study are unproblematic, but when used cautiously, and in conjunction with each other, they can be utilised to go a considerable way towards understanding the impact of the English Civil War on the economy of London, and, as a result, help illuminate a key aspect of this important period in English history.

The next four chapters of this thesis will examine the various economic pressures and opportunities created by the Civil War, including taxation, finance and military contracting. Individual chapters will examine these subjects in turn to assess the extent to which the Civil War drew resources away from the London economy, or created new opportunities. A further chapter will examine the impact of economic warfare. Deliberate attempts to hinder trade as a means to advance military objectives was added to the underlying disruption caused by plundering and the general lack of confidence created by war. To what extent were the embargoes effective and how badly disrupted were London's commercial networks, at home and abroad, in the war years?

Having examined the various pressures and opportunities that war created for the London economy I will then analyse how the various sectors of the economy responded in the 1640s. How did London's overseas commerce, domestic trade and manufacturing sectors fare? It is also important to look at the economy chronologically, the fighting was not continuous throughout the period 1642 to 1650, nor were all periods of warfare alike in their intensity or geographical scope. The final chapter will look at the economy as a whole, and will use trends in consumer spending, rents and recruitment of apprentices and other more qualitative sources to determine the impact of the war on the metropolitan economy and ask whether the war had a longer term impact on economic practices, attitudes to regulation and the economic role of the state.

3 Parliamentary Taxation and Levies

John Morrill has argued that taxation from London was crucial to Parliament's finances. He observed that between a quarter and a third of the assessment came from the City and that the excise was only really effective there. Indeed a very wide number of Ordinances were passed imposing a bewildering variety of taxes on London's inhabitants, and it would therefore seem likely that this heavy burden would depress the economy. On the other hand Ian Gentles has drawn attention to the very high levels of arrears of assessments in London, taxes can hardly be a burden if they are not paid. What therefore was the impact of taxation on the London economy?¹

Most studies of the impact of Civil War taxation have almost entirely focused on direct taxes, in particular the assessment, but there is good reason for believing that this approach would not be valid for a study of London. In July 1646 the London merchant Richard Best wrote to John Turner, his colleague in Tenerife, reporting that hostilities were virtually over, nevertheless he complained 'many taxes are kept still on foote, God putt an end unto them: besides the excyses which is no small mater allso the Plymouth duty though the seeges be Removed yett still Continue which is 8s upon every pipe of wyne, it is hoped that it will be taken of at michelmas next'.² It is noticeable that it was indirect taxes which were the focus of his complaint, the assessment was not mentioned.

The high level of wartime taxation became a significant focus for agitation in Civil War London, and the passage quoted above suggests that this reflected real anxieties in London's commercial community, but caution is necessary when interpreting these complaints. For those outside government, taxation can easily become a scapegoat for wider problems and tax reductions can appear an easy way to boost the economy. Moreover taxation was not the only way in which the Parliamentary war effort burdened the London economy, it is also necessary to look at other levies such as the militia and sequestration. It is clear therefore, that understanding the impact of all the levies imposed by Parliament on London is vital to a proper understanding of the wartime economy as a whole.

¹ J. Morrill, 'Introduction', in J. Morrill, (ed.), Reactions to the English Civil War, 1642-1649, (1982), 19; I. Gentles, The New Model Army in England, Ireland and Scotland, 1645-1653, (Oxford, 1992), 30.

² PRO C 110 151 2, Best to Turner, 17 July 1646.

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(i) The Twentieth Part

The first direct tax imposed by Parliament, the Twentieth Part, was initiated in November 1642. This was not technically a tax but a forced loan. Those who possessed an estate valued at more than £100 who had not previously contributed to the cause, or had not contributed a twentieth of their estate, were liable to assessment. Those assessed who had already lent to Parliament, had their loans discounted from their assessment. On payment of half the assessment within six days, and the whole within twelve, 'public faith' would be given for repayment at some uncertain date in the future.³

A total of £72,006 12s 11d was collected in the City and Southwark on the first assessments of the Twentieth Part, of which about £69,000 was collected in the City. Subsequently the assessment and collection of the Twentieth Part in and around London came directly under the Committee for Advance of Money. Between June 1643 and July 1644 over £100,000 was collected, although this included receipts from rural Middlesex as well as London. By the standards of pre-war direct taxation this was remarkably successful, the fifth subsidy of 1628 had raised only about £3,526 in the City, and might reasonably be expected to have had a major effect on the economy.⁴

The impact of the twentieth part can be illustrated by closer examination of the experiences of the parishioners of the wealthy, central City parish of St Olave Old Jewry. Sixty eight householders had been assessed for the 1642 Scavenger's rate, a tax paid by all householders not receiving poor relief, only nine were assessed for the Twentieth Part in December of that year. In addition two brothers of Thomas Bowyer who do not appear in the Scavenger's assessment were also assessed for the Twentieth Part, as was William Bedborough who is probably the William Bedbury who appears in the Poor Rate for 1642, though not in the Scavenger's assessment.⁵ Of those assessed, six can be found in 1638 moderated rents assessment for the parish, and for four others who were not householders in 1638, Sir Richard Gurney and the three Bowyer brothers, the house they occupied can be easily discovered. As a result the moderated rental value of ten of the twelve assessed inhabitants can be identified. The average assessment of the ten was £34.6 which is substantially higher than the average for the whole parish, £19.03. Rents are only a rough guide to wealth, but nevertheless this suggests that those assessed were among the

³ Firth & Rait, i, 38-41.

⁴ PRO SP 19 49, ff. 1-78; PRO SP 19 51, f. 143; M. J. Braddick, Parliamentary Taxation in Seventeenth Century England: Local Administration and Response, (Woodbridge Suffolk, 1994), 81.

⁵ PRO SP 19 49, f. 33; GL MS. 4415 1, St Olave Old Jewry, Vestry Minutes, 1574-1680, ff. 106v-107.

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wealthiest inhabitants of the parish.⁶

Subsequently, after the assessment of the Twentieth Part was handed over to the Committee at Haberdashers' Hall, at least a further twelve of the householders in the 1642 Scavenger's assessment were assessed for their Twentieth Part up until the end of 1645, together with two widows of men who had been on the 1642 assessment. The Twentieth Part therefore reached about a third of the households of this parish, a much smaller proportion than the over ninety percent who paid the poor rate, and in other less wealthy parishes the total was probably considerably less. The Twentieth Part was levied only on a small proportion of the City's population, generally the more wealthy.⁷

Richard Grassby has argued that the annual income of seventeenth century business averaged about a tenth of their capital, although for the rich this might be more like six per cent as they held much of their wealth in secure but low yielding assets. The Twentieth Part would therefore theoretically have come to a half or more of the annual income of those assessed.⁸ According to the author of one tract, Londoners were substantially over-assessed for the Twentieth Part but that they could not complain as this would involve declaring their true estate which 'endangered their credit, which could not but occasion their ruine'.⁹ This is misleading, the records of the Committee for Advance of Money contains considerable numbers of affidavits from Londoners concerning their estates, many were perfectly willing to plead poverty in order to avoid or reduce their assessments.¹⁰

It is impossible to judge whether the assessments were fair or not. Most assessments are in round figures, suggesting a rather rough and ready procedure, but the evidence does not support the argument that there was large scale over-assessment. William Garway, brother to the prominent royalist alderman, and himself a significant Levant Company merchant, was assessed to pay £800 for his Twentieth Part, which would value his estate at £16,000. Using Grassby's ranking of the wealth of seventeenth century business men this would place him well within the 'prosperous' category, but below the 'mere rich', and therefore does not sound excessive. Garway paid £250, with an affidavit that this was his Twentieth Part, excluding his lands under royalist control, at which he was

⁶ T. C. Dale, (ed.), The Inhabitants of London in 1638, (2 vols., 1931), i, 171-2.

⁷ Those from St Olave Jewry were identified from the addresses given in the Committee for Advance of Money's assessment books, PRO SP 19 63; PRO SP 19 65; PRO SP 19 67; PRO SP 19 69, the parish rates assessments in GL MS. 4415 1, St Olave Old Jewry, Vestry Minutes, 1574-1680, and the 1641 inhabitants list in PRO E 179 252 5.

⁸ R. Grassby, The Business Community of Seventeenth Century England, (Cambridge, 1995), 258.

⁹ BL E373(2), London's Account: Or a Calculation of the Arbitrary and Tyrannical Exactions, Taxations, Impositions, Excises, Contributions, Subsidies, Twentieth Parts, and other Assessments, (1647), 9.

¹⁰ See for example PRO SP 19 80 and PRO SP 19 81.

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discharged.¹¹

The initial assessments in St Olave Jewry came to £5,270 in total, but £945 4s was abated for payments on the propositions and other loans. In total only £2,460 16s was collected or received for distrained goods.¹² This tax became less effective under the Committee for Advance of Money. There is no evidence of any payment for most of those assessed. George Almery was assessed at £400 in December 1643, but he was able to produce public faith bills totalling £315 10s 8d and was therefore discharged from his assessment. In many cases there is simply no record of any further proceedings. Those who did pay paid only a small proportion of their assessment. Thomas Price submitted an affidavit that he was not worth £100, this was disputed by the Committee who ordered him to pay £80 but Price was able to obtain a certificate from Alderman Pennington testifying to his poverty, upon which he was discharged having paid £20. Price's poverty was at worse relative, his poor roll assessment was 2d a week and the 1641 poll tax return shows that at that time he had three servants, two male and one female. About £635 was paid on assessments made by the Committee for Advance of Money but £480 was from two men who had been assessed in December 1642. Hence in practice the impact of the Twentieth Part was considerably mitigated by the manner in which it was enforced.¹³

The principal objection against the Committee for Advance of Money was that it disrupted links between London and other parts of the country. The City's Remonstrance of May 1646 described it as 'one of the greatest grievances of this City, and which so long as it is continued, doth hinder the concourse of people thereunto, and tendeth much to the destruction of the trade and inhabitants thereof'.¹⁴ Even people coming up to London only for brief periods to conduct business, or for other reasons found themselves assessed; on 4 June 1644 the Committee for Advance of Money ordered that Alexander Heatley, resident in Covent Garden, be discharged from his assessment of £300 as he was a Scotsman in London on business, without any property in England, and the Scottish Commissioners had certified that he had paid all his taxes and contribution in Scotland. This, and other similar cases, caused considerable disquiet in London. It was feared that this over zealous assessing was deterring people from coming to London which would have a detrimental affect on the economy. The Remonstrance called for either the abolition of the committee, or restrictions on its powers, the latter request was granted in August 1646 after which it

¹¹ CCAM, i, 350; Grassby, Business Community, 247-9.

¹² PRO SP 19 49, f. 33.

¹³ PRO SP 19 63, ff. 83, 89, 127; PRO SP 19 65, f. 130; CCAM, i, 37; GL MS. 4415 1, St Olave Old Jewry, Vestry Minutes, 1574-1680, ff. 106v-7, 115v, 121, 131v; PRO E 179 252 5.

¹⁴ LJ VIII, 331-3.

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was no longer a major grievance in the City.¹⁵

(ii) Assessments and other direct taxes

The purpose of this section is to examine the impact of non discriminatory direct taxes which Parliament introduced, of which the most important was the assessment. The assessment was not one single tax but a type of taxation under which each locality was assigned to raise a particular cash sum, but wide discretion was allowed as to how the sum was to be raised. A number of different assessments were imposed for different purposes, each of which produced a different set of records. The first part of this section will therefore comprise a survey of the different assessments and other direct taxes in order to establish, as far as possible, how much each raised. Subsequently discussion will turn to the impact of the levies on the London economy.

In February 1643 the weekly assessment was introduced, initially for three months. Despite the protests of the municipality, the City was assessed at £10,000 per week, which dwarfed all previous taxes and levies. The highest ship money levy demanded from the City had been £35,118 in 1635, and this had been reduced to £32,163 after complaints from the municipality. Under the Act passed in 1642 to raise £400,000 for the suppression of the Irish rebellion, the City had been assessed to pay £42,476 16s 3d in two halves, to be collected in May and November.¹⁶

As the Ordinance admitted, London was assessed at a much higher rate than the remainder of England. As the total of the first weekly assessment in England was £33,437 (Parliament assessed all counties in England whether they controlled them or not), the City's share was nearly thirty per cent, a much higher proportion than any previous levy. In comparison, the City's share of the £400,000 levy had been ten per cent of the national total, but even this may have been an over assessment. Nearly £97,000 had been collected on the two subsidies levied towards the end of 1641, of which about £6,821, around seven per cent, had been collected in the City. The City's share of ship money had been even lower, it was about 6.5 per cent in 1640.¹⁷

It is very difficult to find accurate estimates of the population of the City before the Civil War, but that of Finlay and Shearer, which puts the population at about 135,000 in 1640, is likely to be too high rather than too low. This would suggest that the population of

¹⁵ CCAM, i, 35, 56.

¹⁶ Firth & Rait, i, 86; M. R. Gordon, 'The Collection of Ship Money', *TRHS*, 3rd Series, 4, (1919), 155; *Statutes of the Realm*, v, (1819), 145, 147.

¹⁷ Firth & Rait, i, 86-9, 99; PRO SP 28 170 Accounts of the Treasurers for Two entire subsidies, f. 1; Gordon, 'Collection of Ship Money', 143, 159.

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the City was not more than 2.7 per cent of the national total.¹⁸ Little wonder that Alderman Gibbs, speaking for the City before the Commons, stated that Londoners would be assessed four times higher than those living in Surrey.¹⁹ Again, this may have been an underestimate, for one newsbook reported that it was said that 'a citizen dwelling in the freedome is rated at £9 a week, and a gentleman out of the freedome but three of four doores off, as large in estate almost, is but 4s per week'.²⁰ In an attempt to head off the discontent Parliament promised the inhabitants of the City repayment of sixty per cent of the money collected on the 'public faith'.²¹

The weekly assessment Ordinance assessed Southwark and adjacent parishes at £300 per week, Westminster and the Middlesex suburbs at £1,250 per week, and rural Middlesex at £750 per week. The Ordinance made it clear that the assessment placed on Westminster and the Middlesex suburbs was, like the City's, higher than their proper proportion. The whole of Middlesex had been assessed to pay £12,354 12s 9d in the Act for raising £400,000, about three per cent of the total compared with £3,000 per week for the weekly assessment, which was nearly six per cent of the total.²²

Large sums were also collected by the weekly assessment in the City. By the beginning of July over £57,500, or about half the total assessment, had been paid in by the collector.²³ Accounts from a few precincts have survived in the papers of the Committee for Advance of Money giving details of money paid to the treasurers by the collectors up to early 1644. Comparison with the accounts from July 1643 suggest that after this date more than half as much again was paid in on the weekly assessment. It is possible therefore to estimate that about £89,000 was paid in from the first weekly assessment in the year following the Ordinance, and that perhaps three quarters of the total assessment was collected. By any pre-war standard this was a massive sum of money. However, without exact figures of the total wealth of the City, which are unobtainable for this period,

¹⁸ R. Finlay & B. Shearer, 'Population growth and suburban expansion' in A. L. Beier & R. Finlay, (eds.), London 1500-1700: The Making of the Metropolis, (1986), 42; E. A. Wrigley & R. S. Schofield, The Population History of England, 1541-1871: A Reconstruction, (1981), 532 table A3.3; for a critique of Finlay and Shearer's figures see V. Harding, 'The Population of London, 1550-1700: a review of the published evidence', London Journal, 15, (1990), 120-22, if Dr. Harding's figures for the population of the 25 wards in 1631 are used then the City's proportion of the national population at that date was 2.3 per cent.

¹⁹ C. Thompson, (ed.), Walter Yonge's Diary of Proceedings in the House of Commons, 1642-1645, Vol. I, 19th September 1642-7th March 1643, (Wivenhoe, 1986), 320.

²⁰ BL E96(2), Speciall Passages, No. 35, 4-11 April 1643, 284-5.

²¹ Firth & Rait, i, 128.

²² *Ibid.* i, 86, 99; Statutes of the Realm, v, 145.

²³ PRO SP 28 170, Accounts of the collectors of the Weekly Assessment in London; PRO SP 19 47, ff. 130v-134.

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considerable caution is necessary before drawing conclusions about the consequences for the economy.²⁴

Westminster and the Middlesex suburbs were not so overassessed as the City, but enough to provoke protests. John Glyn, Recorder of Westminster, and Sir Gilbert Gerrard, one of the Middlesex knights of the shire, were tellers for a motion in the House of Commons to recommit the clauses concerning Middlesex and Westminster. The motion was defeated, but subsequently Glyn was instructed to bring in an Ordinance for reducing the assessments of Westminster and Middlesex. No such Ordinance is recorded by Firth and Rait, nor is there any further reference to it in the printed *Common's Journals*, but it is evident that at some stage the assessments on the suburbs were eased. An Ordinance passed on 10 May 1643 to clarify what parts of Surrey were to be assessed as part of Southwark, mentions that the assessment on that part of London had been reduced to £200.²⁵

Further evidence that the assessment on the suburbs was reduced comes from the surviving accounts from the Middlesex suburbs. In some cases there are separate accounts for the first month and the following two, and these indicate that assessments were abated. In Clerkenwell, £193 13s 8d was assessed for the first month, but only £330 12s 6d for the two remaining months, a reduction of fourteen per cent. The assessment on the Upper Liberty of St Sepulchre Without similarly declined. This may have been just a readjustment among the various parts of the suburbs made by the assessment committee, but, although some parts did not see their assessments reduced, primarily Westminster and the Duchy of Lancaster Liberty, none appear to have had their assessments increased. How high the weekly assessment was in the suburbs has proved impossible to establish.²⁶

In Westminster a high proportion of the first weekly assessment was collected relatively quickly. In part of St Clement Danes over ninety per cent of assessment had been collected by early July. The collectors for that part of St Mary Savoy in Westminster paid in to the treasury £88 13s on 22 June out of a total assessment of £100 12s.²⁷ The fact that higher proportions of the weekly assessment were collected in Westminster than in the City does not necessarily mean that it had a greater impact on the local economy. In total, £2,186 7d was paid to the treasurer at war in Westminster on the first weekly assessment by 25 March 1644, but this was only a fraction of the sum collected in the City. The first part of the Act for £400,000 brought in about £1,000 in Westminster, less than half the amount

²⁴ PRO SP 19 47, ff. 130v-134.

²⁵ CJ II, 973, 979; LJ VI, 41.

²⁶ PRO SP 28 164 1, ff. 163-168; PRO SP 28 198 2, ff. 96-104; PRO SP 28 298, ff. 1060-1.

²⁷ PRO SP 28 163 Account of the collectors for the first weekly assessment in part of Clement Danes in the Liberty of Westminster; PRO SP 28 166, Account of the collectors of the first weekly assessment in part of Mary Savoy in the Liberty of Westminster.

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received on the first weekly assessment Ordinance. But in the City by July 1643, the amount collected on the first weekly assessment was already more than three times the receipts from the Act for £400,000. This would suggest that the weekly assessment fell most heavily on the City. The success of the tax in Westminster may suggest that the assessment was a relatively smaller proportion of total wealth here than in other parts of London.²⁸

In most parts of the Middlesex suburbs the first weekly assessment was not as effectively executed as in Westminster, and the proportions collected varied widely. In the wealthier parts a high proportion of the assessment was collected. In the liberties of Saffron Hill and Ely Rents in Holborn the weekly assessment was very successful, for the last two months about £44 was assessed, all of which was collected, and £43 13s 4d had been paid in by the end of July 1643. These liberties were generally very good at paying their taxes, even on the second part of the £400,000, £31 7s 10d was collected out of a total assessment of £36 10s 10d.²⁹ In the Duchy of Lancaster Liberty on the Strand, where the assessment was not changed, receipts followed a similar pattern to the City. In Savoy ward £126 had been paid in by the collectors by the end of June, about half the total assessment of £252 9s. Subsequently up to the end of October 1644 a further £65 was paid in, in total eighty per cent of the assessment was collected. In comparison £137 was collected in the Savoy and Church Wards for the first part of the £400,000. This again suggests that the assessment was less of a burden in these parts of London than in the City.³⁰

In St James Clerkenwell, one of the less wealthy parishes, the Ordinance was much less effective. By the end of May 1644 only about £88 had been collected of the £193 13s 8d charged for the first month's weekly assessment, and £143 on the £330 12s 6d charged for the two subsequent month's weekly assessment. This suggests that arrears were substantially greater in the poorer parts of the suburbs, but even in the Liberty of the Rolls in Chancery Lane, which we might expect to be one of the more prosperous parts of the suburbs, only about £47 11s 4d was received for the £86 assessed for the first month of the Ordinance.³¹

In Southwark the first weekly assessment was more successful. In St Thomas Southwark the assessment totalled £168 of which £116 1s 6d was collected. £40 had been assessed on property belonging to St Thomas' Hospital but was forborne on orders from

²⁸ PRO E 101 676 52, f. 1; PRO SP 28 162, Account of the Treasurers for the Act for £400,000, f. 6.

²⁹ PRO SP 28 164 1, ff. 106-118.

³⁰ PRO SP 28 166, Account of the collectors of the first weekly assessment Savoy Ward, Liberty of the Duchy of Lancaster; Account of the collectors for the Act for £400,000 in Savoy and Church Wards in the Liberty of the Duchy of Lancaster.

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Parliament. In total, only £11 18s 8d remained in arrears. In St George Southwark the collection was less successful, £222 18s 6d was assessed and £180 was collected, but this still suggests that about eighty per cent of the first weekly assessment was collected. If eighty per cent of the first weekly assessment was collected in Southwark then the total receipts on the tax were around £1,920, indicating that even in the less wealthy parts of London the weekly assessment was effectively enforced. It also implies that the weekly assessment had less of an impact than the Twentieth Part; in St Thomas Southwark the first assessments for the Twentieth Part yielded £144 3s, and in St George Southwark, £708 3s 1d.³²

Further taxes were raised at this time to pay for fortifications: £4,000 was rated by the Common Council on the City in February, and the same amount again in July. In March an additional levy was placed on Westminster and the suburbs amounting to 6d for every house worth £5 a year, and 2d for every pound of additional rent. The assessment on the part of St Mary Savoy within the liberties of Westminster amounted to £5 19s, compared with the weekly assessment of £8 7s 8d. In Southwark an Ordinance passed on 5 June initiated a weekly levy of £100 to pay for guards and fortifications. Other Ordinances also had financial implications. For example under an Ordinance passed on 25 July to raise a force of cavalry under the Earl of Manchester, London and Middlesex were to contribute 1,500 horse and the Deputy Lieutenants were instructed to levy sufficient money for a week's pay for the force.³³

When the weekly assessment was renewed for a further two months from the beginning of August 1643 the City was specifically excluded. It was renewed in the suburbs but at a much lower rate. £750 per week was demanded from Middlesex and Westminster and £500 from Southwark and Surrey.³⁴ The relative balance of the burden was shifted towards Westminster and away from other parts of the suburbs. In the part of St Mary Savoy in Westminster the assessment rose from £8 7s 8d per week to £8 9s 2d.³⁵ In other parts of the suburbs the amounts assessed fell substantially. In St Sepulchre

³¹ PRO SP 28 164 1, ff. 163-168; PRO SP 28 198 2, ff. 96-101; PRO SP 28 166, Account of the collectors of the first weekly assessment in the Liberty of the Rolls.

³² PRO SP 28 179, St Thomas' Southwark Parish Account, f. 43; PRO SP 28 180 261, St George's Southwark parish account, unfol.; PRO SP 19 49, ff. 77-9.

³³ *CIRO Jour.* 40, f. 52, 66; Firth & Rait, i, 103-4; PRO SP 28 166, Account of the collectors of St Mary Savoy in the Liberty of Westminster for fortifying London, Account of the collectors of St Mary Savoy for the first weekly assessment; *J* VI, 81-2; E. Husbands, (ed.), A Collection of all the Publicke Orders, Ordinances and Declarations of Both Houses of Parliament, 1642-1646, (1646), 275-277.

³⁴ Firth & Rait, i, 223-41.

³⁵ PRO SP 28 166, Account of the collectors of the first weekly assessment in part of St Mary Savoy in the Liberty of Westminster, Account of the collectors for the second weekly assessment in part of St Mary Savoy in the Liberty of Westminster.

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Without the weekly assessment had been set at £56 6s 8d for the first month of the first weekly assessment, it was then reduced to £47 14s per month for the next two months, and for the second weekly assessment it was reduced further to £35 13s 4d per month.³⁶

In the Middlesex suburbs the implementation of the second weekly assessment Ordinance was delayed for several months. In Finsbury the assessment was not made until the end of November, while warrants for implementing the Ordinance in the Liberty of the Duchy of Lancaster on the Strand were not issued until 10 January 1644. In Westminster the assessment committee was quicker off the mark, issuing a warrant to execute the assessment in that part of St Clement Danes within Westminster on 26 August.³⁷

In total, £1,227 7s 2d was raised in Westminster on the second weekly assessment, up to 25 March 1644. This suggests, given that the rates were slightly higher than in the first weekly assessment, that the second Ordinance was not as well enforced as the first.³⁸ Nevertheless collection rates remained high. In the King Street division of St Margaret Westminster, over eighty five per cent of the assessment of £150 3s 8d was collected and a total of £128 15s 6d had been paid to the treasurers by the end of January 1644.³⁹

In the Duchy of Lancaster Liberty the collection rates fell despite the fact that the assessment was lower. In the Savoy ward about three quarters of the second weekly assessment was collected, compared to roughly eighty per cent of the first. In Temple Bar ward over ninety per cent had been collected of the first weekly assessment, but slightly under three quarters was collected of the second. In other parts of the suburbs the second weekly assessment was more successful. Over eighty five per cent was collected in Cripplegate Without, and only a slightly lower proportion was collected in Sepulchres. In the precinct of Katherine's by the Tower the assessment of £70 had been paid to the Treasurer at War by Michaelmas 1644.⁴⁰

³⁶ PRO SP 28 298, ff. 1060-1; PRO SP 28 164 1, ff. 79-88.

³⁷ PRO SP 28 162, Account of the collectors of the second weekly assessment in Finsbury; PRO SP 28 164 1, ff. 74-88; PRO SP 28 165 4, f. 442; PRO SP 28 166, Account of collectors for the second weekly assessment Temple Bar Ward, Duchy of Lancaster Liberty. See also the other accounts from the Duchy of Lancaster Liberty in this box.

³⁸ PRO E 101 676 52, f. 1v. This is about 56 per cent of the receipts of the first weekly assessment, whereas if the rates were the same and the same proportions were collected one would expect the receipts on the second weekly assessment to be about two thirds of the first. However this account only covers the period up until the 25th of March, in the following August the Commons sent four of their members to put pressure on the collectors for Westminster and the suburbs to bring in their arrears, *CJ* III, 597.

³⁹ PRO SP 28 165 1, ff. 1-10.

⁴⁰ PRO SP 28 166, Account of the collectors of the first weekly assessment in Savoy ward, Duchy of Lancaster Liberty; Account of the collectors for the second weekly assessment in the Savoy ward, Duchy of Lancaster Liberty; PRO SP 28 165, f. 329; PRO SP 28 166, Account of the collectors of the first weekly assessment in Temple Bar Ward, Duchy of Lancaster Liberty; PRO SP 28 162, St Giles Cripplegate

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The exclusion of the City from the second weekly assessment did not mean that it was exempt from further demands for money. In August a forced loan was imposed. Those inhabitants of the City who had been assessed towards the two last subsidies, voted by Parliament in 1641, were to pay fifty times their assessment, and provision was made to assess those who had not been assessed for the subsidies. Half the assessment was to be paid immediately and the other half within a month. As about £6,821 had been collected in the City on the two subsidies, Parliament could expect to receive perhaps as much as £170,000.⁴¹ In fact only just over £80,000 was collected, and the money came in slowly. By the end of November 1643 only £32,655 16s 8d had been 'lent' by Londoners. An additional £31,260 had been raised by end of May 1644 and further sums trickled in until February 1648.⁴²

In September 1643 a further levy of £14,000 was imposed on the suburbs to pay for a magazine, and for raising soldiers; £4,000 on Tower Hamlets, £6,000 on Westminster and the other Middlesex suburbs and £4,000 on Southwark.⁴³ Surviving accounts record the collection of the Magazine Money in the area under the Savoy militia sub-committee, which included Westminster and the Middlesex suburbs, except Tower Hamlets. A total of £4,689 16s 1d was collected, about seventy eight per cent of the assessment. Of this about forty six per cent came from Westminster. Though this sounds impressive, the money was sometimes slow to come in; in one part of St Margaret Westminster £169 4s was paid on an assessment of £232 17s, but it took until 21 June 1645 for the total to be paid to the treasurers. By the end of March 1644 only about £120 had been paid in, just over half the assessment, some seven months after the passage of the Ordinance.⁴⁴ In Southwark the collection of magazine money was much less effective; £140 was placed on St Thomas Southwark of which £31 was assessed on the Hospital, but again abated by order of Parliament. Of the remaining £109 only £44 12s 6d was collected, only slightly over forty per cent. This suggests that Parliamentary direct taxation became less successful in the latter part of 1643.⁴⁵

In March 1644 two new taxes were introduced in London. A monthly assessment for four months was passed to raise money for Essex's Army. London was assessed at £6,962 4s per month, of which £5,400 was to come from the City. This was substantially

bundle, account of collectors of the second weekly assessment; PRO SP 28 164 1, ff. 179-88; GL MS. 9680, St Katherine by the Tower Constables Accounts, 1598-1706, f. 73.

⁴¹ *Firth & Rait*, i, 251-3; PRO SP 28 170, Accounts of the Treasurers for Two entire subsidies, f. 2.

⁴² CLRO MS. 386A, i, f. 16; ii, f. 23v; iii, ff. 18, 18v, 19.

⁴³ *Firth & Rait*, i, 267-71.

⁴⁴ PRO SP 28 164 3, ff. 600-602; PRO SP 28 162, Account of collectors in part of St Margaret Westminster for Magazine Money, in bundle entitled 'London, various wards, mostly Scot's Army'.

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lower than the assessments of 1643, but at the end of August substantial arrears were owing, only £16,024 7s 4d had been collected, about fifty eight per cent of the assessment. A high proportion of the assessment had been paid in the area under the Savoy militia sub-committee, £2,100, which was nearly eighty six per cent of what had been assessed, but in the City only fifty six per cent, £12,308 4s 6d, had been collected. In Southwark and the Tower Hamlets the situation was even worse, in both cases less than half the assessment had been paid. In early October £9,700 was still uncollected. Parliament ordered that £9,000 of the arrears should be paid to Sir Walter Earle, the Lieutenant of the Ordinance, but he only received £2,000, and a further Ordinance, passed on 26 December 1644, states that very little of the arrears had been received.⁴⁶

The other new tax was the weekly meal money. Every household in London, except those receiving poor relief, was to pay a sum equivalent to what they spent on one meal every week for six months towards the upkeep of the auxiliary Trained Bands. In Westminster and the Middlesex suburbs, excluding Tower Hamlets, a total of £4,068 1s 8d was assessed for the weekly meal, of which slightly over half was assessed on Westminster.⁴⁷ It is not clear how much the weekly meal was intended to raise in the City, but in one ward, Bassishaw, the assessment totalled £7 15s 6d per week, or £186 12s for the full six months, which can be compared with the assessment for Essex's Army which came to £66 per month, or £264 for the full four months. In contrast, in St Sepulchre Without, in the suburbs, the whole assessment for the six months was £120 16s compared with £122 5s for the four month's assessment, which suggests that the weekly meal fell more heavily on the poorer, more populous, parts of London than the monthly assessment.⁴⁸ When the editor of The Moderate Intelligencer attacked the excise in 1646 for penalising large, hard working, households, he compared it to the weekly meal.⁴⁹

The evidence from the suburbs suggests that the weekly meal was not successful. An account of receipts by one of the officials of the Savoy militia sub-committee records payments of only about £14,068 19s 2d, not much more than a third of the sum assessed. In one division of Clement Danes in the Liberty of Westminster, generally an area where a high proportion of the taxes were paid, nearly half the assessment was uncollected by July 1645. In the Liberties of Saffron Hill and Ely Rents in Holborn, about a third of the assessment had still not been collected a year after the Ordinance had officially expired. In Southwark the weekly meal was more successful. In St Thomas Southwark £59 14s 10d

⁴⁵ PRO SP 28 179 St Thomas's Southwark Parish Account, f. 47.

⁴⁶ CJ III, 619; CSPD 1644-5, 10; Firth & Rait, i, 581.

⁴⁷ Firth & Rait, i, 398-405, 405-9; PRO E 179 253 12, ff. 11-12.

⁴⁸ PRO E 179 253 12, ff. 11-12; GL MS. 3505, Bassishaw Deputy's Book, ff. 80, 80v.

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was collected out of an assessment of £76 12s, more than three quarters of the assessment. In St Saviours Southwark only £5 7s 6d remained uncollected out of an original assessment of £65 16s.⁵⁰

In September 1644 a new weekly assessment was levied to raise money for the army in Ireland, initially for twelve months, but later extended until October 1646. London was assessed at £300 a week, Westminster and Middlesex at £125, and Surrey and Southwark at £83 6s 8d. The over assessment of London that characterised the first weekly assessment was absent from this one, whereas in 1643 London's assessment was more than eight times higher than that of Essex, in September 1644 London's assessment was less than twice as high.⁵¹

The receipts on the assessments for the Army in Ireland are not fully documented, but, of the £7,200 assessed on the City for the first six months of the weekly assessment, all but £1,962 1s 7½d was paid. The arrears from a similar period in 1646 were £1,332 18s 9d. This indicates that about three quarters of the assessment was collected, which, as the total assessment on the City for the full two years came to £28,800, suggests that about £21,600 was collected in total.⁵² A further £6,570 was collected in Middlesex in the first eighteen months of the assessment.⁵³

From the beginning of November 1644 a monthly assessment of £6,692 2s was imposed for six months to fund the fortifications, of which £5,482 10s 3d was placed on the City. In February 1645 a further monthly assessment was introduced for the New Model Army, initially for ten months, later extended for another ten. London and Middlesex was rated at £8,059 15s: £5,800 per month was placed on the City, £356 Westminster and £1,245 on Ossulston hundred, which contained the Middlesex suburbs. From the beginning of March yet another monthly assessment began for the Scottish forces, this time for four months. For the Scottish army the City was rated at £2,195 4s and Middlesex and Westminster at £1,095 2s.⁵⁴

The City was underassessed for the New Model Army in comparison with Essex

⁴⁹ BL E334(2), *The Moderate Intelligencer*, No. 59, 16-23 April 1646, 406.

⁵⁰ PRO SP 28 166 Accounts of John Frampton for the Savoy Militia sub-committee; Account of the collectors for the weekly meal in part of St Clement Danes in the Liberty of Westminster; PRO SP 28 163, Account of the collectors for the weekly meal in the Liberties of Saffron Hill and Ely Rents; PRO SP 28 179, St Thomas Southwark Parish Account, f. 51; PRO SP 28 180 260, St Saviour Southwark Parish Account.

⁵¹ *Firth & Rait*, i, 531, 747, 849. Essex's proportion of the assessment for Ireland was £187 10s, its proportion for the first weekly assessment was £1,125. *Ibid.* 86, 531.

⁵² PRO SP 28 162, 'London ptclr. instructions & c' in 'Misc. Central Admin. papers' bundle.

⁵³ PRO SP 28 162, 'Midd. ptclr instructions & c' in 'Misc. Central Admin. papers' bundle.

⁵⁴ *Firth & Rait*, i, 574-78, 615, 631; PRO SP 28 170, Account of Receipts from the New Model Army Assessment in London, Westminster, and Middlesex.

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(assessed at £6,750), probably because at this time London was also burdened by the monthly assessment for fortifications. From March 1645 there were four different direct taxes running concurrently in London. In the City the combined total was £14,677 14s 3d a month, of which less than half was towards the New Model Army.⁵⁵

Of the £116,000 assessed on the City for the twenty months of the New Model Army Ordinances, about £92,350 was paid. In Middlesex and Westminster about £40,054 was collected on the twenty months of the New Model Army assessments, of which Westminster contributed £7,264 16s 7d, about eighteen per cent of the total. Most of the receipts in Middlesex came from the hundreds of Ossulston and Isleworth where a total of £24,047 14s was collected. This may be because Ossulston included the Middlesex suburbs, but a further reason is probably that it also included the rural parishes closest to London where the country houses of the wealthy London merchants were situated.⁵⁶

The assessment for the Scottish Army was only renewed once, for a further four months, in August 1645. These assessments were less successful than those for the New Model Army. Only about a third of the total assessment on the two ordinances, £5,951 18s 6d, was collected in the City, and £4,716 4s 8d, about fifty four per cent, was collected in Middlesex and Westminster.⁵⁷

The monthly assessment for the New Model Army and the weekly assessment for the army in Ireland expired in October 1646, which meant that at the beginning of 1647 no regular direct national taxation was officially in force in London. Although an Ordinance to raise a monthly assessment for the forces in England and Ireland was introduced to run from 25 March 1647, it was not finally passed by the Lords until the following June. It was originally voted for a year, but the period from 25 September to 25 December was remitted, so only nine months were due to be paid. It was subsequently renewed until March 1649.⁵⁸

Unlike the original monthly assessment for the New Model Army the new assessment covered the whole of the country. As a result, although the national total was higher, £60,000 per month, less was demanded of London: £3,907 19s 2¹/₂d a month for the City and £1,521 17s 9d for Middlesex and Westminster, making a combined total of £5,429 16s 10¹/₂d. The City's assessment was still lower than that imposed on Essex, which was £4,547 9s 5d. The City's proportion of the national total, about 6.5 per cent,

⁵⁵ Firth & Rait, i, 615.

⁵⁶ PRO SP 28 170, Account of assessments for the New Model Army in London and Middlesex; on the importance of Londoners in the assessment in rural Middlesex see the letter from Middlesex sub-committee for accounts to the Committee for Taking the Accounts of the Kingdom, 1 January 1646, PRO SP 28 256, unfol.

⁵⁷ PRO E 351 1966.

⁵⁸ LJ VII 541-2; Gentles, New Model Army, 29, 30, 454, n. 18.

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was still higher than her share of the population, but may not have been higher than her share of the wealth of the nation.⁵⁹

A total of £72,064 5s 7d was collected in the City for the full twenty one months of the £60,000 assessment, this is nearly eighty eight per cent of the assessment but is probably less than the amount raised from the first weekly assessment. Additionally £28,831 2s 1¹/₂d was collected in Middlesex, but it is difficult to say exactly how much was collected in Westminster as the ledger records only the total received from Middlesex as a whole for the final six months. However in the six months from 25 March 1648 a total of £8,304 11s 9d was collected in Middlesex of which £1,463 6s, about eighteen per cent, was collected in Westminster. As £8,286 13s 3d was collected in Middlesex in the final six months, the proportion collected in Westminster can be estimated at about £1,460, and the total collected in Westminster on the £60,000 assessment can be estimated at about £3,170. If this is accurate then total collected was higher than that for the first weekly assessment, but the latter tax covered a much shorter time span. All of this suggests that the tax burden was considerably less in the latter 1640s than in 1643.⁶⁰

In Southwark about £6,702 was collected on the New Model Army assessment Ordinances and the £60,000 monthly assessment. It has not been possible to establish the size of Southwark's assessment, as it was assessed with Surrey in the Ordinances. A further £2,013 was collected in Surrey and Southwark on the first four months assessment for the Scottish Army, and £1,776 on the second.⁶¹

In February 1648 an additional assessment of £20,000 per month was introduced for the forces in Ireland, for one year. The City's assessment was £1,302 13s 1¹/₄d, and Middlesex and Westminster, £507 5s 11d. In the City about £14,234 was collected, and a further £5,723 in Middlesex.⁶² With the establishment of the Commonwealth a single consolidated monthly assessment was introduced, set at £90,000 per month. For the first three months, from 25 March 1649, the City was to pay £5,800 a month and Middlesex and Westminster £2,282 16s 7¹/₂d, but subsequently the burden was redistributed, in London the assessment was raised to £6,000 and in Westminster and Middlesex to £2,300.⁶³ About £33,634 was collected in the City on the first six months of the £90,000 assessment, ninety five per cent of the total due.⁶⁴ A further £23,138 19s 3d was raised by the reassessment and sequestration of the accumulated arrears on the army assessments in

⁵⁹ *Firth & Rait*, i, 958-84.

⁶⁰ PRO E 101 67 11A, ff. 80, 96, 100v, 112, 113v; PRO E 179 143 326

⁶¹ PRO E 101 67 11A, ff. 29, 51v, 67, 83v, 96v, 100v; PRO SP 46 106 313.

⁶² *Firth & Rait*, i, 1072, 1704; PRO E 360 208, f. 288.

⁶³ *Firth & Rait*, ii, 27, 28, 52.

⁶⁴ PRO SP 28 162, 'London ptclr. instructions & c' in 'Misc. Central Admin. papers' bundle.

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London.⁶⁵ This suggests that at the end of the decade the burden of direct taxation was rising in London. It is noticeable that after the redistribution the municipality began to argue that it was overassessed, especially compared to the suburbs. The absence of such complaints between 1643 and the Commonwealth period suggests that the City's proportion of taxes in those years was not disproportionate.⁶⁶

The total direct taxes collected on Parliament's Ordinances in the 1640s in the City was at least £490,728. As this excludes receipts from the Twentieth Part after the middle of 1643, the weekly meal and the fortification money, the total was probably over half a million pounds. Estimating the amount received in the suburbs is more difficult, but it was almost certainly substantially less than receipts in the City. In Westminster receipts were at least £24,647 and probably much more, as this excludes what was received on the Twentieth Part. In Southwark receipts on the major assessments, the first assessments for the Twentieth Part, the first weekly assessment, the monthly assessment of 1644 and the assessments for the Army from 1645 to 1648 came to about £13,078. In total, receipts from direct taxation in London the 1640s totalled at least £600,000 but probably not more than about three quarter of a million pounds, although it should be emphasised that this figure is very speculative. Nevertheless in the period from 1643 to 1650 it may have amounted to little more than £100,000 per year.⁶⁷

If the above totals for the receipts of direct taxes in London are correct, then they suggest that the burden of direct taxation may not have been as great as in other parts of the country controlled by Parliament. Alan Everitt estimated that the yield from the assessment in Kent was about £570,000 between 1644 and 1651, which as Kent was considerably less populous, suggests that per capita the burden of taxation in London may have been significantly lower than in Kent. In other parts of the country the receipts from direct taxation were considerably less than in London and Kent. Ann Hughes suggested that, in Warwickshire, receipts from direct taxation between February 1643 and August 1646 were over £100,000 and may have been as much as £150,000, but the inhabitants also suffered from the burden of free quarter, and many parts of Warwickshire also had to pay royalist taxes, two burdens from which London did not suffer.⁶⁸

The figures for the total receipts on Parliament's assessment Ordinances can be misleading,

⁶⁵ PRO E 101 67 11A, f. 113v.

⁶⁶ CLRO Jour. 41, ff. 46v, 89-v, 110.

⁶⁷ The total receipts from the various forms of Parliamentary taxation are tabulated in an appendix to this chapter, see p. 91 below.

⁶⁸ A. Everitt, The Community of Kent and the Great Rebellion, 1640-1660, (Leicester, 1966), 159; A. Hughes, Politics, Society and Civil War in Warwickshire, 1630-1660, (Cambridge, 1987), 157, 188.

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until the pattern of payment over time is established. Direct taxation in London was rigorously enforced both at the beginning, in 1643, and at the end of the decade, when pressure was brought to bear by the Parliamentary authorities. This can be seen in the timing of receipts. In the City precincts of Old Jewry and Lothbury in Colemanstreet ward in 1645, £338 was paid for the New Model Army assessment, compared with £700 paid on the weekly assessment up to July 1643. In the following year the total was slightly less, £331. In 1647 the total fell to £112 18s 4d, nothing was paid in between 1 February and 2 September and subsequently only small amounts were paid until the end of the year. In 1648 the amount paid in increased to about £559, and large sums came in on the first collections of the four month's assessment and the £60,000 in the early part of the year. Subsequently little came in until towards the end of the year. In 1649 the total increased again to £819, and this excludes the sums collected on the £90,000 per month assessment.⁶⁹

A similar pattern may be detected in the suburbs. In Southwark £1,883 was collected on the monthly assessment for the New Model Army in 1645, compared with receipts on the first assessment of the Twentieth Part of £3,000. The total fell to £1,393 in 1646 and £570 in 1647 but then rose to £1,093 10s 9d in 1648. The burden of direct taxation was high in 1643, subsequently fell, but reached a new peak at the end of the decade.⁷⁰

During the second half of the 1640s the collection of the assessments became very slow and considerable arrears accumulated, until the occupation of the City by the army led to a major drive to collect the arrears in the early part of 1649. The delays in payment of the assessments are shown in the account of arrears in the City for the New Model Army prepared in August 1647. The first Ordinance, for ten months, was about three quarters paid. However nearly two thirds of the total assessment was still owing on the six months assessment of the second Ordinance, and the final four months assessment had not even been assessed.⁷¹

In the suburbs and Westminster, the weekly and monthly assessments were administered by assessors and collectors appointed by the committees. Traditional local officers had very little to do with the administration of taxation.⁷² In contrast in the City the

⁶⁹ PRO E 101 67 11A, ff. 12, 39, 58, 74, 88, 106; PRO SP 28 170, Account of the Weekly Assessment in the Wards of London; PRO SP 19 49, ff. 70-9.

⁷⁰ PRO E 101 67 11A, ff. 29-v, 51v, 67, 83v, 100v.

⁷¹ CLRO Jour. 40, f. 257v. According to the Ordinances the 6 month assessment should have begun in December 1645 and the four month assessment from the beginning of the following June.

⁷² J. Morrill, The Revolt of the Provinces, Conservatives and Radicals in the English Civil War, 1630-1650, (1976), 79; Braddick, Parliamentary Taxation, 136.

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weekly and monthly assessments were, to a considerable degree under the control of the municipality. Until 1645, Parliament usually appointed the Court of Aldermen to act as the assessment committee for the City. For the New Model Army assessment Parliament appointed a committee of individual members, but its active membership was dominated by senior aldermen.⁷³ The assessments were made by the Common Councillors of each ward and those they appointed to help them. The Common Councillors also probably nominated the collectors. They also played a key part in the fifty subsidies and the weekly meal assessments. It is likely that the administration of the assessment was, therefore, tailored to meet the needs of the City elites.⁷⁴

Ian Gentles has argued that high arrears on the monthly assessment for the New Model Army in London, was a sign of growing opposition to the Army. This may be partly true, but it is evident that high arrears were also a feature of other assessments. Virtually no money was received from the weekly assessment for the army in Ireland, in London in the first six months of the Ordinance, and by the end of May 1646, three quarters of the monthly assessment in the City for the Scots Army was still in arrears. The evidence suggests that when Parliament introduced direct taxation it took considerable trouble to see that it was effectively implemented, but in later years this vigour wore off, leaving the London authorities to their own devices. This led to rising problems of arrears until the growing financial demands of the army forced Parliament to take direct steps again to ensure adequate collection of taxes at the end of the decade.⁷⁵

In February 1648 the Goldsmiths' Hall Committee wrote to the municipality complaining that the City had the highest arrears of assessments. They blamed the negligence of the assessment commissioners, particularly in failing to proceed against those who had failed to pay their assessments. There is some corroborating evidence for these allegations, for example the second four month's assessment for the Scottish Army was only assessed in the ward of Bassishaw, after receipt of a Lord Mayor's precept, dated 5 January 1646.⁷⁶

Nevertheless this criticism of the City authorities needs to be treated sceptically. They were willing to put considerable pressure on even the most privileged tax payers to collect arrears. In the second half of the 1640s the Court of Assistants of the Vintners' considered that their company was much too indebted to pay any taxes and was in any case

⁷³ Firth & Rait, i, 93, 399, 546, 574, 620, 636. For the active members of the New Model Army assessment committee see PRO SP 28 30, f. 253; PRO SP 28 33, f. 318; PRO SP 28 46, f. 65.

⁷⁴ CCAM, i, 234; CLRO Jour. 41, f. 4v; CLRO Minutes of Common Hall, i, f. 153v, 224; Firth & Rait, i, 252, 406, 1145-6.

⁷⁵ Gentles, New Model Army, 196; CSPD 1644-5, 360, 385; CCCD, i, 39, 82.

⁷⁶ CCCD, i, 39, 82; GL MS. 3505, Bassishaw Deputy's Book, f. 86v.

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over-assessed, but in April 1646 the Master informed the Court that he and the Wardens were in danger of being imprisoned unless the taxes the company owed, and in particular the assessment for the New Model Army, were paid. It is unlikely that any Londoners were better treated than the leading officers of one of the twelve great companies.⁷⁷

Many important members of the municipality had a vested interest in the collection of taxes, as they were frequently also treasurers and creditors to Parliament. All but three of the Court of Aldermen advanced money on the £80,000 loan to finance the New Model Army in early 1645. Thomas Adams, Lord Mayor 1645-6, was one of the treasurers at war and had £5,250 of his own money invested in the Army.⁷⁸ Most of the initiatives for dealing with the problems of arrears in the City in the later part of the war, principally consisting of the establishment and empowering of the City arrears committee, came from the municipality.⁷⁹

Complaints were made that, in London, the assessments were very unequal, and that the rich escaped lightly. A petition presented to the Common Council in April 1645 stated that 'assessments are made very unequal, whereby the Taxes laid on the City are made burthensome, and paid with much repining'.⁸⁰ In the following month similar complaints came from a more moderate source when John Dillingham, the middle party editor of The Moderate Intelligencer, argued that if the assessment for the New Model Army was imposed equitably then it would be possible to collect it quickly. In December 1648 he complained that those worth £100 were assessed at the same level as those worth £1,000.⁸¹

In April 1649, after the Common Council had been purged of political Presbyterians and royalists, certain Common Councillors of the City complained that the assessments had not been made fairly, and many poor people were over burdened. When the new Common Councillors for Walbrook ward came to make the assessment for the arrears, they found that in the previous assessments for the Army, real estate had either not been assessed at all, or only at a very low level. They also alleged that the previous assessors had underrated both themselves, and the wealthy of the ward, and the less well off had been overrated. In the following July, the assessment commissioners argued with the Common Council over claims by the commissioners that the assessments for the £90,000 had not been made

⁷⁷ GL MS. 15201-4, Vintners' Company, Court Minutes, 1638-1658, f. 207.

⁷⁸ PRO SP 28 350 5, part 2.

⁷⁹ CLRO Jour. 40, ff. 81, 86v, 92, 107, 117, 175.

⁸⁰ J. Lilburne, 'England's Birth right Justified', reprinted in W. Haller, (ed.), Tracts on Liberty in the Puritan Revolution, (3 vols., New York, 1933-4), iii, 280.

⁸¹ BL E284(6), The Moderate Intelligencer, No. 11, 8-15 May 1645, 85; BL E476(24), The Moderate Intelligencer, No. 195, 7-14 Dec. 1648, unpag.

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fairly. The Common Councillors were elected annually by the freemen of their ward, who constituted the majority of the householders, and although this does not guarantee that the allegations of inequality in rating were false, it does suggest that the rating system had considerable support in the City.⁸²

The principal factors which hampered the effective prosecution of direct taxation in the 1640s were economic. In June 1644 the Court of Aldermen decided that, although the municipality was very short of money, this could not be remedied from the City's local tax, the fifteen, because many wealthy men had left the City, and those inhabitants who remained were increasingly impoverished.⁸³ The collection of tithes was disrupted during the war, as were other local rates.⁸⁴ The decline in receipts from taxation is evident in the accounts of the Act for £400,000. In the City the first part of the tax, collected in May 1642, brought in more than eighty per cent of the assessment, but the second part, which was collected in the following December, receipts fell to forty five per cent.⁸⁵

The economic problems afflicting London taxpayers made vigorous collection politically divisive. One of the key problems in the collection of assessments in London was the reluctance of collectors to distrain the goods of their neighbours who refused to pay the assessment. In December 1642 it was reported to the Committee for Advance of Money that collectors of the Twentieth Part feared the ill will of their neighbours, particularly the wealthy who might crush them. The reluctance to distrain was identified as a major reason for the arrears of the assessment for the New Model Army as early as August 1645. In the second half of the 1640s cases began to crop up in the Middlesex Session records of assaults on collectors, but the major problem was that collectors feared that the unpopularity involved in vigorous collection of the taxes would have adverse effects on their trade.⁸⁶

In the later 1640s the collectors may have been increasingly unable to rely on the support of local officers. In 1647, one of the constables in Clerkenwell was accused of assaulting a collector and rescuing goods taken for distress. In early 1648 similar accusations were made against one of the headboroughs of St Katherine Precinct in the eastern suburbs.⁸⁷ For the magistrates the opposition directed against Parliamentary taxation

⁸² BL E550(33), A Declaration of the well affected Common Council-men of the City of London, (1649), 1-3; CLRO Jour. 41, ff. 3, 4v, 5.

⁸³ CLRO Rep. 57 1, f. 141.

⁸⁴ M. Mahony, 'Presbyterianism in the City of London, 1645-1647', HJ, 22, (1979), 96-98.

⁸⁵ PRO SP 28 162, Account of the Treasurers of the Act for £400,000; CLRO Jour. 39, f. 309; CLRO Minutes of the Common Hall, i, ff. 15, 15v.

⁸⁶ CCAM, i, 8; BL 669 f. 9 (41), An Order of the London Assessment Committee, (1645); GLRO MJ SR 956 119, 962 119 963 127, 970 50; BL E520(8), Perfect Occurrences, No. 47, 19-26 Nov. 1647, 314.

⁸⁷ GLRO MJ SR 1000 69, 1011 157.

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could have a detrimental affect on their own authority. In October 1647 Jane Wright of Charterhouse Yard, and her son John, were bound over for assaulting the collectors of the assessment for the New Model Army, for reviling the headborough when he came to serve a warrant from the Justice of the Peace, for saying they cared not for Justice, and for behaving 'uncivilly' before the Justice of the Peace when they were brought before him. Opposition to taxes could be a problem in particular for the Common Councillors in the City who stood for re-election every year.⁸⁸

In 1643 the political problems involved in raising taxation were over ridden by vigorous direction from Parliament. The Committee for Advance of Money played a central role in the enforcement of taxation in London in the early part of the war. Though it is not mentioned in the original Ordinance for the assessing of the Twentieth Part in London, the Committee quickly started to intervene to ensure that the Ordinance was properly enforced.⁸⁹ The committee solved the problem of distraint by appointing new 'distraining' collectors who were assigned to wards other than where they lived. Additionally Parliament ordered regular soldiers to assist in the collections.⁹⁰ The new collectors were more effective than the old. Whereas the original collectors in Colemanstreet ward certified that they could find no goods to distrain in Sir Richard Gurney's house, the new collectors were able to find goods, which they sold for £113.⁹¹

When the weekly assessment was imposed, the Commons ordered the Committee for Advance of Money to oversee the execution of the Ordinance in the City. The Committee was given the power to call the assessors and collectors before them and demand accounts of their actions. The Committee again appointed 'distraining' collectors who, like those appointed to levy the arrears of the Twentieth Part, were sent to wards other than those where they lived. On 13 May 1643, the Committee for Advance of Money ordered the collectors of the weekly assessment in the City, to go round the houses of those who had been assessed, and urge them to pay their whole three months' assessment in one instalment.⁹²

Parliament gave considerable attention to the collection of the weekly assessment in the suburbs. On 6 April 1643 the Commons ordered the assessment books from the suburbs to be sent to the Committee for Advance of Money, which was to arrange for the use of force to levy the arrears. On the 18th the Commons ordered the Committee for Examinations to send the Trained Bands to assist the collectors in levying arrears. The

⁸⁸ GLRO MJ SR 1004 190.

⁸⁹ Firth & Rait, i, 38-40; CCAM, i, 2, 8, 12.

⁹⁰ CCAM, i, 8; PRO SP 19 1, f. 92; Firth & Rait, i, 77-79.

⁹¹ PRO SP 19 48, ff. 67v-68; PRO SP 19 49, ff. 32v-33.

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Commons frequently acted directly to order the imprisonment of individuals in the suburbs who abused the collectors and refused to pay, and gave orders for the use of the Trained Bands in the suburbs in support of the collectors.⁹³ On 13 March the Venetian ambassador reported that parliamentary taxation was 'imposed and raised daily with the help of paid troops, who sack the houses and shops of everything without any reference to the amount due'.⁹⁴

Although the Committee for Advance of Money was involved in the enforcement of the fifty subsidies in the autumn of 1643, subsequently it mostly concerned itself with the Twentieth Part. A further factor probably contributing to the difficulties in executing the assessment Ordinances may have been the lack of regular soldiers in London. Randal Manwaring's regiment was based in London during 1643, and soldiers from it were deployed to help to collect taxes. It moved away in January 1644, and was not replaced until 1645, when another regular regiment was raised, which was only used to man the fortifications, not enforce taxation. Military force was very important in collecting taxes in other parts of the country. Clive Holmes estimated that, in the Isle of Ely, twenty one per cent of assessments for the Eastern Association was collected by troopers. In Dorset, the County Committee was able to respond to rising arrears on the £60,000 monthly assessment in early 1648 by billeting soldiers on those who refused to pay. Fairfax sent Hewson's regiment to quarter in the City in November 1647 but the Commons ordered that it be recalled.⁹⁵

In April 1646 a meeting of the army committee attended by several of the treasurers at war, including the Lord Mayor, Thomas Adams, appointed two men to be assistants to the London collectors in levying distresses, but relations between the assistants and the collectors were not good and the assistants proved ineffective.⁹⁶ In November 1647 the Common Council requested that Parliament appoint distraining collectors, like those appointed by the Haberdashers' Hall Committee in 1643. They wanted the army committee to sit in the City to supervise the collections, but these suggestions were not taken up.⁹⁷

The continued accumulation of arrears forced the Commons to intervene directly in the collection of assessments in the City. On 7 October 1648 they ordered the London

⁹² PRO SP 19 1, ff. 109, 145; CCAM, i, 17-18, 20.

⁹³ CJ III, 23, 26, 27, 31-2, 38, 43, 49.

⁹⁴ CSPV, 1642-3, 252.

⁹⁵ L. C. Nagel, 'The Militia of London 1641-1649', (Unpublished PhD thesis University of London 1982), 85-6, 231-2; C. Holmes, The Eastern Association in the English Civil War, (1974), 139; C. H. Mayo, (ed.), The Minute Book of the Dorset Standing Committee, 23rd September 1646 to 8th May 1650, (Exeter, 1902), 352; Gentles, New Model Army, 226.

⁹⁶ PRO SP 16 514 7; PRO SP 28 41, f. 60.

⁹⁷ CLRO Jour. 40, f. 260.

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sequestration committee to proceed against nineteen individuals, including the Chamberlain, Gilbert Harrison, for their failure to pay their assessments, and they also ordered the imprisonment of collectors of Walbrook, Candlewick and Dowgate wards for failure to pay over money they had collected to the treasurers.⁹⁸

After Pride's Purge the army occupied the City, insisting that they would not leave until the arrears had been paid. Not surprisingly, this spurred the municipality into tackling the problem. The result was the reassessment of the arrears. Aldermen and Common Councillors from each ward agreed to become bound to the treasurers at war for the payment of the arrears levy. In May 1649 the Common Council ordered that the names of those who refused to pay their assessments be returned to the agent for the Army Committee, who was to pass the names on to officers of the army who would obtain the arrears. In 1649 Robert Abbot paid his assessment much more promptly than he had previously, though still somewhat late. He paid his assessment for the first three months of the £90,000 to Midsummer 1649 on 19 July, the Michaelmas quarter's tax on 20 October, and the quarter ending 29 December only two days later on 31 December.⁹⁹

Jeremy Boulton has argued that the assessments imposed on Southwark in the Civil War reached a greater proportion of the population than previous taxes. He calculated that forty three per cent of Boroughside inhabitants were assessed towards the weekly assessment in 1643 compared with 30.7 per cent for the poor rate and only 15.5 per cent for the subsidy.¹⁰⁰ There is some evidence that in other parts of London the assessment reached a larger part of the population than previous taxes. For example Mrs Gardiner of Moorfields was assessed for the weekly assessment in 1643 although she was described as 'fitter to receive relief than pay any rate'. To establish how typical cases like this were, a detailed study of the assessment in one ward in Westminster was conducted.¹⁰¹ In the Palace Ward of St Margaret Westminster 199 households were assessed in the 1641 poll tax. Of those ninety two, or about forty six per cent, were also assessed on the poor roll. In 1645, excluding the shops in Westminster Hall, 178 households were assessed in the ward. As in Southwark, parliamentary assessments in Westminster reached more people than previous taxes and rates.¹⁰²

⁹⁸ CJ VI, 46.

⁹⁹ CLRO Rep. 59, f. 323; CLRO Jour. 40, ff. 310v-311, 319v; GL MS. 2931, Robert Abbott's Account Book, 1646-1652, ff. 115, 139.

¹⁰⁰ J. Boulton, *Neighbourhood and Society: a London Suburb in the Seventeenth Century*, (Cambridge, 1987), 108, 116.

¹⁰¹ CCAM, i, 31.

¹⁰² PRO E 179 253 10; WAC E155 St Margaret Westminster Overseers' Accounts, 1641; WAC E1580 St Margaret Westminster Weekly, Assessment for the Army in Ireland, 1645.

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Parliamentary assessments need to be treated cautiously. Those for the suburbs were divided into two parts, the first part was for the personal estate of the householder and the second part for the rental value of the house. The Ordinances stated that assessments on rents were to be paid by the landlord if the property was let for its full market value. If the landlord failed to pay his share then it was to be paid by the tenant, who could then deduct it from the rent. Most of those assessed in Westminster were rated only for their rents; for example in an assessment made in 1648, for the £60,000 monthly assessment in Palace ward in St Margaret Westminster, forty nine people were assessed for their estates, whereas 169 people were assessed for their rents. To establish the true extent of the assessment it is, therefore, necessary to discover how many of the assessments on rents were payable by the landlord.¹⁰³

Generally it is impossible to establish whether the assessments on rents were paid by the landlord or the householder, but for the £90,000 monthly for three months from 29 September a different rate was set on the rents of 'outlandlords', the term used when the assessment was paid by an outside landlord, and 'inlandlords', who were householders who paid the rental part of the assessment themselves. Beside many of those rated for rents only, a small 'o' was written in the assessment book, which has been taken to signify that the assessment was placed on the 'outlandlord'. In Palace Ward, again excluding Westminster Hall, 177 were assessed in total, but of those, sixty, about one third, were only assessed for their landlord's rents, therefore in practice only 117 were assessed, not many more than the total who were assessed on the poor rates in 1641. This suggests that the assessment did not penetrate as far down the social scale as the assessments initially suggest, and that it did not significantly widen the taxpaying section of the population. A much larger proportion of the population were obliged to pay the weekly meal, which, as we have seen, was supposed to be assessed on all those not receiving poor relief, but this tax only lasted six months.¹⁰⁴

In the City, assessment rolls were made in a different way. They were divided into two parts, but here these were for the assessments on the householder and the 'outlandlords', although many 'outlandlords' were exempted from taxation because of their charitable status. The City hospitals were exempted from taxation by parliamentary ordinance, and the lands of the livery companies, the municipality, excluding the halls, and the parishes of London were exempted by order of the assessment commissioners. In practice, assessments fell on the 'inhabitants' rather than the 'outlandlords'. For example, in Bassishaw Ward, seventy four inhabitants were assessed at £32 per month for the New

¹⁰³ WAC E1583 St Margaret Westminster, Monthly Assessment, 1648.

¹⁰⁴ WAC E1587 St Margaret Westminster, Monthly Assessment, 1649.

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Model Army in 1645, whereas only forty six 'outlandlords' were assessed, totalling £17, and a further £9 was assessed on halls.¹⁰⁵

In the late 1640s assessments were changed in the City, and they came to resemble the pattern in Westminster. For the first assessment for the £90,000 per month on Bassishaw, ninety five inhabitants were assessed and 144 houses.¹⁰⁶ The housing belonging to the livery companies and the parishes was taxed. Up until 1648 the Clothworkers' Company accounts only record allowances for taxes deducted from their rents on properties outside the City, but from 1648-9 similar allowances for their City properties became a regular feature of the company's accounts, rising from £35 3s 2d in 1648-9 to £220 in 1650-1.¹⁰⁷

For much of the 1640s the impact of Parliamentary direct taxation was mitigated by the fact that, as enforcement was left to the locality, it was adapted to local conditions. It is, therefore, difficult to argue that direct taxation had a major impact on the London economy in the 1640s. Indeed economic difficulties may have been one of the causes of the problems with collection, as the municipality claimed. It was the economy which affected the real levels of taxation rather than the other way round, but 1643 and 1649, when the collection of taxation was backed up by intense pressure from the centre and military force, were years which may well have been exceptions to this rule.¹⁰⁸

(iii) The Excise

The most important new form of indirect taxation in the Civil War was the excise. The first excise Ordinance, passed in July 1643, was never implemented, instead a new Ordinance was passed in September with lower rates. The majority of the commodities taxed were imports, the exceptions were soap, beer, spirits and woollen cloth. The excise amounted to a five per cent tax on imports of groceries, drugs, mercery wares, silk fabrics, linen drapery, haberdasheries, paper, glass and earthen wares, leather and upholstered goods. The tax effectively doubled the customs rates.¹⁰⁹

The highest taxed commodity was wine, which was rated at £5 per tun, although this was a pound less than the original ordinance. The Vintners argued that the tax constituted a quarter of the wholesale price of wine, while the existing customs accounted for a further quarter. A subsequent Ordinance set the retail price on Spanish wines at 14d

¹⁰⁵ CLRO Minutes of Common Hall, i, f. 152v; GL MS. 3505, Bassishaw Deputy's Book, ff. 84v-85.

¹⁰⁶ GL MS. 3505, Bassishaw Deputy's Book, ff. 99v-101.

¹⁰⁷ CH, Wardens' Accounts, 1639-49; CH, Wardens' Accounts, 1649-58; GL MS. 4071 2, St Michael Cornhill, Churchwardens' Accounts, 1608-1702, f. 158v.

¹⁰⁸ CLRO Jour. 40, f. 255.

¹⁰⁹ Firth & Rait, i, 202-14, 274-83.

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per quart, and French wines at 8d a quart. The excise therefore constituted 8.5 per cent of the retail price of Spanish wine and nearly fifteen per cent of the price of French wine.¹¹⁰

In March 1644 the rates on tobacco were reduced to 1d per pound for customs, 2d excise for the produce of English plantations and 6d customs and 1s excise for all other tobacco.¹¹¹ The Ordinance stated that the tax should be paid by the first person to purchase the goods from the importer or from broker acting as intermediaries between the merchant and retailer, the latter category presumably referred to specialised domestic wholesalers. The excise therefore seems to have been intended to be paid by the retailer but in London the functions of domestic wholesaler and retailer do not seem to have become clearly distinguished, many London shopkeepers also supplied goods to country retailers and chapmen, indeed most wholesalers may still have been also retailers. The London vintners paid the excise on the wine they supplied to their country colleagues, and it seems safe to suppose that most other London shopkeepers in similar circumstances did likewise.¹¹²

The excise was more than an additional import duty, a rate of 6d in the pound was put on all woollen cloth produced for the domestic market, and up to 10d a firkin on home produced soap. The most important of the original domestic excises was that on beer and ale, which also seems to have suffered the highest rates. Beer and ale, costing 8s a barrel or above, was taxed at 2s a barrel. Domestic brewed beer was assessed at half that rate, but most strong beer consumed in London at this time was probably commercially produced. One contemporary tract estimated that 416,000 barrels of strong beer was sold in London per year compared with domestic production of 400,000. Beer valued up to 6s a barrel was rated at 6d the barrel, whether brewed commercially or not.¹¹³

In April 1643 the metropolitan magistrates had set rates of 10s per barrel for strong beer, 8s per barrel for the second sort, 6s for the third sort and 4s a barrel for small beer and ale. The brewers were allowed by the excise ordinance to add the rates to their prices, which they no doubt did, so the excise meant that the wholesale price of strong beer rose by twenty percent, the second sort by twenty five percent, the third sort by about eight percent and small beer by twelve and a half percent.¹¹⁴ The impact on the retail price of beer should, theoretically, not have been as great. Like the brewers, the retailers were allowed to add the excise to their prices, but they were expressly forbidden from raising their prices any

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.* 208, 275, 305; GL MS. 15201-4, Vintners' Company, Court Minutes, 1638-1658, ff. 132, 194.

¹¹¹ *Firth & Rait*, i, 361-2, 394-5.

¹¹² *Ibid.* 278; GL MS. 15201-4, Vintners' Company, Court Minutes, 1638-1658, f. 131.

¹¹³ *Firth & Rait*, i, 275-6, 277, 315-6; C. D. Chandman, *The English Public Revenue, 1660-1688*, (Oxford, 1975), 51; *London's Account*, 10.

¹¹⁴ *CMSB*, 1639-1644, 131; *CMSB*, 1644-1652, 20, 40, 90, 120.

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further.¹¹⁵

Subsequently the excise was extended to other domestic goods. Meat and salt was added to pay for the navy, all butchers were to pay five per cent of the value of all animals before they were slaughtered. In July it was extended further, all imports not formerly taxed were to pay five per cent, except foodstuffs, bullion and munitions, and a wide range of English goods were also taxed: Copperas, Monmouth caps, hats, Saffron, starch and tin were rated at five percent, alum, hops, wood, upholstery wares and silk goods not previously taxed, were assessed at two and a half percent. Subsequently herrings were added to pay for escorts for the fishing fleet. In November 1645, glass, gold, silver and copper wire and thread and oils made in England were added, and the rates on lead, silk and soap was increased. The excise on meat and salt was repealed in 1647, but Parliament moved quickly to declare that all the other duties were to continue as before.¹¹⁶

Critics claimed that the bureaucracy of the excise obstructed internal trade, and that the need to be sending constantly for tickets from the excise office and so forth, was in itself a burden on merchants and tradesmen. The vintners complained that, despite paying the excise when purchasing wine from the importers, when they sent deliveries to customers outside London their goods were seized by the officers of the excise, unless they obtained tickets from the excise office for each consignment first, which added to their expenses. It was also claimed that the excise discouraged people from stocking up, instead they only bought what they immediately needed.¹¹⁷

Unfortunately we have no detailed accounts of the excise from the first Civil War, the first account covers the period from September 1647 to September 1650. A total of £853,345 was received during this period, of which £487,656, fifty seven per cent, was collected in and around London. The average annual receipts in London would, therefore have been about £162,552. In comparison in the early 1660s the farm of the excise in London, Middlesex and Surrey was £118,000 per year, which given that the Restoration excise covered a much more limited range of goods, suggests that the excise was not efficiently collected in the 1640s.¹¹⁸

In August 1647 Parliament declared that the net receipts on the excise had been £1,334,532 10s 11¹/₂d, and that the cost of collection was only ten per cent of receipts. This suggests that the total gross receipts were about £1,467,986. Combined with the

¹¹⁵ Firth & Rait, i, 316.

¹¹⁶ Firth & Rait, i, 364, 466, 498-497, 806, 1004-7; LJ IX, 253.

¹¹⁷ BL 669 f. 15 (9), Several Particulars Shewing the many conveniences of receiving the imposition of the Excise at the Custom House, (1649); GL MS. 15201-4, Vintners' Company, Court Minutes, 1636-1658, ff. 137, 145, 146, 229.

¹¹⁸ PRO E 351 1295, ff. 3-15; Chandman, English Public Revenue, 54.

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receipts mentioned above, up to September 1650, the excise may have come to £2,321,330 in total. If it is assumed that the proportion of the receipts collected was constant, i.e. fifty seven per cent, then it can be estimated that about £1,323,158 was collected on the excise in London up to September 1650, or about £189,023 per year.¹¹⁹

The excise was the most successful of the Long Parliament's fiscal innovations in London, probably more productive than direct taxation. This fits oddly with the usual perception of the excise as a major source of disorder in the 1640s. Michael Braddick has recently warned us not to over estimate the unpopularity of the excise, arguing that much of the opposition came from opponents of the regime, who seized every opportunity to criticise Parliament, or from specific interest groups.¹²⁰

The preponderance of London in the receipts was not because the excise was more effectively enforced there, rather it was in large part because the excise amounted to an additional duty on imports and reflects London's role as a port. The majority of the receipts in London came from imported goods; receipts from the excise on imports of silk and linen textiles, grocery wares, drugs, wine, tobacco and saltery wares (the last included tar, pitch, hemp and tallow), came to £273,062, more than half the total receipts in London and nearly a third of all receipts. Ale, perry and cider account for only about a quarter of the receipts, £128,214 7s, in contrast to the rest of the country, where these items dominated receipts.¹²¹ To a lesser extent the receipts also reflect London's predominance in internal distribution of English manufactures, in 1647 over twice as much of the excise on woollen cloth was paid in London as in the rest of the country. This suggests that despite appearances the excise did not press more heavily on London than the rest of the country, most of the receipts were collected in London because that was where most of the trade in excisable goods took place, it is indeed possible that much of the costs of the excise was passed on by the London tradesmen to their provincial customers.¹²²

Complaints about the excise came from a very wide cross section of London's economy, petitions were present to Parliament by feltmakers, tobacco sellers, silkmen, goldwire drawers and refiners.¹²³ The agitation cannot be written off entirely as royalist inspired; the petition from the tobacco sellers was signed by a number of strong supporters of Parliament, including Alderman John Warner, his brother Samuel and Maximillian Bard.¹²⁴ However all the agitation was concerned with specific rates on commodities of

¹¹⁹ Firth & Rait, i, 1006.

¹²⁰ Braddick, Parliamentary Taxation, 178-83, 199.

¹²¹ PRO E 351 1295, f. 3; CJ VI, 380.

¹²² PRO SP 46 122B, f. 1.

¹²³ HMC Fifth Report, House of Lords MSS., 104, 118, 119; CJ, IV, 386-7, 389.

¹²⁴ HLRO House of Lords Main Papers, 23 12 43, Petition of Tobacco Traders in and around London.

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particular concern to the traders, not with the excise as a whole. Some of the complaints were against the way the excise was levied rather than the excise itself, the goldwire drawers and refiners were mostly concerned that it should be payable by the buyer rather than the manufacturer. It is important to distinguish whether the excise was the cause of economic problems or whether agitation focused on the excise as an easily identifiable grievance in a more general crisis.¹²⁵

The most vociferous of the early opponents of the excise were the vintners. As early as 9 June 1643, before the first Ordinance was passed, the Vintners' Company had set up a committee to consider the problem. By the end of the month the company had prepared petitions for both the Lords and the Commons, claiming that their trade could not possibly support a £6 per tun rate. On the 19 July a general meeting of retailers of wine in London declared that they could not possibly consent to any levy. Following the implementation of the excise a further committee was established which drew up a remonstrance which was presented to the commissioners for the new tax. Dissatisfied with the answer of the commissioners a petition was drawn up to be presented to Parliament which stated that, since the price rises which arose from the excise had been introduced, demand for wine had fallen so much they would soon have to abandon their trade. In the following April the Vintners' Company claimed that, since the introduction of the excise, demand for wine had fallen to less than a quarter of what it had been before and they drew up yet another petition to Parliament.¹²⁶

The discontent of the vintners was focused on their own trade and it became increasingly concerned with the level of the rates rather than the existence of the tax itself. They argued that their commodities were much more highly rated than those of others, and that a reduction would increase receipts because it would increase demand. By April 1644 their arguments had become focused on the rate on French wine in particular. Their discontent also became increasingly focused on administrative matters, issues such as the collection of tickets, the allowance of the full 252 gallons to the tun and the refusal of the excise officials to allow time for payment. Arguments about the rates only returned when they feared that increases were being contemplated. The Vintner's did not only attribute their economic difficulties to the excise, heavy direct taxation and the general economic climate were also blamed, indeed it is sometimes not clear whether they are arguing that the decline in their trade is the result of the excise or the cause of their inability to pay.¹²⁷

The most violent protest against the excise in London in the 1640s came from the

¹²⁵ *HMC Sixth Report, House of Lords MSS.*, 80.

¹²⁶ *GL MS. 15201 4, Vintners' Company, Court Minutes, 1636-1658*, ff. 118, 119, 127, 130-2, 144, 156.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.* ff. 130-1, 137, 144-6, 191, 229, 297, 300.

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butchers. On 15 February 1647 refusal to pay the excise on cattle in Smithfield market led to a major riot, during which a crowd, led by butchers, burnt down the excise office and destroyed its records. This does not necessarily mean that the excise had a major impact on the butchers' trade. The evidence from the company accounts suggests that their trade was recovering strongly in the immediate post war period, in the year to October 1646 fifty two apprentices were enrolled, compared to thirty one in the year 1643-4. In addition, in 1645-6 £7 5s 9d was collected for quarterage, only slightly less than in 1638-9 when £7 9s 3d was collected.¹²⁸

The excise riot was not the first time the butchers of Smithfield violently attacked Parliament's revenue officers, in July 1643 they had combined to assault and abuse the officers of the sequestration committee who had come to sequester oxen. It may also be significant that Smithfield market brought the butchers of London together to an extent which was probably not the case with other occupations. It gave the butchers the opportunity to engage in crowd activity specific to their occupation which other London trades did not possess.¹²⁹

The Brewers' Company also began campaigning against the excise in June 1643, and they renewed their protest in the summer of 1647, complaining that their margins were further reduced by great increases in the price of malt, presumably as a result of the bad harvests. The brewers alleged that their customers were refusing to pay the excise and, as a result, the brewers, who had to pay the excise before delivering the beer to their customers, were falling into arrears and were threatened with sequestration. Brewers who were in arrears were brought before the House of Commons, where they said that they would only pay what they owed when their customers paid them.¹³⁰

The butchers and brewers were in a different position to other London traders as they could argue that their products were necessities, and, as such, were less legitimate targets for taxation than 'superfluities'.¹³¹ It was the taxation of those necessary commodities which was the major concern of the critique of the excise expounded by the pro-Parliamentary newsbook The Moderate Intelligencer, that the excise penalised large households. The editor, John Dillingham, argued:

¹²⁸ M. J. Braddick, 'Popular Politics and Public Policy: The Excise Riot at Smithfield in February 1647 and its Aftermath', IJ, 34, (1991), 597; GL MS. 6440 2, Butchers' Company, Wardens' Accounts, 1593-1646, part 2, ff. 527v-529, 587v, 607v, 611-2. Unfortunately the next volume of accounts is missing.

¹²⁹ PRO SP 20 6, ff. 27v-28; Braddick, Parliamentary Taxation, 171.

¹³⁰ IJ, IX, 402; R. Ashton, Counter Revolution: The Second Civil War and its Origins, 1646-8, (New Haven, 1994), 72; GL MS. 5445 17, Brewers' Company, Court Minutes, 1642-52, unfol.; HMC Fifth Report, House of Lords MSS., 95; CJ V, 276, 283.

¹³¹ Braddick, 'Popular Politics and Public Policy', 608

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A man worth £40 or £50, and no more in all the world, hath three or four servants, seven or eight children, all these labour hard, and that gets good stomarcks, this occasions the master of the family to spend so much in beer, so much in flesh, and so much of other things; another man that is his neighbour, and is worth £1,000. He hath none but himself, wife and a man and a maid, these spend but two pence to the poor mans shilling, they of the Excise require twelve pence upon the poor man, and but a pence of the rich.¹³²

The agreement of the Brewers to enter into negotiations for a farm of the excise on beer and ale in London in 1650 is a sign of their admission that their campaign against the excise had failed. Although the excise was certainly unpopular in London, it proved much more difficult to avoid than the assessment. This was because most people paid indirectly, through the retailer, and only the shopkeepers or brewer had direct contact with the excise administration, and it was administered by paid employees of the state who were probably less susceptible to local pressure than those who administered the assessment.¹³³

Were the London tradesmen able to pass on the full cost of the excise to the consumer? Richard Grassby has argued that in the first half of the seventeenth century profit rates in business were generally between ten and fifteen per cent; it is therefore unlikely that tradesmen could absorb the cost of the excise without substantially reducing their profits.¹³⁴ Although Parliament took steps to try to ensure that price rises were kept to a minimum, they do not seem to have been successful. It was widely alleged that the prices of excised goods rose more than was necessary to pay the duty, and, at the time, it was widely believed that retailers were benefiting from the excise. As early as January 1644 the Commons was alarmed by rises in the price of beer, ale and soap.¹³⁵

When the market for a product remained buoyant in the 1640s the excise seems to have been easily accommodated, this suggests that although the excise must have had some impact on demand, it was not the primary determinant. This can be seen when the impact of the excises on beer and wine are compared. The evidence indicates that the brewers and beer retailers were able to pass on more than the full cost of the excise on to their consumers. The retail price of strong beer should not have risen by more than 18.75 per cent, but given the types of coin in circulation, the retailers could not add eighteen and three quarters percent to the price of a quart of ale, in practice they increased their prices by more

¹³² BL E334(2), The Moderate Intelligencer, No. 59, 16-23 April 1646, 406.

¹³³ Braddick, 'Popular Politics and Public Policy', 608; GL MS. 5445 17, Brewers' Company, Court Minutes, 1642-52, unfol.

¹³⁴ Grassby, Business Community, 240.

¹³⁵ CJ III, 304, 365; Firth & Rait, i, 305, 316; E. Hughes, Studies in Administration and Finance, 1558-1825, (Manchester, 1934), 124-5.

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than was strictly necessary to pay for the excise. In 1644 the Committee for Irish Affairs argued that, when the excise was first introduced, the 2s duty had amounted to two thirds of a farthing on a quart of beer, so the retailers increased their prices by a farthing, but after the farthing was taken out of circulation this became impossible so, according to the Committee, beer which had been retailed for six farthings was now being retailed for 2d, a rise of a quarter.¹³⁶

The claims of the committee are supported by a tract published in March 1646 which stated that the brewers and the beer retailers had put up their prices by significantly more than was necessary to pay for the excise, that the brewers were selling ordinary beer and ale at 12s, a barrel and strong beer at 16s the barrel, that retailers of beer were selling ordinary beer at 2d per ale quart, which amounts to over 21s per barrel, and at the same time strong beer was sold at 2d per wine quart, which amounted to 30s per barrel. The rising prices may only be the result of declining economic regulation during the Civil War, but in contrast the Vintners found it difficult to get their customers to accept the increases in prices authorised by Parliament and, in August 1644, they showed considerable concern in disciplining a member of their company who was found to be selling wine below the regulated price. The difference between the brewers and the vintners was that the demand for beer remained buoyant during the war years, but the demand for wine did not, despite the fact that both commodities were heavily taxed. This suggests that the excise in itself did not significantly reduce demand.¹³⁷

The protests of the brewers should, therefore, be taken with a large pinch of salt, for it is by no means clear that the London brewing industry suffered particularly badly in the Civil War. Enrolment of apprentices in the Brewers' Company did not decline significantly, and, in the year to August 1647, rose to the highest total for more than a decade. By this stage the London magistrates were becoming increasingly concerned to constrain beer production to mitigate the rising price of grain. The vigorous enforcement of price controls and crackdowns on unlicensed alehousekeepers, especially in the suburbs, may have been the real cause of the difficulties that the brewers experienced in trying to recover the cost of the excise from their customers. From 1647 the Brewers' records show a significant decline in the enrolment of apprentices, suggesting that their trade was depressed. The revival of the Brewers' agitation against the excise may therefore reflect the impact of the down turn in trade, again suggesting that agitation against the excise was more a reflection of general economic problems rather than evidence of the impact of the tax

¹³⁶ HMC Thirteenth Report, Portland MSS., i, 199.

¹³⁷ BL 669 f. 10 (43), T. A., A Declaration of severall Observations to the Reader, (1646); GL MS. 15201 4, Vintners' Company, Court Minutes, 1636-1658, ff. 131, 156.

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itself.¹³⁸

One critic of the excise wrote in the summer of 1648, that 'we find the sad effects of it at second hand, both in the impoverishing those customers we deale withall in Country Townes, and in the Dearth of all manner of victuals, which the country people must needs sell so much the dearer to us, as they receive from us our commodities at greater rate than formerly they were wont to do'. However blaming the dearth of the late 1640s on the excise is another example of criticism of the tax for wider political motives. It will be shown that domestic consumption increased very substantially in London in the immediate aftermath of the war, despite the excise.¹³⁹

The complaints of the vintners suggests that the excise had a major impact on the London economy, but there is good reason to believe that the wine trade was untypical of the London economy as a whole, a combination of high customs and high excise rates made wine the most heavily taxed commodity. The example of the brewers and beer retailers suggests that, where demand for a product remained strong, the excise could be easily absorbed within general price rises. The vintners themselves attributed their economic problems in large part to the general decline in trade resulting from the Civil War, and the evidence suggests that tavern keepers suffered a substantial decline in sales of food as well as wine. The opposition to the excise in London in the 1640s may be a symptom of wider economic problems rather than a direct reaction to its cause.¹⁴⁰

The predominance of London in the receipts from the excise, like the even greater predominance in the customs receipts, was a function of London's position within the national economy, rather than a sign that either tax weighed particularly heavily on London, indeed it seems likely that much of the cost of indirect taxation was passed on to the provinces in the form of higher prices. In practice it appears that the excise had relatively little impact on the London economy apart from exacerbating existing problems.

(iv) Customs

The first taxes to be levied by force of Ordinance of Parliament alone were the customs. Since May 1641 Parliament had passed a series of short-term Acts authorising the collection of the customs until the new book of rates, integrating tonnage and poundage and the impositions, was ready. By the summer of 1642 the new book of rates had been drawn up, and in June a new Act was passed by Parliament to implement it, but the King refused his

¹³⁸ GL MS. 5442 6, Brewers' Company, Wardens' Accounts, 1617-1653, unfol; CLRO Rep. 58 2, f. 8; BL E522(14), Perfect Occurrences, No. 66, 31 March-7 April, 1648, 469.

¹³⁹ BL E449(10), The necessity of speedy calling a Common Hall, (1648), 3.

¹⁴⁰ GL MS. 15201 4, Vintners' Company, Court Minutes, 1636-1658, ff. 132, 194; PRO C 24 697 28.

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assent, and the previous Act expired on the 1 July. In response, Parliament issued the new Book of Rates and passed an Ordinance early in August to levy the customs.¹⁴¹

In order to encourage submission to taxation without the force of statute, merchants were offered a fifteen per cent discount on their customs, if they paid willingly. On 5 August Giles Greene, chairman of the Navy and Customs Committee, reported to the Commons that the merchants were willing to pay the customs on the basis of the Ordinance. The discount was retained until the Commonwealth abolished it to pay for convoys for the Mediterranean, but it was offset by increases imposed during the war. In November 1643 Parliament passed an Ordinance adding a ten per cent surcharge on the customs for the defence of Plymouth, Poole and Lyme, which was doubled in the following September. The surcharged was levied on the basis of the full 1642 book of rates, without the fifteen per cent discount. The 'Plymouth duty' substantially increased the customs paid by London merchants. Not surprisingly the duty was the focus of agitation among London merchant community in 1645 and 1646. It was finally abolished in January 1647.¹⁴²

The new book increased the tax burden, although the rates on some items were reduced, mostly they went up. For example previously, French wine imported by English merchants paid £4 a tun, including impositions, but in 1642 this was increased to £4 10s.¹⁴³ This would have been ameliorated by the fifteen per cent discount in 1642, but the discount was in turn negated by the Plymouth duty. From September 1644 until the beginning of 1647 merchants would have been paying, on balance, five per cent more than the 1642 rates. The total customs received by Parliament's Customs Commissioners from 2 July 1642 to 24 June 1650 from the port of London was about £1,414,726.¹⁴⁴ This however, does not include the Plymouth duty. Accounts have survived for the Plymouth duty up to the beginning of 1645 and these show that about £24,837 was collected in the port of London. It is impossible to compare this total with the customs in the 1630s because farming means that the totals for gross receipts have not survived for the earlier decade, but if the rates on wine are typical then the likelihood is that the burden on the customs was not

¹⁴¹ CJ II, 635, 642, 694, 695; V. F. Snow & A. S. Young, (eds.), The Private Journals of the Long Parliament, 2nd June to 17th September, (New Haven, 1992), 216, 261; IJ V, 250.

¹⁴² Firth & Rait, i, 16-20, 342, 505-6; ii, 444; CJ II, 705; PRO SP 105 143, ff. 113, 118; CLRO Jour. 40, f. 180v.

¹⁴³ BL E:405(8), G. Greene, A Declaration in Vindication of the Honour of the Parliament, and of the Committee of the Navy and Customs against all Traducers, (1647), 7; Goldsmiths Library BL 1635 668, The Rates of Merchandizes as they are set down in the Book of Rates, (1635), unpag; Goldsmiths Library, BL 1642 790, The Rates of Merchandizes, (1642), 61.

¹⁴⁴ PRO E 122 226 17 4; PRO E 351 643-650

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significantly higher in the 1640s than in the decade before.¹⁴⁵

(v) *Sequestration*

Although not technically a tax, the impact of parliamentary sequestration needs to be examined with that of taxation because it was also a device used by Parliament to try to extract money from the London economy to pay for the war effort. The Sequestration Ordinance of March 1643 named the Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Common Councillors as the committee for the City. In effect, the execution of the Ordinance seems to have been delegated to a committee of Common Councillors who sat at Camden House.¹⁴⁶ The committee paid over a total of £33,268 2s 2d to the central treasurers from sequestered estates in London, only Suffolk provided more money.¹⁴⁷ Whereas in most counties the majority of receipts from sequestration failed to reach the central treasury, this does not seem to have been the case in London. Everitt estimated that the total receipts in Kent were about £70,000 but only £22,618 was received by the central treasurers, an account from the London committee from 1643 shows that of the £21,547 18s 8d received about £14,688 3s 1d was paid to the treasurers. The central treasury received £5,422 3s 11d from Westminster, but here we find a pattern closer to the provinces, one undated account from the Westminster committee records total receipts of £8,012 5s 9d but only £3,550 paid to the central treasury. The lack of substantial receipts does not mean that sequestration had little impact. There are signs that it was very disruptive.¹⁴⁸

Sequestration was designed for a society where land was the main source of income. The officers of the sequestration committees were to take over the lands of those sequestered and collect the income which had previously gone to the 'delinquent'. The London economy was quite different. Although many London merchants owned housing in the City, and some owned land in the country, this was not the major source of their income. Indeed, for many merchants, fixed capital might form a very small part of their business. Instead they had their current stock of goods in which they were dealing, and a network of credit, and the continuance of their business was dependent on their own personal reputation and contacts. It would not be very easy for the sequestrators to take over their business and operate it profitably.¹⁴⁹

Nevertheless the issuing of a warrant for sequestration against a London tradesman

¹⁴⁵ PRO E 122 236 14.

¹⁴⁶ *Firth & Rait*, i, 114; PRO SP 20 1, f. 10v; PRO SP 28 252 1, f. 46.

¹⁴⁷ BL Add. MS. 5478, f. 38.

¹⁴⁸ Everitt, *Community of Kent*, 160-1; PRO SP 20 6, ff. 72v-73; PRO SP 46 104, f. 20.

¹⁴⁹ Grassby, *Business Community*, 243; B. Supple, *Commercial Crisis and Change in England, 1600-1642*, (Cambridge, 1959), 8-9.

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would have rocked the tradesman's credit even if it was subsequently rescinded. The 1643 accounts from the City state that £71,284 12s 7d had been seized upon all warrants issued by the committee but of that £50,088 12s 4d was discharged by warrants from Parliament and orders of the committee, suggesting that sequestration may have had a greater impact than the total receipts would at first indicate.¹⁵⁰

The principal problem that arose from sequestration in London concerned debts, both those owed to and by, the person sequestered. This was no doubt also a problem in other parts of the country, but it seems likely that this was particularly so in London. Surviving accounts from the London sequestration committee from 1643 show that only £848 13s 4d was collected for sequestered rents, £19,296 1s 6d had been received in money and goods from those sequestered, and a total of £27,953 in debts to delinquents was brought to light, of which only £655 had been collected. All of the debts which had been received arose from one 'delinquent', Andrew King, a London wine merchant, who had been owed £2,381 5s 11d by about twenty two Londoners, mostly vintners and coopers. King's debtors were prosecuted by a number of individuals, probably his creditors, who claimed that the debts had been assigned to them. The Commons had to order them to desist. In January 1649 the London sequestration committee delivered debts totalling £25,000, which had been sequestered but which they had been previously unable to collect, to the Army Committee.¹⁵¹

Attempts by the committee to collect debts meant that the impact of sequestration went far beyond the 'delinquents' concerned. Among the goods seized by the London committee belonging to Timothy Wright was a bond for £115 owing by Nicholas Turbeville. The committee demanded payment of the bond from Turbeville but he refused, so Turbeville's estate was seized. The goods seized, valued at £58 5s 6d, were subsequently redeemed by Turbeville's brother. Equally much of what was sequestered as the estate of Andrew King seems to have belonged in reality to King's partner, John Bland, then living in Seville. Bland feared that his estate would be seized by the King of Spain for his adherence to Parliament, so he made over his estate, worth £10,000, to King. However when Bland returned to London he found his estate had been disposed of, for Parliament. Bland was able to obtain an order for repayment of £2,718 13s 4d but was only able to receive £150. He was forced to assign the order to one of his creditors, who was still trying to obtain payment in 1654.¹⁵²

A number of Londoners who were sequestered were members of the East India

¹⁵⁰ PRO SP 20 6, ff. 66v-67.

¹⁵¹ PRO SP 20 6, ff. 56v-7, 67; CJ III, 174; CSPD, 1649-50, 486.

¹⁵² PRO SP 20 6, ff. 57v-8; CCCD, v, 3285.

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Company. The East India Company had no permanent stock at this time, the divisions to members of the voyages and joint stock represented not only their profit, but also their principal. On 17 May the East India Company was ordered not to pay any money owing to Sir Peter Ricaut. His estate was sequestered in the following month and order was given to sell his 'adventure' in the company. This alarmed the company which feared not only that Ricaut might seize goods belonging to the company abroad in retaliation, and also that if the order was enforced it would discourage men from investing in the company. Nevertheless the 'adventure' was sold. The company's fears that Ricaut would seek to seize their goods abroad were realised, by November 1646 the company had spent more than £600 protecting their goods from him in Venice, Goa and Leghorn.¹⁵³

In early September a number of warrants were presented to the company from the Camden House and Haberdashers' Hall Committees for the sequestration of the adventures of various members. The company was ordered not to pay out any of the divisions due on the first general voyage until their representatives had appeared before the committee for Advance of Money. The company claimed that the warrants would discourage investment and destroy their trade, but the Commons ordered that the dividends from the sequestered 'adventures' should be used to repay money recently borrowed for Waller's army.¹⁵⁴

It is clear that sequestration was executed in a different manner when it came to the estates of London merchants. The estates of the royalist gentry and aristocracy were kept intact, except for those sold off in the 1650s, only the profits, the rents, were taken. However the London merchants who were sequestered lost the debts owed them, their stock and their shares in the East India Company, and not just the profits on their estates but the estates themselves. In reality the result may well have been less drastic, after the sequestration ceased the merchant could receive that part of the estate which the sequestrators had not been able to obtain. When Ricaut's sequestration was rescinded, the East India Company promised him payment of the divisions on the first general voyage which had not been paid the sequestrators, in return for a full discharge for the rest of the money. Nevertheless it would appear that, when applied to mercantile estates, sequestration meant the appropriation not only of the revenue from the estate but the capital as well.¹⁵⁵

The sequestration of Sir Nicholas Crispe led to the virtual collapse of the Guinea Company. Crispe owned about half the stock of the company, and his agreement was required before any dividends could be paid or any fresh commercial venture begun. Crispe was sequestered in 1643 for debts he owed as a farmer of the customs, and he

¹⁵³ CJ III, 90, 139, 140-143, 149, 151; CCMEIC, 1640-3, 330; *ibid.* 1644-49, 169.

¹⁵⁴ CJ III, 90, 139, 140, 240; CCMEIC, 1640-3, 350, 351; CCAM, i, 25.

¹⁵⁵ CCMEIC, 1644-9, 259-60, 261.

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subsequently fled to Oxford. In his absence the other members of the company decided to withdraw the company's stock from West Africa and pay off its debts, effectively dissolving the company. In November 1643 the *Star* belonging to the company arrived in London laden with about £11,000 in gold, but the company was forced to lend £5,000 of the gold to Parliament for the navy. They were promised repayment in the following month, but it failed to materialise. In the meantime the company was unable to repay its debts. For a while the company seems to have entered a state of paralysis, but by the end of 1645 it had been re-launched under Rowland Wilson.¹⁵⁶

Many of those sequestered in the rest of the country were indebted to London tradesmen, who were generally obliged to give up to six months credit to their customers. Sequestration made it difficult for them to obtain repayment of their debts, which caused great economic difficulties to some London tradesmen. The London tailor William Perkins, who before the Civil War had many noble and gentry customers, seems to have suffered particularly badly, unable to collect his debts from his sequestered customers, he was unable to pay what he himself owed and, by April 1647, was imprisoned by his creditors. Repayment of debts owed by delinquents became a minor, but persistent, issue in London politics in the 1640s.¹⁵⁷

On 8 May 1643 the central sequestration committee ordered that the charges of mortgages and judgements which had been executed on the lands of 'delinquents' should be paid by the sequestrators, but not debts on contracts, bonds, bills, specialities and judgements and statutes not executed, partly because they claimed this would frustrate the purpose of the Ordinance, and partly because it would cause too many disputes and troubles. On the 13th of that month the Committee ruled that personal debts on bonds, bills, contracts judgements or statutes not executed were not to be allowed either out of the lands or goods of those sequestered except by special order of the committee.¹⁵⁸

On 20 May the creditors of Marmaduke Royden, a prominent London merchant who had been sequestered, petitioned the Commons for the payment of their debts. The Commons referred the petition to the Sequestration Committee and ordered that the creditors should be paid, after the debts to the Commonwealth were first satisfied. The committee was clearly unsure what the Commons had intended, and they decided to refer

¹⁵⁶ PRO SP 16 450 365-400; R. Porter, 'The Crispe Family and the African Trade in the Seventeenth Century', *Journal of African History*, 9, (1968), 67-8.

¹⁵⁷ Grassby, *Business Community*, 82-3; *HMC Ormonde MSS., New Series*, i, 114-5.

¹⁵⁸ PRO SP 20 1, ff. 15v, 24v. Where sequestered estates were mortgaged those holding the mortgage sometimes took over the management of the estate. In December 1643 the sequestration committee ordered that Sir John Cordell, who had a mortgage on the estate of Lord Rivers, to pay over to the committee any sums he received from the estate over and above what was due him for his mortgage. SP 20 1, f. 143.

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back to the House for further directions on the case, which do not seem to have been forthcoming.¹⁵⁹

The issue of the non payment of debts from sequestered estates caused considerable agitation in London in 1644. In February 1644 a petition was presented to the Court of Aldermen arguing that creditors should be able to reclaim their debts from sequestered estates and, in March, a similar petition was presented to the Common Council. A petition to Parliament was drawn up which was approved by the Common Council, and presented to the Commons on 3 August.¹⁶⁰ This issue was of particular importance in August 1644 because the Commons began to debate the sale of sequestered estates. Meetings of creditors were organised by a group of scriveners. These meetings drew up propositions to advance money to Parliament, in return for which they wanted the estates of the delinquents made over to their creditors in satisfaction for their debts. The propositions were presented to the Common Council, which referred them to a committee, but nothing further is heard about them, probably because Parliament decided against the immediate sale of delinquent's estates, nevertheless they show the depth of concern felt in London about this issue.¹⁶¹

Presumably as the sequestered estates were returned to their owners, after they compounded, the creditors could seek the usual forms of redress for their debts, but this would not have been true of those who owed estates to those who either were not permitted to compound, or refused to do so, and proposals to sell off sequestered estates created fresh alarms among creditors who feared that they would not receive their debts. In December 1647 fears that Cottington's estate was going to be sold off to pay for the suppression of the Irish rebellion caused the East India Company to decide to sue for the money still owing on the Pepper debt, as soon as possible. This proved a false alarm, but in August 1649 fresh fears that the estate was going to be sold off led the company to resolve to petition the Rump for the repayment of their debt.¹⁶²

In August 1650 a petition was presented to Parliament from the creditors of delinquents arguing that they should be repaid their debts before the estates were sold. As a result the trustees appointed by Parliament to sell the royalist estates were instructed to satisfy the creditors before the lands were put up for sale. Land was transferred to creditors in lieu of debts, where the creditors were London money lenders they immediately resold the lands, the lands in the eastern suburbs of London belonging to the Earl of Cleveland, the owner of Stepney and Hackney manors, were parcelled out and sold to forty seven new

¹⁵⁹ CJ III, 93; PRO SP 20 1, f. 40v.

¹⁶⁰ CJ III, 577-8; CLRO Rep. 57 1, f. 47; CLRO Jour. 40, ff. 91, 103.

¹⁶¹ BL E7(14), The Kingdomes Weekly Intelligencer, No. 69, 20-27 Aug. 1644, 555; BL E7(23), Mercurius Civicus, No. 66, 22-29 Aug. 1643, 623-6; CLRO Jour. 40, ff. 104v-5.

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owners.¹⁶³

Sequestration also provided new areas of business for Londoners; some lent money to sequestered landowners to enable them to pay off their composition fines, others acted as agents helping royalists buy back their estates when they were sold off.¹⁶⁴ Despite this, the overall impression is that, for the London economy, sequestration caused considerable disruption for little yield for Parliament, although trying to quantify the extent of the damage to the metropolitan economy is difficult. For those London tradesmen who were sequestered, it was potentially much more catastrophic than for members of the gentry in a similar positions, as they stood to lose the bulk of their productive estate. The impact of sequestration went much wider, many Londoners were indebted to a sequestered estate, and found themselves threatened with sequestration unless they paid their debts promptly, others found themselves unable to reclaim money which they had lent to men who had been sequestered.

(vi) The Militia

In practice, the militia formed another indirect financial burden on Londoners during the Civil War. From September 1642 the militia was deployed to defend London, each regiment serving for a week in turn, and in 1643 and 1644 London militia units were sent on active service to reinforce the armies of Waller and Essex. Indeed from the relief of Gloucester to the formation of the New Model Army trained band regiments seem to have served in every major campaign in southern England.¹⁶⁵

During the Civil War the militia was substantially expanded, from September 1642 lodgers and those who traded in London, but did not reside there, could also be enlisted. How large the militia was in Civil War London is difficult to establish precisely. In 1642 the City agreed to raise forty companies, each with more than 200 men, to be organised into six regiments, which would have meant a force of more than 8,000. Emberton gives a total of 5,077 for the London Trained bands, but he seems to have missed out one of the regiments. He gives a figure of 4,716 for the suburban regiments, while Pearl states that the trained bands of the whole metropolis totalled 10,000 men, which may be about right. This would suggest that there was one trained bandsman for every forty inhabitants or

¹⁶² CCMEIC, 1644-9, 249, 347.

¹⁶³ BL 669 f. 15 (45), Petition of Creditors of Such Delinquents whose Estates are Propounded to be Sold, (1650); J. Thirsk, 'The Sales of Royalist Land During the Interregnum', in her The Rural Economy of England. Collected Essays, (1984), 93-7.

¹⁶⁴ F. T. Melton, Sir Robert Clayton and the Origins of English Deposit Banking, 1658-1685, (Cambridge, 1986), 46; Thirsk, 'Sales of Royalist Land', 90-2.

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perhaps one for every eight households.¹⁶⁶

Londoners could either serve in person, in which case they would be unable to attend their trades, or they could send substitutes, which seems to have been most common, wealthy inhabitants could be expected to provide up to three men. Either way they would incur loss of income. In October 1642 the Common Council fixed the allowance to be paid to substitutes at 12d per day and 12d per night, although in December 1643 this was reduced to 6d per day and per night. Those enrolled had to provide the arms and equipment for whoever actually served. The militia might therefore be seen, indirectly, as another form of war time taxation. A petition from London tradesmen in February 1645 stated that service on the forts in the trained bands cost them more than £1,000 per week, although this claim probably needs to be treated cautiously.¹⁶⁷

A muster roll has survived for a company in the Blue trained band regiment from 1644. The roll is very similar to a taxation roll, it goes from house to house in Dowgate Ward, assigning men to the householders specified, ranging from two men for one household to a third of man, undoubtedly according to the wealth of the household. In one precinct, fifteen householders were responsible for supplying eleven men. Although relatively few substitutes are mentioned in the roll, this may underestimate the extent of the practice. Another muster roll has survived for the Tower Hamlets regiment, which covered the hamlet of Ratcliff. Here practically every man was supported by more than one householder, presumably because of the greater poverty of the eastern suburbs, but hired substitutes were uncommon, probably because the inhabitants of this poorer sector of London could not afford them. Of the 147 militia places to be filled only twenty were substitutes, fifty seven were not specified while seventy were filled by one or other of the assessed householders.¹⁶⁸

In April 1644 the Haberdashers' Company were instructed to find two men for the trained bands for their Hall. As a result the company's accounts can be used to shed some light on the cost of the militia. Between the 18 April and 22 November 1644 the company paid their two substitutes £6 6s. This indicates that the cost of a single man in this period was 9s a month. Comparison with other payments in the accounts suggests that the burden was a relatively minor one. The company's weekly assessment in 1643 had been £20 a

¹⁶⁵ CLRO Jour. 40, f. 37v; Nagel, 'Militia of London', 70, 89, 118, 135, 138, 156, 158, 168, 174, 183, 185, 192, 203, 204, 208, 215.

¹⁶⁶ Nagel, 'Militia of London', 46, 68; W. Emberton, Skippon's Brave Boys: The Origins Development and Civil War Service of London's Trained Bands, (Buckingham, 1984), 33; V. Pearl, London and the Outbreak of the Puritan Revolution. City Government and National Politics, 1625-43, (Oxford, 1961), 251.

¹⁶⁷ CLRO Jour 40, ff. 40v, 81v, 123; Firth & Rait, i, 452-4; Nagel, 'Militia of London', 61.

¹⁶⁸ Nagel, 'Militia of London', 60-1, 101.

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week and the assessment for the New Model Army was £15 a month. The Dowgate muster roll suggests that two men was generally the highest rating in the City, few would have paid more than the Haberdashers. This indicates that for those able to afford substitutes the militia was not a major burden.¹⁶⁹

The impact of the militia on the London economy seems to have gone further than the burden of paying for substitutes. In 1643 Hugh Fountaine served for Tobais Goodwyn in the regular Westminster trained band regiment at Basing house, but he fell ill and three days after his return he died, leaving a heavily pregnant wife in considerable poverty. Before the militia sub-committee Goodwyn promised to pay 40s or 50s a year to Fountaine's widow as long as she remained unmarried, and 12d per week for the education of her child, but he later tried to get out of his obligation and widow Fountaine had to take him to court.¹⁷⁰

In addition to the regular Trained Bands, there were the auxiliary regiments recruited in 1643 which may have numbered about 8,000, although many of the units were understrength. The City auxiliaries were recruited from the apprentices and other young men, and they, therefore, probably served in person. In the suburbs the recruits may well have been somewhat older. Many in the Southwark auxiliaries were watermen or had other trades, and many had families. This was also the case in the western suburbs, in May and June 1644 the Savoy militia sub committee paid out £35 for the relief of the families of the Westminster auxiliary regiment, then on active service with Waller around Farnham.¹⁷¹

In theory, those serving on the expeditions should have been paid, but this frequently was not the case. In July 1645 the committee of the militia was petitioned by officers of the trained bands calling for the payment of their arrears. It is clear that many warrants for the payment of the trained bands had not been paid. On 22 March 1646 the militia committee issued a warrant for payment of £368 1s to Captain Thomas Juxon for service in the trained bands since 1 September 1643 to 3 September 1645, despite the fact that Juxon had already been issued with a warrant for payment from September 1643 in September 1644. Juxon received £168 1s in cash on the 9 April and was assigned the rest from the excise, but it is clear that many others still had arrears owing. In April 1648 the Common Council received a petition from various militia officers in the name of 500-600 citizens who had served in various expeditions for Parliament but were, they claimed, owed large arrears. Men of the Westminster auxiliaries claimed that they had been defrauded of

¹⁶⁹ GL MS. 15866 1, Haberdashers' Company, Wardens' Accounts, 1633-1653, ff. 442, 485, 524.

¹⁷⁰ PRO C 24 702 43.

¹⁷¹ Nagel, 'Militia of London', 80-4, 96-7; Emberton, Skippon's Brave Boys, 33; PRO SP 28 164 3 Account of John Honour for the Savoy Sub-Committee.

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the money owed them by the commanders of their regiment.¹⁷²

As the war dragged on there were growing complaints that service in the trained bands was damaging the economy by keeping men away from their trades. There were calls for a professional garrison from early in 1644, and by the autumn it was reported that the trained bands would rather pay for a professional garrison than serve in person on the fortifications around London. In the spring of 1645 a new professional regiment was created to serve on the fortifications, which began service in July. The newsbook The Moderate Intelligencer stated that this was of great benefit to London tradesmen, saving them time and money. The Haberdashers' Company accounts illustrate the falling cost of the militia, between 5 December 1644 and 9 September 1645 they paid their two substitutes £6 2s, less than 7s a month each and they were able to obtain a release from any further service. Nevertheless although the militia was undoubtedly disruptive, the evidence suggests that it was more of a nuisance than a burden.¹⁷³

The inhabitants of London were fortunate in that they never had to bear the burden of free quarter, which in other parts of the country amounted to as much again as direct taxation. At the same time it is clear that the burden of indirect taxation, particularly the excise, fell most heavily on the London economy. It may be of interest to note that the total receipts from Parliamentary taxation do not compare with the £8 million worth of damage reportedly done by the Great Fire of 1666. Not all the money raised in taxes from London was totally lost to the local economy, a lot of it was returned in the form of repayments of loans and contracts for the armed forces. However the damage done to the economy by wartime taxation cannot be counted solely in terms of the size of the receipts; fiscal devices such as the Twentieth Part, the excise and sequestration also disrupted London's economic

¹⁷² CLRO Jour. 40, ff. 136, 266v; PRO SP 28 268, ff. 366-8; PRO SP 28 265, f. 42.

¹⁷³ BL E33(13), The Parliament Scout, No. 34, 9-16 Feb. 1644, 290-1; Nagel, 'Militia of London', 227-32; BL E292(3), The Moderate Intelligencer, No. 18, 26 June-3 July 1645, 143; GL MS. 15866 1, Haberdashers' Company, Wardens' Accounts, 1633-1653, f. 524.

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networks, and in particular links with the provinces. It is notable how much of the agitation against taxation centred around these concerns rather than the scale of the burden. Nevertheless the general impression is that these burdens, like direct taxation exacerbated an already difficult economic situation, rather than being the primary reason for the economic problems themselves.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷⁴ Grassby, Business Community, 91.

Chapter 3

Appendix. Receipts from Parliamentary Taxation¹

Tax	City.	Middlesex Suburbs.	Westminster.	Southwark.	Total.
Twentieth Part, first assessments (early 1643).	£68,997 3s 6d			£3,009 9s 5d.	£72,006 12s 11d, (City and Southwark)
First Weekly Assessment, (to March 1644).	c. £89,000		£2,186 7d.	c. £1,920.	c. £93,000. (City, Southwark and Westminster)
Twentieth Part, Haberdashers' Hall assessments (June 1643-July 1644).					£109,875 5s 4d, (Within 20 miles radius of London).
Second Weekly Assessment, (to March 1644).	not applicable		£1,227 7s 2d.		
Fifty Subsidies.	£80,588 10s 4d.	not applicable	not applicable	not applicable	
Magazine Money.	not applicable.	£2,526 8s 1d. (excluding Tower Hamlets)		£2,191 8s	
Monthly Assessment for Essex's Army, (to the end of August 1644).	£12,308 4s 6d.	£3,012 11s 10d, (includes Westminster)		£703 11s	£16,024 18s 8d.
Weekly Meal.		£14,068 19s 2d, (Westminster and Middlesex suburbs, except Tower Hamlets).			

¹ The sources for this table are those referenced in this chapter.

Weekly Assessment for the Army in Ireland.	c. £21,600.		c. £1,183.		c. £22,783, (City and Westminster)
Monthly Assessment for the New Model Army.	£92,350.	£24,047 14s, (Hundreds of Ossulston and Isleworth)	£7,264 16s 7d.	£4,977 10s 9d.	£128,640 1s 4d.
Monthly Assessment for the Scottish Army.	£5,951 18s 6d.		c. £849.		c. £6,801, (City and Westminster)
£60,000 Monthly Assessment.	£72,064 5s 7d.		c. £3,170.	£1,943.	c. £77,177, (City, Southwark & Westminster)
Reassessment for arrears.	£23,138 19s 3d				
£20,000 Monthly Assessment for the Army in Ireland.	£14,234		c. £1,030.		c. 15,264, (City and Westminster)
First 6 months of the £90,000 monthly assessment.	£33,634.				
Total direct taxes	c. £490,728		c. £22,818.		c. £618,356
Excise, to September 1650					c. £1,323,158
Customs, July 1642-June 1650.					c. £1,414,726. (except Plymouth Duty)
Total Taxes,					c. £3,356,240

4 Parliamentary Loans and Finance

The previous chapter examined the extent to which Parliament's war effort burdened the economy of London through taxation and other levies. The purpose of this chapter and the next is to ask to what extent London profited from the war effort. The following chapter will be concerned with supplying the armed forces but here the focus will be on finance. The City of London was Parliament's major source of credit and wealthy Londoners feature prominently among the treasurers and commissioners who administered Parliament's financial machinery. Loans to Parliament from London came from three sources. The first is general subscriptions from those individuals able and willing to lend, for some loans the subscribers were probably number in their thousands. The second source of finance was the corporations of the City, the trading and livery companies. The final significant group of creditors were Parliament's own treasurers who lent on the security of the revenues they were assigned to receive, although it is highly likely that the treasurers borrowed a substantial proportion of what they lent from other London financiers. This meant that Parliamentary finance was very broadly based in London society and could have had a major impact on the economy.

It is not possible within the limits here to fully disentangle the finances of the Long Parliament. A number of Londoners lent money for very short periods in times of crisis.¹ There were also a number of minor loans raised in the City, particularly for the provincial armies. It is therefore impossible to come to any definite figure for the amount of money lent towards Parliament's war effort, nevertheless by concentrating on the major loans raised by Parliament, it should be possible to establish the economic impact of Parliamentary finance.²

The interest on the loans, usually eight per cent per annum, and the earnings of the treasurers brought money into the London economy in the war years, but the benefits this brought were counteracted by Parliament's chronic financial problems which meant that the creditors frequently had major difficulties obtaining repayment of what they lent. In the early part of the war a large proportion of the money lent to Parliament was on no security but the 'public faith', or the securities contingent on Parliament's victory in the war. As the war continued the loans were increasingly secured on the receipts of taxation, but at first Parliament frequently defaulted on these debts. This meant, that by the end of the war, a very large amount of money was owed to London creditors. Although provisions were

¹ CCAM, i, 27.

² A. Hughes, Politics Society and Civil War in Warwickshire, 1620-1660, (Cambridge, 1987), 181.

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made to repay these debts from the proceeds of the sales of confiscated lands, the way in which this was done, combined with the depressed state of the land market in the late 1640s, meant that it is unlikely that many were able to recover all they were owed.

It is doubtful that Parliamentary finance was a major disaster for the London economy. Lending on the public faith had more of the nature of an act of political commitment than an economic investment; many of the lenders may not have expected repayment, and tailored their contributions accordingly. Parliament did not default on all its loans. The treasurers seem to have been particularly successful in obtaining repayment, and they also profited from their salaries and fees. As Parliament's financial administration improved in the latter part of the war there do seem to have been genuine opportunities to make money in lending to Parliament, and not just for the treasurers.

It is also striking how small the loans were, compared both with the years immediately preceding the war, and the latter 1640s. It is possible that the large number of small loans make up for this, but the common assumption that the Civil War marked a major expansion in public finances needs to be carefully considered. Most of the soldiers who served in the war were members of local garrisons and the regional armies who were frequently financed from the areas they were quartered in, often collecting the taxes with which they were paid themselves. This suggests that the Parliamentary finance may not have had a substantial impact on the London economy.

It is essential to distinguish between loans and taxes. Many Parliamentary financial levies were technically forced loans, such as the forced loan of fifty subsidies. Those loans which were raised from individuals, compulsory from inception and unsecured, have been treated as taxes and discussed as such in the previous chapter. This was probably how they were regarded at the time, however it should be born in mind, as will become evident below, some of the money collected in this way was recovered by the original creditors, although rarely the full amount. However the line between forced and voluntary loans was not always as clear as this distinction implies, several loans discussed below were originally voluntary but became compulsory, also on occasion very considerable pressure was brought to bear on individuals to subscribe to theoretically voluntary loans. This chapter also includes discussion of the loans from the livery companies to Parliament where considerable compulsion was used.

(i) General Subscriptions

The first and greatest general subscription was the Propositions initiated in June 1642. Those advancing money were promised repayment, with eight per cent interest, on the public faith, while those providing plate, horses, horsemen and arms would have their

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value repaid, although apparently not with interest. A treasury was established at the Guildhall under four London Aldermen; Andrewes, Towse, Warner and Wollaston. These individuals were to become very important figures in parliamentary finance. Parliament instructed the London Militia Committee to collect contributions in London and Middlesex, and they soon appointed collectors in the Wards of the City and the parishes of the suburbs.³

Subsequently there were three major drives for fresh subscriptions on the Propositions; in late August 1642, the middle of September and in January 1643. Exact figures are missing, but the impression given by the available sources is that these efforts proved increasingly unsuccessful as time went on.⁴

These unsecured popular subscriptions were the backbone of Parliament's finance at the beginning of the war. It is clear that very large sums were collected in London. The full extent of Parliament's debts to the inhabitants of London on the public faith is suggested by the Southwark parish accounts. In St Olave Southwark £4,151 4s 8d was collected in money and plate and £1,029 15s worth of horses and arms. A further £3,312 12s 1d was raised in St Saviour Southwark and £575 6s 2d in St Thomas Southwark. St Thomas paid more money in the propositions than on the first assessment of the 20th part, the first weekly assessment Ordinance, the Magazine Money, the weekly meal and the four months' assessment of the Essex's Army combined.⁵

Southwark was more parliamentarian than some other parts of the metropolis, but other areas contributed substantial sums. More than a thousand pounds was raised in High Holborn.⁶ Anecdotal evidence suggests that in the beginning vast sums were enthusiastically pledged. On 15 June one correspondent reported 'the citizens are very forward in raising of men, arms and money and horses, . . . , and they their plate in abundance to be coined for the raising of money - 'tis thought there will be a million raised that way'.⁷ On 18 June it was reported to the Commons that large quantities of plate had been brought to the Guildhall. Parliament authorised the Guildhall Treasurers to coin it. It was subsequently claimed that the Guildhall treasury was so overwhelmed with plate that it

³ *CJ* II, 608, 613, 617; *LJ*, 121, 147; *Firth & Rait*, i, 6-9; *CSPD*, 1641-3, 348.

⁴ *Firth & Rait*, i, 24-25; *CIRO Jour.* 39, f. 342v; *CIRO Jour.* 40, ff. 38-v; *LJ* V, 533-5.

⁵ PRO SP 28 179, St Olave Southwark Parish Account; PRO SP 28 180-260, St Saviour Southwark Parish Account; PRO SP 28 179, St Thomas Southwark Parish Account, ff. 11, 43-51; PRO SP 19 49, f. 79.

⁶ PRO SP 28 167, Account of the collectors of the Propositions in High Holborn.

⁷ Sir W. C. Trevelyan & Sir C. E. Trevelyan, (eds.), *Trevelyan Papers, Part 3*, (Camden Society, 1872), 227.

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proved impossible at times to weigh it all.⁸

Returns in the state papers for the subscriptions collected in the August drive show that very large sums were collected in the City. In Bishopsgate £1,941 was received and a further £1,474 17s subscribed. In comparison £1,130 had been subscribed in the Ward on the £50,000 loan for relief of Ireland. Returns from Church and Old Bailey precincts in St Sepulchre state that £1,306 16s was subscribed, which was more than the three month's weekly assessment collected in 1643.⁹ The September subscription drive, initiated in response to a request from the Earl of Essex for £100,000 for his army, was also very successful, the required sum being collected in just four days.¹⁰ Towards the end of September one newsbook reported that 'Plate and money comes still very fast to Guild-hall so that not withstanding the vast charge the Parliament is at the great heaps of money and Plate do not decay'.¹¹

The only accounts of collections covering the whole metropolis which survive concern the listing of horses and arms. Three books among the Commonwealth Exchequer Papers suggest that horses and arms worth at least £73,960 8s 2d were subscribed from the summer of 1642 to the autumn of 1643, the vast majority by Londoners. This was only a fraction of total subscriptions on the propositions in London. In the accounts for St Olave Southwark, horses and arms represented a fifth of total subscriptions. If this was true of the metropolis as a whole, then the total raised on the propositions could amount to over a third of a million pounds. The propositions involved a major transfer of resources from the usual channels of the metropolitan economy.¹²

The propositions were by no means the only unsecured loans raised from Londoners in 1642-3. In the earlier stages of the war various groups of Parliament's supporters came forward with schemes to raise forces, for which they were promised the 'public faith' for the money they raised. One of the most substantial of these schemes was initiated by a group of Londoners in mid November 1642. They proposed to raise a force of cavalry for Parliament and pay for it through a voluntary weekly subscription.¹³ By the end of the month it was reported that £3,000 per week had been pledged and a month later

⁸ CJ II, 632; PRO SP 28 253B, part 2, 'Interrogatories to be administered to [blank] concerning plate and money upon the Propositions'.

⁹ PRO SP 16 491 130; PRO SP 28 198, part 1, f. 82; PRO SP 28 170, account of the weekly assessment in the City of London.

¹⁰ CLRO Jour. 39, f. 342v; CLRO Jour. 40, ff. 38-v; BL E64(3), The Earle of Essex his letter to Master Speaker, July 9th 1643, With Some Briefe Animadversions on the said Letter, (Oxford, 1643), 5-6.

¹¹ BL E119(2), Speciall Passages, No. 7, 20-27 Sept. 1642, 55.

¹² PRO SP 28 131, parts 3-5; There is also another damaged account covering late 1642 in PRO SP 28 237.

¹³ CJ II, 847; LJ V, 445-6; CCAM i, 1-3.

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that £6,659 had been collected. The evidence suggests that despite this early success, the weekly subscriptions fizzled out in the new year. In the parish of St Michael Queenhithe the Churchwardens collected a total of £72 5s 6d in December, but the second payment was not made until 1 March, when only £58 12s 4d was raised, after which no further collections are recorded. The subscriptions were even less successful in the suburbs, in St Olave Southwark only £4 6s was collected.¹⁴

After January 1643 taxation and loans secured on taxation were used to finance Essex's Army, but unsecured voluntary subscriptions continued to be used for other purposes. They were raised in the metropolis to support the regional armies. On 25 April Parliament promised the public faith to anyone willing to lend money, horses or arms for Waller's army in the west country. In July the newsbook A Perfect Diurnall reported that a committee from the Commons had attended a large meeting of citizens at Grocers Hall where, after a speech by Sir Robert Harley, many donated money or pledged subscriptions. How much money was raised overall is unclear, but £247 18s was raised in St Olave Southwark. The same parish raised £182 16s for Sir William Brereton's Cheshire forces, and £148 for Sir Thomas Middleton's Army in north Wales. Another £80 was raised for Lord Brooke's Midland forces and £150 for the Earl of Denbigh's. These subscriptions are small when compared to the sums raised on the propositions, but were far from insignificant contributions to the war effort.¹⁵

By early 1643 Londoners were increasingly weary of lending on the public faith. The later subscription drives for the propositions were relatively unsuccessful. In November 1642 a petition from London complained that many had not paid their subscriptions. On 28 November it was reported that the arrears of subscriptions in Candlewick Ward came to £785.¹⁶ The January subscriptions proved particularly disappointing. Despite considerable pressure from the Committee for Advance of Money, a substantial part of what was subscribed then had still not been paid at the end of March. The failure of the January subscriptions reflects the fact that Parliament could no longer hope to fund its war effort from loans without offering security for repayment. This was the last major general drive for subscriptions on the 'public faith' for the main army.¹⁷

In May 1643 a loan of £50,000 was proposed to finance the capture of Newcastle, to be secured on the future customs of that town; this proved unsuccessful, even in St

¹⁴ CJ II, 862; CCAM i, 6; GL MS. 4825.1, Churchwarden's Accounts, St Michael Queenhithe, 1625-1706, ff. 61, 61v; PRO SP 28 179, The Accounts of St Olave Southwark.

¹⁵ Firth & Rait, i, 135; GL H 10.3 No. 2, A Perfect Diurnall, 17-24 July 1643, 6v; PRO SP 28 179, The Account of St Olave Southwark.

¹⁶ CJ II, 858; LJ V, 391; PRO SP 16 492 103.

¹⁷ CCAM, i, 11, 13, 17.

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Olave Southwark where only £16 6s 6d was raised. According to an account from November 1644, only about £6,848 was collected in total, a derisory sum. In the same month a voluntary subscription of one meal a week was begun by the Salters' Hall sub-committee to equip auxiliary militia regiments, but only £1,647 was raised and the weekly meal had to be turned into a compulsory tax.¹⁸

Significant sums could still be raised in an emergency. In July 1643, fearing the approach of the royalists, the City Government appealed for a further loan from the inhabitants of the City, and offered the security of the City's seal to those willing to lend £50 or more. In total about £11,810 was borrowed, but an attempt to raise £20,000 in April 1644 to pay the Trained Bands then serving with Waller was a failure. On 2 May 1644 it was reported that only £6,000 had been subscribed, and the rest of the money had to be raised from funds which had been assigned to repay loans from the livery companies.¹⁹

The largest voluntary subscription, after the propositions, were initiated to finance the Scottish Army. In October 1643 an Ordinance was passed to borrow £200,000. Creditors were promised repayment out of sequestered estates and rates on the Newcastle coal trade (once the north east had been taken from the royalists). The money came in slowly, and further Ordinances were passed to compel lenders. Nearly eight five per cent of the £80,000 assigned to the City was collected voluntarily, but none of this money was repaid from the promised securities.²⁰

Although it was clear by 1645 that to raise very large sums of money from London, substantial securities would have to be given, smaller sums could be raised simply as free gifts. When Parliament appealed for contributions for the relief of Taunton in June 1645 £6,263 19s 1d was raised in the City and £471 15s 9d from the suburbs under the Savoy militia sub committee.²¹

In St Olave Southwark, over £6,500 was collected on voluntary subscriptions for Parliament in the first Civil War, perhaps more than the receipts on Parliament's various taxation Ordinances in the parish.²² A high proportion of economically self sufficient

¹⁸ CLRO Jour. 40, ff. 60, 117; PRO SP 28 179, St Olave Southwark Parish Account; BL 669 f. 7 (10), A Declaration and Motive of the Persons Trusted, Usually Meeting at Salters Hall, (1643); PRO SP 28 198, part 1, 2nd folder, ff. 4-5.

¹⁹ CLRO Jour. 40, ff. 68-v, 94; CLRO MS. 386A, iv, f. 3v

²⁰ CCCD i, 1; Firth & Rait, i, 311-5, 322, 572; D. Laing, (ed.), Letters and Journals of Robert Baillie, (3 vols., Edinburgh, 1841), ii, 104; R. Bell, (ed.), Memorials of the Civil War, (2 vols., 1849), i, 109; PRO E 351 1966.

²¹ CLRO Jour. 40, f. 132; PRO SP 28 169, Account of collections for the relief of Taunton; PRO E 179 253 12, f. 33.

²² PRO SP 28 179, St Olave Southwark Parish Account.

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inhabitants in the metropolis contributed to the unsecured loans. In 1642 the collectors for Church precinct, St Sepulchre, returned the names of sixty two people they thought capable of contributing to the propositions, of whom fifty were willing to subscribe.²³ In St Michael Queenhithe, a parish with about 130 householders in 1638, sixty seven people contributed to the first collection of the weekly subscription.²⁴ The individual sums given were relatively small, Alderman Towse, one of the Guildhall Treasurers, contributed only about £156 on the propositions, Alderman Atkins contributed in total £500, on the public faith, £300 in September 1642 and £200 in the following March. Both of these were wealthy men and strong supporters of Parliament and had lent far larger sums before the war, £1,000 each on one loan in 1641.²⁵

Many may have contributed for fear of reprisals. From August 1642 the collectors of the propositions were ordered to return the names of those who refused to subscribe, and in the following autumn the Parliamentary authorities started to imprison defaulters. At the end of October 1642 the Committee for Safety ordered the arrest of fifty six wealthy citizens and ministers who had refused to contribute.²⁶ Among those arrested was Alderman Sir John Cordell. This experience encouraged him to contribute, two horses on 17 November, and plate worth £300 on 21 November. The propositions were beginning to be transformed into taxation, a process completed by the Ordinances for the twentieth part.²⁷

On 17 November 1645 the Common Council appointed a committee to consider the un-repaid loans which had been advanced to Parliament. In May 1646 the City's Remonstrance called on Parliament to repay its debts from the estates of delinquents. The City received support from the Independent minister, Hugh Peters, who stated that many had lent more than they could afford, and were suffering as a consequence. Despite these pleas the economic consequences of unsecured lending should not be exaggerated. Given the vagueness of the promises of repayment, the vast majority who contributed almost certainly did so, either to support a cause in which they believed, or to keep out of trouble, not as an investment. Given that the individual could limit the scope of his or her

²³ PRO SP 16 491 130.

²⁴ GL MS. 4825 1, Churchwarden's Accounts St Michael Queenhithe, 1625-1706, f. 61; T. C. Dale, (ed.), The Inhabitants of London in 1638, (2 vols., 1931), ii, 150-1.

²⁵ CCAM, 567; BL Add. MS. 22620, f. 80v; PRO SP 28 162, Account of Treasurers for £95,900 loan, 1641.

²⁶ Firth & Rait, i, 24-25; HMC Twelfth Report, ii, Cowper MSS., ii, 324; CJ II, 819; BL 669 f. 5 (95), An Order of the Committee of Lords and Commons for Defence of the Kingdome for Disarming such as are Disaffected to Parliament, (1642); GL Broadside 16.52, A Catalogue of Sundrie Knights, Aldermen, Doctors, Minister and Cizens, (1642).

²⁷ CSPD 1641-3, 403; PRO SP 19 49, f. 22.

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contributions, the money lent probably did not reduce the amount available for investment, although, as Londoners shifted resources from consumption to contributions to the public faith the demand for luxuries is likely to have been reduced. For many Londoners who found themselves in economic difficulties in the late 1640s, repayment of money lent on the public faith would have alleviated at least part of their problems, but it is unlikely that it was the original lending which was the cause of their distress in the first place.²⁸

(ii) Underwriting Assessments

After the introduction of parliamentary taxation towards the end of 1642, unsecured general subscriptions played a progressively smaller part in parliamentary finance, loans were raised instead on the security of receipts of taxation. Parliamentary loans became less and less a matter of political allegiance, and more an economic transaction. In place of large numbers of small subscriptions, parliamentary finance came to be dominated by small numbers of large scale lenders. Not all the money advanced on Parliament's taxation ordinances was repaid as promised, and, in practice, a large proportion of these loans became part of the vast outstanding debt owed to Londoners by the end of the war.

This transition did not happen all at once. The first attempt to raise money on the credit of Parliamentary taxation aroused considerable enthusiasm. On 25 November 1642 a deputation from Parliament appealed to the Common Hall for a loan of £30,000 with eight per cent interest on the credit of the 20th part. Pennington ordered the minister of the City to support the new loan from the pulpit, and an intercepted letter, revealing royalist machinations for foreign support, was published to encourage subscription.²⁹

The raising of the £30,000 loan was similar to the propositions. Parliamentary finance was given fresh impetus by the promise of prompt repayment from a specific fund, plus interest. Londoners could, therefore, look on contribution as an investment, and redirect money which they would otherwise have put into their businesses. Driven by a combination of political enthusiasm and economic calculation, a large number of Londoners contributed to the loan. In St Mary le Bow alone, fifty two people subscribed where in 1638 the parish had contained ninety three households. How much money was raised in total is impossible to say, but surviving returns from 111 parishes and hamlets suggest that

²⁸ CLRO Jour. 40, f. 151; BL E330(11), H. Peters, Gods Doing and Mans Duty, (1646), 45; BL E351(12), *idem*, Mr Peters Last Report of the English Wars, (1646), 11-12.

²⁹ CJ II, 847, 862; IJ V, 445; BL E128(25), The Discovery of a Great and Wicked Conspiracy against this Kingdome in generall, and the City of London in particular, (1642).

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£37,000 was subscribed and the total was probably more.³⁰

Parliament broke faith with her creditors, and the receipts from the twentieth part were diverted to other uses. When, in the following February, Parliament tried to raise fresh loans of £60,000 on the security of the weekly assessment, it proved impossible to raise more than about £23,000. In St James Garlickhithe no one was willing to subscribe to the loan. Even William Walwyn refused it. Instead, £40,000 was raised from the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen, on the promise of repayment from the first receipts of the weekly assessment. It proved difficult to raise, as prominent Aldermen (such as Sir Thomas Soames) were reluctant to lend. To reassure creditors Parliament also ordered that payment of the receipts of the weekly assessment in London should be paid to the Guildhall Treasurers instead of the Treasurer of the Army, Sir Gilbert Gerrard, and the treasurers were ordered not to pay out any money from the assessment for any other purpose until the loans were repaid.³¹

In early May Parliament ordered the first £23,000 received from the weekly assessment in London to be sent to the Army, and the lenders had to wait until the loan of £40,000 from the Aldermen was paid off, although they received the additional security of first receipts to be collected on the weekly assessment in Westminster, Southwark, Middlesex, Hertfordshire Essex and Suffolk and also the 20th part, which had now been extended to the whole Kingdom. A further attempt was made to raise £17,000 from the Common Councillors on the credit of the weekly assessment, but they only subscribed £7,261, a further sign of the disenchantment of Londoners with the Parliament's financial dealings.³²

In total, about £70,000 was lent by Londoners on the security of the first weekly assessment in London. In August the Common Council appointed a committee to examine all the Ordinances passed for repayment of money advanced for Parliament's Army because all, or most, of the money had not been repaid. Indeed Londoners were still owed money from these loans at the end of the war. When Parliament was looking for a new loan on the credit of the second weekly assessment ordinance, it had to be raised as a forced loan from the livery companies.³³

³⁰ PRO SP 16 492 65-103; PRO SP 19 78, ff. 1-2, 5, 8, 7, 11, 27, 29, 91-105; R. Finlay, Population and the Metropolis: the Demography of London, (Cambridge, 1981), 170. A number of parish returns are missing and some returns mention additional contributions made directly to the Guildhall.

³¹ CJ II, 971, 983, 999; PRO SP 19 79, ff. 37, 86; V. Pearl, London and the Outbreak of the Puritan Revolution. City Government and National Politics, 1625-43, (Oxford, 1961), 260, 267; Firth & Rait, i, 98, 128-9.

³² Firth & Rait, i, 143-4; PRO SP 19 79, f. 86.

³³ CLRO Jour. 40, ff. 71v, 72v; PRO SP 28 256, Notes of bills doubled at Goldsmith Hall.

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Parliament was not again to try to raise a substantial loan by general subscription secured on direct taxation, until the creation of the New Model Army. In March 1645 Parliament resolved to raise £80,000 on the security of the first Ordinance for the New Model Army. In order to reassure subscribers Parliament agreed to allow the City the nomination of Treasurers at War, who were to receive the receipts from the assessments and repay the loan.³⁴

The survival of an account book of the repayments of principal and interest on this loan enables us to build up a far more detailed picture of those who lent money on this loan, than for any of the previous wartime loans. Only £77,362 10s was subscribed by seventy eight lenders. In contrast to the £30,000 loan, the individual subscriptions were much larger, the smallest being £50, but about two thirds were for £500 or above. The most common sum lent was £1,000, the largest £5,350. The greatest subscribers were the eight Treasurers at War who, between them, contributed £29,212 10s, or about thirty eight per cent of the total.³⁵

The vast majority of the lenders were Londoners, mostly merchants, with scatterings of goldsmiths, although the former courtier Sir John Maynard, and barrister Richard Newdigate, both subscribed £500. All but three of those who were Aldermen for the City at the beginning of the year subscribed, and their subscriptions came to £39,900, more than half the total. Curiously no currently sitting member of the Long Parliament is recorded as having subscribed to the loan. Perhaps the subscriptions of members of Parliament were recorded separately, although it is difficult to think why this should have been done. It is more likely that this was a manifestation of the 'self denying' ethos among members of Parliament who did not want to be perceived as profiting from the war.³⁶

The economic interests of those who subscribed were diverse. Seven of the subscribers were members of the committee of the East India Company, and various other subscribers had strong connections with the company, twenty one having been investors in the first particular voyage.³⁷ On the other hand, four were members of the Courteen syndicate, or Assada group, which interloped in the East Indies' trade. The Merchant Adventurers included John Kendrick, Walter Boothby, Christopher Pack and George Witham. There were also a number of internal traders and manufacturers, such as the

³⁴ CJ, IV, 74; Firth & Rait, i, 656-660; CLRO Jour. 40, f. 125.

³⁵ PRO SP 28 350.5, part 2; Firth & Rait, i, 656.

³⁶ The Aldermen were identified from A. Beavan, The Aldermen of the City of London, (2 vols., 1908-13); For Sir John Maynard and Richard Newdigate see their entries in DNB.

³⁷ CCMEIC, 1644-9, 32; OIOC, H 6, ff. 113-179.

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distiller Edward Hooker and the cutler Lawrence Bromfield.³⁸

A surprising number of the subscribers had conservative political backgrounds. There were seven aldermen from the old guard, including Sir John Cordell, who had been imprisoned in 1642 for refusing to subscribe to the propositions. A further six had subscribed to the Benyon petition in February 1642 calling for control of the London militia to be returned to the royalist Lord Mayor, Sir Richard Gurney. Although the vast majority were undoubtedly politically committed to Parliament, the impression gained is that lending to Parliament was becoming an economic decision rather than a political one, and was dominated by the small group of wealthy Londoners who could afford to risk the dangers of defaulting.³⁹

Repayment of the loan was delayed by problems in collecting the assessment, but the creditors did receive all their principal back, plus interest. The last repayment was made on 13 January 1646. In total £83,610 2s 4d had been paid out in principal and interest, suggesting that the lenders cleared a profit of eight per cent. The accounts of repayment show little sign of any market in debts on the New Model Army loan. Only three repayments were collected by assignees of the subscribers; the rest were received by, or for, the original investors. If this was typical then it suggests that there was little or no trading in Parliamentary securities during the Civil War.⁴⁰

In 1645 further loans were raised in London for the Scottish army, the accounts of the Treasurers at Goldsmith's Hall record that in total £74,855 was lent. The treasurers also borrowed £40,324 23s 9d to purchase Spanish dollars and rials from London Goldsmiths, making a profit of £375 5s 9d 'in paying and exchanging the same'. In total £115,179 15s 9d was borrowed, which was repaid with £1,998 8s 8d interest.⁴¹

It is clear that Parliament's financial administration improved considerably in 1645, and her creditors began to make a profit on their loans, but suspicions evidently still remained about repayment. Consequently, an element of compulsion continued to be used in Parliamentary finance. In October 1644 Parliament borrowed £22,000 on the security of the excise in the metropolis, of which £17,250 was assigned to the City and the remainder to the suburbs. In case the full total was not raised, provision was also made to compel wealthy Londoners to pay an assessed proportion. Nevertheless those who paid willingly profited from the loan. Those who lent in Westminster were repaid their principal, with

³⁸ R. Brenner, Merchants and Revolution, Commercial Change, Political Conflict and London's Overseas Traders, 1550-1653, (Cambridge, 1993), 192-3, 489.

³⁹ Pearl, London and the Outbreak of the Puritan Revolution, 292-308; HLRO House of Lords Main Papers, 24 February 1642, Petition of the Citizens of London.

⁴⁰ PRO SP 28 350 5, part 2; Firth & Rait, i, 818.

⁴¹ CJ IV, 173, 186, 188, 298, 305-6, 362, 369; Firth & Rait, i, 702-3; PRO E 351/1966; CCCD, i, 2, 22.

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interest at eight per cent within a year as the Ordinance had specified. This device was used twice in 1645 to raise £60,000 for the New Model Army, and again in February 1646 to raise a further £32,000 for the fortifications and guards of the metropolis. Again, these loans were repaid with interest.⁴²

The problems which continued to dog Parliament's efforts to raise loans in London are exemplified by the difficulties experienced trying to raise £80,000 in the autumn of 1647 for the army, on the security of the £60,000 monthly assessment. £30,000 was advanced by the Treasurers at War, but there were difficulties in raising the rest of the money. Certain Londoners offered to re-lend sums which they had owing them from the excise on the forced loan of February 1646, and it was reported that others were willing to lend fresh sums to make up a total of £32,000. On 7 October 1647 Parliament passed an Ordinance securing the £32,000 on the monthly assessment and ordering repayment by the Treasurers at War three months after the cash was paid in, plus interest at eight per cent. Less than £12,000 was raised, but those who did lend received their money and interest promptly. It would seem that Londoners were increasingly unwilling to lend money to Parliament, even on the security of Parliament's taxation.⁴³

(iii) Doubling

By the end of the first Civil War very large numbers of Londoners were owed money by Parliament, not only for loans on the public faith, but also for loans raised on the early taxation ordinances. These debts were widely regarded as desperate, and repayment became a significant political issue. As a result, when in September 1646, Parliament approached the municipality about raising £200,000 to pay off the Scottish Army, the Common Council suggested the procedure that became known as 'doubling'. Those who had previously lent money on the public faith were invited to lend as much again as the money they had lent and the accumulated interest, in return for which they would have the security of the receipts from the sale of the Bishops' estates for both debts, and would receive eight per cent interest on both debts, paid at six monthly intervals out of the excise. Baillie claimed that this scheme was the invention of the Presbyterian clergyman Cornelius Burgess, but it may have originally derived from the Royal Contract of the late 1620s, when Charles I had sold royal lands to clear his outstanding debts to the City, and secure

⁴² Firth & Rait, i, 526-28, 723-5, 786-9; CJ IV, 413, 426; PRO SP 28/162, Account of the Treasurer at Savoy, Account of Money lent for the City Guard; PRO E 351/302.

⁴³ Firth & Rait, i, 1019-21; LJ IX, 472-3; PRO E 351/302; PRO SP 28/350 5, part 2.

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the advance of a further £120,000.⁴⁴ Doubling proved spectacularly successful. The £200,000 was raised in eight days. Consequently when Parliament sought to raise another £200,000 in May 1647 the same procedure was followed and the money was raised in only seven days. A third Ordinance raised a further £42,000 in June.⁴⁵

The bills brought to the treasurers for doubling on the first ordinance included those for money lent on the propositions, the £30,000 loan, the weekly subscriptions, the £60,000 loan, the £200,000 raised for the Scots in October 1643, the twentieth part where public faith had been given, and even the sixty per cent of the weekly assessment which Londoners had been promised on the public faith. There is no evidence that bills from the Fifty subsidies, for which the City Seal rather than the public faith had been given, or debts owed by Parliament from before the Civil War, were used to double on the first ordinance. These debts were explicitly included in the second ordinance, which may explain the continued enthusiasm for doubling. Doubling, therefore, probably covered the majority of the money raised by Parliament from London in the early part of the Civil War. An understanding of the success or failure of doubling is therefore vital to any assessment of the cost of the Civil War to the London economy.⁴⁶

From the very beginning of this process there was concern about those who did not have the money to double. The Common Council persuaded Parliament to assign £30,000 from the third doubling Ordinance to repay the money owed those who were too poor to double. Unfortunately for the creditors the vast majority of this money was seized by the army in December 1648, the accounts of the treasurers give no sign that it was ever repaid.⁴⁷

As the ordinances permitted doubling on assigned bills, those who could not double could sell their bills to those who could. On the eve of the opening of subscriptions for the first ordinance, it was reported that public faith bills were circulating at almost their face value in London, this is confirmed by the requests from some investors to subscribe to more than their public faith bills amounted. Had bills been available at a discount it would have been cheaper to buy the bills and double, than subscribe the whole amount in new

⁴⁴ BL Add. MS. 15903, f. 61; CLRO Jour. 40, f. 191v; Firth & Rait i, 884; Laing Letters and Journals of Robert Bailie, ii, 411; R. Ashton, The Crown and the Money Market, 1603-1640, (Oxford, 1960), 132-3.

⁴⁵ Firth & Rait, i, 928-35, 948-953; PRO SP 28/350/2. The doubled bills from the first ordinance are called Goldsmiths' Hall bills, those from the second and third ordinances were called Weavers' Hall bills, after the site of the respective treasuries.

⁴⁶ PRO SP 28 256, Notes of bills doubled at Goldsmiths' Hall; Firth & Rait, i, 928-35.

⁴⁷ BL Add. MS. 22620, f. 82; CLRO Jour. 40, f. 214; Firth & Rait i, 948-953; PRO SP 28 350/2A, ff. 35v-38.

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money.⁴⁸ However demand never again reached the same levels, and the value of bills suffered accordingly, four days before the opening of subscriptions on the second ordinance they were valued at only three quarters of their face value.⁴⁹ Prices subsequently fell to 9-12s in the pound as confidence in doubling declined. Moreover the quoted prices underestimate the degree of discount, because they fail to take into account the accumulated interest; a public faith bill for £100 from 1642 would, by 1648, have £32 in interest which also counted towards its value for the purpose of doubling.⁵⁰

Habakkuk has argued that during the Commonwealth 'doubling' on other confiscated properties was increasingly less successful, but the evidence suggests that the ability of the new regime to raise money varied according to how its political and financial stability was perceived. In the early days of the Commonwealth the perception was clearly not good. In April 1649 the Rump attempted to raise £300,000 by doubling on the former estates of the Deans and Chapters, but the money came in slowly. In June the number of debts which could be doubled was extended, and the interest on the public faith bills which were not doubled was reduced to six per cent. However, according to a report to the Council of State in the following October, only £170,832 15s 10d had been received. The growing military strength of the Commonwealth then inspired a renewal of confidence, by October 1650 the £300,000 loan had been oversubscribed, and a subsequent £120,000 loan on the remaining estates of the Dean and Chapters was successful; in total £455,621 was raised from doubling on the capitular lands. In February 1651 a £250,000 doubling loan on the fee farm rents also proved successful. The first doubling loan on the sale of the estates of the royalist, initiated in July 1651 for £250,000, proved so successful that an additional £14,446 was deposited with the treasurers in expectation of a further loan. However receipts on further doubling loans on the fee farm rents and delinquents' estates, initiated during the First Dutch War, fell short of expectations. An attempt to raise £600,000 on a third batch of royalist land sales in November 1652 raised only £114,644, and the attempt to raise £400,000 by doubling on the Royal Forests in 1653 brought in no money at all. In total over £1.75 million of debts were secured on the various doubling loans. The success of doubling, therefore, followed the political and financial fortunes of the Commonwealth,

⁴⁸ D. Gardiner, (ed.), Oxinden and Peyton Letters, 1642-1670, (1937), 92; BL Add. MS. 15903, f. 61; CJ II, 726.

⁴⁹ CLRO Rep. 58 2, f. 103.

⁵⁰ PRO E 101 699 20; PRO C 8 140 40; BL 669 f. 13 (22), A Second Centurie of such of the Aldermen Common Councill and Militia-men of London as receive pay and profit by the continuance of the excise, impositions, warre and Discord betweene King and Parliament, (1648).

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from slump in 1649, to prosperity in 1650-1 and renewed set-backs in 1652 and 1653.⁵¹

For those Londoners who doubled, the profitability of their investment depended on the sales of confiscated lands. The doubled bills could be redeemed either from the receipts of the sales of the confiscated lands, or by being used to purchase them. The latter was favoured, and only a very small amount of cash was realised from the sales. Ian Gentles argues that the episcopal lands were sold after hasty surveys and were therefore generally undervalued, but rents fell substantially during the 1640s, and the surveys may well have accurately reported current values.⁵²

The episcopal lands were generally sold at eleven to twelve years' purchase. This is much lower than was usual in the seventeenth century, but in the late 1640s the land market was depressed. In 1648-9, when most of the lands were sold, fifteen to sixteen years' purchase was usual. Given the element of political risk involved in the sales, the discount is not surprising. Some of the earlier sales may have been at a higher rate, perhaps reflecting continued confidence in a political settlement on Parliament's terms when the sales began in 1647, but this confidence soon diminished and the regime paid the price for rapid sales. Nevertheless, those who did purchase Bishops' lands and who later chose to resell could generally make a substantial profit, generally about forty per cent, probably because of the return of prosperity in the 1650s, and growing confidence in the stability of the Protectorate.⁵³

For those Londoners who decided to use their doubled bills to invest in the Bishops' lands, and then later sold them, the whole business may have proved highly profitable, but the evidence suggests that most Londoners sold their doubled bills. Only about a third of the episcopal lands were sold to London merchants and tradesmen, although contemporaries complained that Londoners monopolised the doubling subscriptions. The profitability of doubling was therefore dependant on the market for doubled bills, but all doubled bills were heavily discounted. Bills on the episcopal estates were sold at fifteen to thirty per cent less than their face value in the late 1640s, rising to thirty five per cent for Weavers' Hall Bills in early 1652. Habakkuk says that bills on the

⁵¹ H. J. Habakkuk, 'Public Finance and the Sale of Confiscated Property during the Interregnum', *EcHR*, 2nd Series, 18, (1962-3), 73, 74, 83-4; *Firth & Rait*, ii, 91, 140-2, 154, 498, 531, 582, 615, 947; *CJ* VI, 223, 249, 253-475; *CJ* VII, 210; *CSPD* 1649-50, 359; W. Shaw, *A History of the English Church during the Civil Wars and under the Commonwealth*, (2 vols., 1900), ii, 515; PRO E 351-438.

⁵² Habakkuk, 'Public Finance', 72-5, 86 & n. 1; I. Gentles, 'The Sales of Bishops' Lands in the English Revolution, 1646-1660', *EHR*, 95, (1980), 582, 585; J. Broad, 'Gentry Finances and the Civil War: The Case of the Buckinghamshire Verney's', *EcHR*, 2nd Series, 32, (1979), 186-8.

⁵³ Gentles, 'Sales of Bishops' Lands', 585, 587; Broad, 'Gentry Finances and the Civil War', 193; G. B. Tatham, 'The Sale of Episcopal Lands During the Civil War and Commonwealth', *EHR*, 23, (1908), 108.

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capitulator estates were generally traded with a twenty five to thirty per cent discount, although the Churchwardens of St Margaret Westminster were able to buy them at a forty per cent discount. The discount on bills on royalist lands was even greater, probably nearly forty five per cent.⁵⁴

The first three doubling ordinances produced £884,000 worth of doubled bills, but the sales of episcopal lands came to only £676,387. The bills from the first Ordinance were given precedence in purchasing episcopal lands, and those with Weavers' Hall bills were not able to use them to purchase lands until most of the property had been sold off. By the end of 1652 Weavers' Hall bills totalling £256,574 5s were still outstanding, although virtually all the Bishops' lands had been sold. The subscribers were also promised the estates of royalists as additional security, but after consultation with the creditors, the Rump decided to transfer the debt to the excise. In December 1653 the Protectorate Council of State suspended repayment of the principal, as a result £222,082 6d worth of bills were still outstanding at the Restoration. The payment of interest out of the excise continued throughout the intervening period, but the holders of the bills never recovered their principal.⁵⁵

Habakkuk is probably correct in asserting that most of Parliament's creditors suffered losses in the way the Long Parliament settled its debts. A few who purchased episcopal estates profited, and those who sold their public faith bills in November 1647 probably recovered nearly all the money they had lent. It is also clear, however, that many of those who held public faith bills failed to double, or to sell when prices were high. Those who doubled and then sold their bills lost at least part of what they had lent to Parliament. Nonetheless many of the securities doubled, especially those from the weekly assessment and fifty subsidies, had probably been long written off as taxes. Indeed many Londoners may have had little expectation of receiving any part of their contributions to the propositions, regarding them as political contributions rather than investments. It is therefore possible that any returns from these sums were regarded as a bonus. Undoubtedly doubling considerably mitigated the financial cost of the Civil War to the inhabitants of London.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Gentles, 'Sales of Bishops' Lands', 583, 588-9; CLRO Rep. 62, f. 93v; Habakkuk, 'Public Finance', 81 & n. 2; WAC E 30, St Margaret Westminster, Churchwardens' Accounts, 1650-1.

⁵⁵ Habakkuk, 'Public Finance', 79; Gentles, 'Sales of Bishops' Lands', 592-593; CSPD 1653-4, 448; CJ VIII, 238-241; the payment of interest on the Weavers Hall Bills from 1653 to 1659 are recorded in the excise accounts, PRO E 351 1297, f. 15; PRO AO 1 889 3, f. 4v; PRO AO 1 890 5 unfol.; PRO AO 1 891 7, f. 5; PRO AO 1 891 9, f. 7; PRO E 351/1298, f. 4v; PRO E 351/1299, f. 4v.

⁵⁶ Habakkuk, 'Public Finance', 86; CJ VI 608.

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(iv) Corporate Lending

It has been shown that Parliament was only ever able to borrow intermittently from the inhabitants of London. Two groups of lenders existed over whom Parliament was able to exert a greater degree of pressure to lend money. These were, firstly, the corporations of the City, the livery and merchant companies, and, secondly, Parliament's own revenue officers. From the very beginning the Long Parliament borrowed substantial sums from livery companies. In November 1640 £50,000 was borrowed, followed in June 1642 by a loan of £100,000 for Ireland. On 11 August 1643 the Common Council agreed to borrow £50,000 from the livery companies for the army, on the security of the second weekly assessment Ordinance. Each company's quota was assessed on the proportion of corn they were required to provide for the municipal stores.⁵⁷

Some companies, for instance the Cordwainers', paid their proportions promptly. Others proved more obdurate. The Clothworkers' protested that they could not pay their own debts. On 17 August 1643 the Assistants of the Pewterers' Company claimed that their debts were greater than their assets, and their members could not raise the money because of the decline in trade, and their own heavy taxes. A meeting with the 'better sort' of the yeomanry also produced no results. At a court held on 28 September 'with divers of the generality' about the loan, only one member was willing to advance £5 towards the loan.⁵⁸ At the end of September it was reported to the Commons that about £20,000 was still in arrears. The companies were threatened with sequestration, but this was not carried through. Nevertheless there was a protracted struggle between the Committee for Advance of Money and the more recalcitrant companies which continued until early 1645.⁵⁹

Most of the livery companies were unable to raise the loan from their own resources. (Their wealth came from legacies from deceased members and as a result their expenditure was tied to charitable projects of various kinds.) They were, therefore, compelled to borrow themselves. This need not have been problem if the loan was repaid promptly. Even a craft based company like the Cordwainers' was able to borrow the necessary money at seven per cent interest, one per cent less than the companies had been promised by Parliament.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ CLRO Jour. 40, f. 70v; CLRO Minutes of Common Hall, i, f. 79v; LJ VI, 195; Ashton, Crown and the Money Market, 135-6.

⁵⁸ GL MS. 7353-1, Cordwainers' Company, Court Minutes, 1622-1653, f. 262; CH, Orders of Court, 1639-1649, f. 83v; GL MS. 7090-4, Pewterers' Company, Court Minutes, 1611-1643, ff. 352, 353-v, 354.

⁵⁹ W. P. Harper, 'Public Borrowing, 1640-1650', (Unpublished MSc. thesis University of London, 1927), 67; CCAM i, 114-116.

⁶⁰ Harper, 'Public Borrowing', 67; GL MS. 7353-1, Cordwainers' Company, Court Minutes, 1622-1653, f. 262; LJ VI, 195.

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In May 1644 receipts which had been assigned to repay the livery companies, were diverted to fund the Trained Bands serving under Sir William Waller. In return the companies were promised repayment out of the Excise. In April and May 1645 companies which had paid their share promptly received a third of their principal back, plus the interest due on that third. The municipality tried to persuade the companies to re-lend the major part of their repayments for Brereton's Cheshire forces, but only three were willing to do so and contributed £1,500.⁶¹ No further repayments were forthcoming and this was the last time the livery companies lent substantial sums of money to the Long Parliament. When, in 1649, the Rump tried to get the companies to double the money they had lent on the £100,000 loan of June 1642 on the Dean and Chapter estates, none of the companies did so.⁶²

The livery companies still had to repay their own debts, and were forced to borrow more and more money to underwrite their loans. In November 1652 the Grocers' Company claimed that they were owed a total of £30,180 for principal and interest, of which they had received only £1,237, which left £28,943 still outstanding. In that year the company's total expenditure amounted to £7,416 17s, of which £4,250 was spent in repaying the principal on their debts, a further £275 5s on interest on the principal repaid, and £1,059 17s 6d on interest on their remaining debts. Not surprisingly the company sought to increase its immediate receipts, even at the expense of its long term revenue. In 1651 the Court of Assistants ordered all the company's existing leases be made up to ninety nine years, and all new ones to be made for that term. At the same time the Court also cut back expenditure, ordering that all the company's pensions and exhibitions to scholars not founded by specific benefactions should cease.⁶³

The Long Parliament also borrowed substantial sums from the merchant companies, generally in return for the confirmation of their privileges. In December 1642 the Merchant Adventurers offered £20,000, presumably to encourage Parliament to pass an Ordinance which they had presented ten days earlier to confirm their charter. Parliament failed to take them up on this offer, but in the following August they opened negotiations with the Merchant Adventurers for a loan of £60,000 for the navy. The company was offered the

⁶¹ CIRO Jour. 40, f. 94; CIRO Rep. 57 1, ff. 167v-168v; W. Prideaux, (ed.), Memorials of the Goldsmiths' Company, (2 vols., 1896), i, 220-1, 227, 228; PRO SP 28/168, f. 157; GL MS. 7351 2, Cordwainers' Company, Wardens' Accounts 1636-1678, 1644-5 accounts.

⁶² Firth & Rait, ii, 140.

⁶³ GL MS. 11571 13, Grocers' Company, Wardens' Accounts, 1642-1652, 1651-2 accounts; GL MS. 11588 4, Grocers' Company, Court Minutes, 1640-68, ff. 266, 267, 271; In 1650 the Cordwainers' Company sold lands totalling £790 to repay their debts, GL MS. 7353 1, Cordwainers' Company, Court Minutes, 1622-1653, ff. 340, 351, 353.

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security of the customs, the right to nominate the Customs Commissioners from March 1644, and confirmation of their privileges. The company agreed to lend the money, but when they insisted on receiving the customs from Michaelmas 1643 (which contradicted Parliament's commitment to the existing commissioners) the loan was rejected.⁶⁴

In the following October the Merchant Adventurers agreed to lend £30,000 for the navy on the security of the excise, and in return for the confirmation of their privileges. The company was promised repayment a third at a time every three months, but in the following January was persuaded to lend a further £10,000 for six months for Waller's forces in the west, and the repayment of the final £10,000 due in July was repeatedly deferred. The likelihood is that the eventually majority of the loan was repaid.⁶⁵ Further loans were raised from the Merchant Adventurers' in the latter part of the decade, £15,000 in November 1647 in return for Parliament's acknowledgement of £8,804 of outstanding debts to the company, which, together with the new loan, was secured on the excise. A year later £10,000 was borrowed for the navy which was repaid out of the customs, with interest. By April 1649 £10,000 plus interest had been repaid out of the excise and the remaining £13,804 owed to the company was transferred to the Dean and Chapter lands. This debt could not be used for the purchase of lands, and, as only a very small amount of money was raised in cash for the land sales in September 1650, the debt was removed from this security. In early 1653 the company complained that they were still owed £18,221 4s by the state, for which they had no security.⁶⁶

In November 1643 the proceeds of the additional Excise on meat and salt were assigned to the navy, and the Navy Committee was authorised to negotiate with any company of merchants for loans on this security. The committee negotiated a loan for £8,000 from the Levant Company and another for £6,000 from the East India Company. In return the Commons passed Ordinances for the confirmation of the charters of both companies, although that for the East India Company was defeated in the Lords. The Levant Company did not lend any more money to Parliament in the 1640s after their charter was confirmed, but in July 1648 the Committee of the Navy persuaded the East India Company to advance £10,000 on the customs of goods recently arrived.⁶⁷

In common with Parliament's other creditors, the Levant merchants, suffered delays

⁶⁴ C. Thompson, (ed.), Walter Yonge's Diary of Proceedings in the House of Commons 1642-1645, Vol. 1, 19th September 1642-7th March 1643, (Wivenhoe, 1986), 211; CJ II, 893; CJ III, 222, 235, 236, 237, 239, 243; BL Harl MS. 165, f. 194v.

⁶⁵ CJ III, 255, 265, 274, 364, 405-6, 417, 582, 722; CJ IV 104; CJ VI, 15.

⁶⁶ CJ V, 362, 369, 373-458; CJ VI, 56-462; PRO E 351/1295, f. 16; Firth & Rait, ii, 99-102; CSPD 1652-3, 136.

⁶⁷ CJ III, 312, 313, 395, 412; CCMEIC, 1640-3, 365-6; CCMEIC, 1644-49, 196, 278; LJ VI, 393.

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in the repayment of their loan. The company petitioned for repayment in December 1644, and again in the following March. A further petition at the end of August 1645 complained that, although the principal had been repaid, they still had not received any interest. The company's ledger book suggests that the interest was not received until March 1646.⁶⁸

The accounts of Sir Henry Vane, the Treasurer of the Navy, record payment of £5,000 from the treasurer of the Guinea Company. This arose out of an agreement reached with the company in December 1643. The company's ship the *Star* had recently arrived laden with £11,000 of gold, but the leading merchant involved in the company, Sir Nicholas Crispe, had been sequestered. The rest of the adventurers were willing to contribute £5,000 worth of the gold for the navy until Crispe's proper share had been determined. If a proportion of what had been advanced was found to belong to the other merchants, then they were to be repaid with eight per cent interest. In the following year the company claimed that the money was due to their creditors, and most this money was repaid.⁶⁹

The merchant companies generally did better from lending to Parliament than the livery companies. Although the repayment of their loans was usually delayed, they did receive most of their money with interest. The merchant companies also received the less tangible, but nevertheless important, asset of goodwill from the Long Parliament. However loans from the companies were not a major source of finance during the Civil War. The largest loan received by Parliament from any single London institution during the 1640s, was £70,000 received from the Merchant Adventurers in early 1642 for the war in Ireland.⁷⁰

(v) Borrowing from Revenue Officers

From 1643 borrowing from Parliament's own treasurers and revenue commissioners in anticipation of their revenues became an increasingly important part of Parliament's credit. The officers in question were generally wealthy London merchants and financiers who were appointed because of their willingness and ability to advance substantial sums. It is possible that they brokered loans to Parliament from the wider London financial community, much as the Customs Farmers had done for Charles I, although there is no direct evidence of this in the 1640s. It is likely that these men were the only Londoners to profit consistently from Parliament's finances, receiving not only interest on their loans, but

⁶⁸ PRO SP 105/143, ff. 101, 102v, 103v, 104, 105, 113; PRO SP 105/159, f. 126.

⁶⁹ CJ VI, 15; LJ VI, 321-2; PRO SP 16 540/365-400. The Customs Commissioners paid John Wood, the treasurer of the company, £3,039 on order from the Navy Committee in December 1644. PRO E351/644.

⁷⁰ PRO SP 28 162, Account of the Treasurers for the Act for £400,000, f. 20.

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also fees or salaries for their posts. Almost all London treasurers advanced money to Parliament. The Treasurers to the Committee at Goldsmith's Hall advanced at least £6,000 for the Scottish Army in 1645. The largest lenders were the Customs Commissioners, the Excise Commissioners and, after 1645, the Treasurers for the New Model Army, who advanced £125,891 2s 9d up to the end of 1650.⁷¹

The first revenue officers to lend to Parliament were the old Customs Commissioners. They advanced £4,500 to Parliament in August 1642 to transport the contents of the Hull magazine to London. By December 1642 they had advanced at least £50,000 for the navy. Parliament approached the old Customs Commissioners to borrow £20,000 for the army on 24 December 1642 on the public faith. The commissioners claimed that they were already engaged to lend £20,000 for the navy, but offered to negotiate if Parliament would appoint a committee to meet them. Presumably they were seeking better security. However, on receiving the King's belated Proclamation prohibiting the payment of customs to Parliament, the commissioners abandoned their posts.⁷²

On 14 January 1643 Giles Greene, the chairman of the Committee for the Navy and the Customs, presented proposals to the Commons from a group of Londoners who were willing to become Commissioners for the Customs in their place. Greene and his committee attempted to secure a loan of £30,000 from the new commissioners but they were only able to obtain £20,000, secured on the receipts of the customs. The new commissioners were accepted by Parliament, and orders and instructions were issued for them on 21 January.⁷³

Robert Brenner has argued that the new Customs Commissioners were drawn from the leaders of the 'new merchants', the opponents of the merchant companies who had arisen from the American trades, and their political allies. Certainly Maurice Thompson, Thomas Andrewes, and Francis Berkeley all had strong interests in the trade with the American colonies, and Francis Allen was an investor in the Bermuda company. Also Thompson, Andrewes, Stephen Estwicke, and James Russell were all involved in the East Indies interloping trade, and John Fowke was engaged in a long dispute with the East India Company. However the economic interests of the new commissioners were more diverse than Brenner suggests. Berkeley's main interest was in trade with France, James Russell was a member of the Merchant Adventurers' Company, and Fowke and Chambers were members of the Levant Company. Thomas Andrewes was a wholesale linen draper and had

⁷¹ CCCD, i, 30; PRO E 351/302.

⁷² J. S. Wheeler, 'English Army Finance and Logistics, 1642-1660', (Unpublished PhD. thesis University of California, Berkeley, 1980), 32-40; Thompson, Walter Yonge's Diary, 164, 204; CJ II, 900-1; BL E245(11), England's Memorable Accidents, 9-16 Jan. 1643, 148.

⁷³ CJ II, 902, 919, 927-8, 937, 1001-4; Thompson, Walter Yonge's Diary, 206, 253-4, 261, 341.

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previously been an undersharer in the customs farm. Estwicke was generally described as a 'haberdasher of small wares', while Francis Allen was a jeweller.⁷⁴

Parliament had constant problems obtaining further finance from the new commissioners. Efforts to extract a new loan in March failed, as did a further attempt in August, although in the following month they agreed to lend £30,000. In March of the following year the commissioners agreed to lend a further £22,000, but by 23 May only £15,000 had been received. This consortium held office until February 1645 during which time they advanced about £111,000 for the navy. When compared with the Caroline customs farmers, who advanced over £104,000 to Charles I in 1640 alone, their record was disappointing. It probably reflects the poor state of the customs revenue at this time, and the reluctance of the commissioners to over commit themselves.⁷⁵

The commissioners paid themselves £4,226 in interest on their loans and received a further £12,223 17s 9d from their successors. It was their salary which was their principal source of profit. They paid themselves a total of £20,833 for slightly over two years. Their accounts also show separate payments for the customs officers and expenses, so most of this must have been clear profit. In total they made about £37,282 from their office.⁷⁶

The new Customs Commission appointed in February 1645 was dominated by senior members of the Merchant Adventurers' Company. They accepted a much smaller salary, £1,000 per quarter instead of £2,500, and they advanced £50,000 on entering office. Subsequently they lent a further £80,000 for the navy before they were removed from office by the Commonwealth in July 1649. They repaid themselves about £20,348 in interest and £16,666 13s 4d for their salary. In total the various Customs Commissioners received about £74,296 in salaries and interest payments from the beginning of 1643 to July 1649.⁷⁷

The money advanced on the customs went to the navy, but the introduction of the excise in 1643 provided an opportunity to borrow money for other purposes. Like the customs, the excise was put in the hands of a group of London merchants, almost certainly to facilitate raising loans on future receipts. The commissioners were to receive six pence in the pound as salary, they protested that this would not adequately compensate them, for the

⁷⁴ Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution*, 175, 432; Pearl, *London and the Outbreak of the Puritan Revolution*, 309, 314, 315, 317; *CJ* VI, 320.

⁷⁵ *CJ* III, 2, 19, 243, 245; Bodl. Rawlinson MS. A221, ff. 6v, 50; PRO E 351 643-5; BL Harl. MS. 164, f. 354; BL Harl MS. 165, f. 154v; Ashton, *Crown and the Money Market*, 110-1.

⁷⁶ PRO E 351 64-5.

⁷⁷ Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution*, 434 n. 81; *LJ* VII, 265; *CJ* V, 122, 168, 331, 468, 514, 537, 647, 652, 678; PRO E 351 645-9.

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office they claimed, would take up almost all of their time.⁷⁸

By March 1644 at least £90,000 had been advanced by the Excise Commissioners to pay for Parliament's armies. Unfortunately the lack of any accounts for the excise before 1647 makes it difficult to establish whether the commissioners profited from their office. By September 1644 they were complaining that more obligations were being placed on excise than it was able to bear. Nevertheless one of the commissioners, Thomas Cullum, earned around £1,300 per year from his post from 1644 to 1650.⁷⁹

John Fowke told the Commons that the most of the Customs Commissioners had abandoned their businesses to concentrate on the administration of the customs, the Levant Company's ledger book suggests Fowke did stop trading. This was not, however, true of his colleague Richard Chambers, or the Excise Commissioners, John Langham and Simon Edmonds. Thomas Cullum's account book shows that he continued his drapery business while he was an Excise Commissioner, and that he prospered during the 1640s. The financiers may indeed have used the profits from their offices to sustain their businesses. It is also possible that, like the Caroline customs farmers, they used the receipts which came into their hands for private financial transactions before the money fell due. John Towse used some of the money which he received as Guildhall Treasurer for his own purposes.⁸⁰

It is also possible that those Londoners who held office in Parliament's financial machinery were profiting illicitly from their offices by embezzlement and corruption. There were certainly plenty of allegations of this kind at the time. Francis Allen, one of the Treasurers at War, was said to have made £70,000 in this way. However many of these allegations came from royalist or other politically biased sources and are clearly unreliable; one tract claimed that Thomas Atkins profited from his position as Treasurer at War, a post he never held. Both Blair Worden and Gerald Aylmer have tended to discount these allegations, and there is no reason to believe that the parliamentary regime was any more corrupt than its predecessors, although this is not saying very much. It is suggestive that Cromwell, at least, believed the allegations against Francis Allen.⁸¹

Possibly the greatest opportunities for enrichment came in the aftermath of the Civil

⁷⁸ CJ III, 239, 240, 243.

⁷⁹ LJ VI, 253, 304, 316, 318, 327; Wheeler, 'English Army Finance and Logistics', 77; HMC Thirteenth Report, Portland MSS., i, 184; A. Simpson, 'Thomas Cullum, Draper, 1587-1664', EcHR, 2nd Series, 11, (1958), 26-7.

⁸⁰ BL Harl. 165, f. 154v; PRO SP 105 159, ff. 40, 84, 99; Simpson, 'Thomas Cullum', 26-7, 34; Ashton, Crown and the Money Market, 14; CCAM ii, 567.

⁸¹ B. Worden, The Rump Parliament, 1648-1653, (Cambridge, 1974), 95; A Second Centurie; G. E. Aylmer, The States Servants: The Servants of the English Republic, 1649-1660, (1973), 328; I. Gentles, The New Model Army in England Ireland and Scotland, 1645-1653, (Oxford, 1992), 433.

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War. Of the four Treasurers for the Propositions appointed in 1642, Warner and Towse, who both died in the 1640s, did not prosper in the period, whereas Andrewes and Wollaston, who survived into the 1650s and invested in church lands, were more fortunate. In early November 1646 the three surviving treasurers petitioned Parliament. Claiming that they had not received any recompense for their service, they asked that they be voted not ready money, but a sum in recognition of the debt owed to them, as though it had been lent on the propositions. They were voted £5,000 on the public faith, but it is probably no coincidence that this happened shortly before the opening of subscriptions on the first doubling Ordinance.⁸²

The various revenue commissioners made considerable sums of money lending money to Parliament, which is almost certainly more than can be said for most of Parliament's creditors, but few made their fortunes this way. Their ability to advance large sums suggests they were wealthy men before the war. It is possible that many of them suffered substantial drops in their income from their established trades. The success of the Customs Commissioners in profiting from their offices may, in part, be due to their efforts to restrict the amounts they lent. Of course this reduced their potential profits, but it also made it less likely that Parliament would default on their debts. Nevertheless, although there is no evidence that office in Parliament's financial machinery was a road to overnight riches, it did enable a group of wealthy London merchants to become even wealthier.

(vi) Conclusion

Parliamentary loans can be divided into two types, those which were raised on the public faith alone, and those raised on specific securities. Contributing to the former can be best regarded as political acts, while the latter were more like investments. The funded loans raised by parliament in London during the Civil War were surprisingly small. The largest single loan, the £80,000 for the New Model Army, is significantly less than the loan provided by the Customs Farmers for Charles I in 1640. As far back as 1607 the farmers had lent £120,000, and a similar sum had been advanced by the City in the late 1620s as part of the great contract, and Sir Paul Pindar had lent £85,000 in 1638-9.⁸³ Parliament had already begun to raise substantial loans before the Civil War began, over half a million pounds was raised in 1640-2 to pay for the settlement of the Bishops' Wars and the suppression of the Irish rebellion.⁸⁴ It is not until after the first Civil War, when doubling

⁸² Pearl, London and the Outbreak of the Puritan Revolution, 310-11, 325, 327, 328-331; CJ IV, 715.

⁸³ Ashton, Crown and the Money Market, 24, 84, 110-1, 132-3.

⁸⁴ 'A Declaration concerning the generall Accompts of the Kingdome', reprinted in Lord Somers' Tracts, (16 vols., 1748-1752), iv, 140-1.

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was introduced, that significantly larger loans were raised in London.

It is possible that the cumulative total of many smaller loans in the Civil War was greater than that which had gone before but the persistent financial problems of Parliament, at least until 1645, suggests that the war effort was significantly under financed. Moreover a very large proportion of Parliament's forces, those in local garrisons and the smaller provincial forces, were financed directly from the area in which they were located. The highly decentralised nature of the war effort made metropolitan finance less important to Parliament than it might otherwise have been. Only a very small proportion of the money for Sir William Brereton's Cheshire forces came from loans from London. The war may not have led to a major expansion in government finance and it is therefore unlikely that Parliamentary finance led to a shortage of capital in Civil War London, nor did it stimulate the financial sector.⁸⁵

Except for the propositions and other unsecured subscriptions, the methods used by Parliament appear to have been broadly similar to those employed by the early Stuart monarchs. Both conducted a high proportion of their credit transactions with persons already involved with their revenue, such as customs farmers, treasurers or revenue commissioners. In all likelihood, these officers not only lent their own money, but also acted as intermediaries with other sources of finance, borrowing money to lend to the state.⁸⁶ Both the Crown and Parliament sought to use the municipality as an intermediary in their dealings with wealthy London citizens, which often meant that senior members of the municipality, especially the Aldermen, formed a large proportion of lenders. Under both the Crown and Parliament, when the credit of the state began to wear thin, large scale land sales were used to secure future loans and repay creditors.⁸⁷

In contrast with the credit dealings of the Protectorate and the Restoration monarchy, there is very little evidence of the activities of goldsmith bankers in the financial transactions of the Long Parliament. Thomas Vyner, who was originally a working goldsmith, did lend money on pawned plate before the Civil War: but he did not become a banker until the later stages of his career. He lent only relatively small sums in the 1640s, £100 in 1643, and a further £150 in 1647. Parliamentary finance during the Civil War did not therefore mark a major change in English government finance. However in the post war period signs of change can be detected. Weavers' Hall bills were perhaps the first widely traded, long term, funded government securities, here we may be looking at the pre-history

⁸⁵ J. Morrill, Cheshire, 1630-1660: County Government and Society during the 'English Revolution', (Oxford, 1974), 99-107.

⁸⁶ Ashton, Crown and the Money Market, 18, 23, 24-5, 99.

⁸⁷ Ibid. 119-20, 122, 127, 132-3

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of the financial revolution.⁸⁸

In the early part of the war even major supporters in London had difficulties in obtaining repayment for their loans. In October 1643 £1,000 was borrowed from Stephen Estwicke because of delays in the collection of the £50,000 loan from the livery companies. He was promised repayment out of the receipts from the loan, but was still waiting for his money in January 1645, despite lobbying on his behalf from the London militia committee.⁸⁹

From 1645 financial administration began to improve. Lingering suspicions about Parliament's good faith meant that many were unwilling to lend. In turn, few profited from the improvement. Much greater enthusiasm was generated by doubling, but it is probable that most Londoners who doubled did not make a profit. Those who lent money in the early years of the war, unless they had the money to double, found it very difficult to receive more than a small fraction of their money back. Those who did double, but were not able or willing to invest in the Bishops' lands, were only able to get part of their money back by selling their bills at a substantial discount.

Caution should be exercised before concluding that Parliamentary finance was a major burden on the economy. Many of the earlier unsecured loans were probably seen more as a political contribution than as an investment and may well have been written off until the advent of doubling. Although the money raised this way was large, the individual contributions were generally small. Most Londoners would have regarded the money they paid on the twentieth part, the weekly assessment and the fifty subsidies as taxes, so getting even part of this money back would have been seen as a windfall. This may explain why doubled notes circulated at a discount, for selling at 15s in the pound may have been regarded as a fifty per cent profit if the original public faith bill had been judged worthless.

For wealthy supporters of Parliament, and even canny neutralists, the Civil War and its aftermath did present opportunities for enrichment. Office holding in Parliament's financial machinery offered a means for some wealthy Londoners to profit from the war, although whether the profits were as good as those of pre-war commerce is doubtful, whilst by 1645, lending on the credit of Parliament's assessment ordinances presented a relatively secure way of making a profit. Indeed, if the treasurers were acting as conduits between the money markets and Parliament, then the profits would have been spread more

⁸⁸ R. Richards, *The Early History of Banking in England*, (1929), 39; PRO SP 28 162, Account of Treasurers for £95,900 loan, 1641, f. 2; *CCAM* i, 27; PRO SP 28 350/5, part 1, f. 8; D. K. Clark, 'A Restoration Goldsmith-Banking House, The Vine on Lombard Street', in *Essays in Modern English History in Honour of Wilbour Cortez Abbott*, (Cambridge Mass., 1941), 3-4, 7.

⁸⁹ *CCAM*, i, 337; *CJ*, IV, 12-13.

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widely than at first appears to have been the case. Those with the money to buy up large amounts of Parliament's bills may well have profited greatly from the sale of episcopal lands.

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Very large sums of money were expended by Parliament in fighting the war. Sir Gilbert Gerrard spent over £1 million as Treasurer for the Army of the Earl of Essex, from its inception in 1642 to early 1645. The expenditure of the Treasurers of the New Model Army totalled over £7.5 million up to the end of 1651. Further large sums of money were spent on the provincial armies. The sums spent on Parliament's navy were also considerable, the younger Sir Henry Vane spent over £1.5 million as Treasurer of the Navy between August 1642 and May 1649.¹

It is clear that Londoners were involved in the supply of the provincial forces. In February 1643 George Langley, a Fleet Street saddler, sold forty one saddles to Lord Brooke for the forces in the west Midlands. John Weaver's accounts for the Eastern Association record payments for arms, tents and saddles purchased in London.² The war saw the expenditure of large sums of money in other areas, for example the defence works around London.³ There was also the money spent by private individuals as a result of the war. When, at the beginning of the war, Edmund Heaman, a clothier from Devon, decided to arm himself and his servants, he employed his brother, then living in the metropolis, to purchase the arms. A larger example of private military expenditure brought about by the war was privateering, a number of London merchants sought to assist the Parliamentary cause and make money by setting out private warships to prey on royalist commerce. All these forms of extra expenditure must be taken into account when assessing the impact of the war on the London economy. However it was undoubtedly the main armies and the navy which had the greatest impact on the London economy⁴

It will never be possible to fully establish how much private individuals spent on arms. Government expenditure can be described, to some degree, although it would need a systematic study of the various accounts and warrants for expenditure in the Commonwealth Exchequer Papers (SP 28), the records of Parliament's Ordinance office and other sources, and such a study was not possible within the time constraints of this thesis. Nevertheless a pattern similar to that noted for Parliamentary loans can be discerned. In the early years of the suppliers generally found it very difficult to get payment for the

¹ CJ VI, 13, 15; PRO E 351 302; PRO E 351 2285-7.

² PRO SP 28 5, f. 362; A. Everitt, (ed.), Suffolk and the Great Rebellion, 1640-1660, (Suffolk Record Society, 1960), 89-91.

³ L. C. Nagel, 'The Militia of London, 1641-1649', (Unpublished PhD. thesis, University of London, 1982), 77.

⁴ PRO HCA 13 60, examination of Richard Heaman, 8 May 1645.

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goods they supplied as a result military contracting may have had a deflationary impact on the London economy. Moreover privateering proved a risky business and never became such a major enterprise as it had been during the Elizabethan Spanish wars.

Fortunately for the London economy this poor state of affairs did not continue into the latter part of the war. In 1645 Parliament's wartime administration was improved substantially, and ready payment became the norm. As a result the economy began to benefit from supplying the military. Prices were low, and there is little evidence of profiteering, but by 1645 the resources that contracting brought in to the London economy must have been, at least in part, offsetting what was lost in taxation. Nevertheless caution should be exercised before attributing any great influence to military contracting. War in the seventeenth century was not capital intensive, most of the money expended went on paying the soldiers, not purchasing equipment. Perhaps as a result, it is difficult to discern any major structural impact brought about by military contracting on the London economy. The London livery companies played a significant role in military contracting, providing a point of contact between Parliament and the craftsmen and helping with quality control.

The system for supplying the Army of the Earl of Essex was dominated by Londoners. In August 1642 Stephen Estwicke and two other colleagues were instructed by the Committee for Safety to receive clothing from the stores purchased for the forces in Ireland, which they were to distribute to the infantry regiments of Essex's army. Estwicke was also authorised to purchase whatever additional stores were necessary, for which he would receive 15s 4d for every man clothed from the Treasurer of the Army, Sir Gilbert Gerrard. In practice the clothing from the Irish stores proved adequate for only a small proportion of Essex's soldiers, and fresh supplies were soon necessary. Unfortunately the surviving records do not tell us where the clothing they bought came from, but it seems likely that

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much of it came from London.⁵

In the first eight months of the war, Estwicke provided over £23,000 worth of clothing, of which less than £2,000 worth came from the Irish stores. This was potentially a significant stimulus to the metropolitan economy. But the evidence suggests that, although at first the warrants issued to Gerrard to pay Estwicke were paid promptly, he was increasingly the victim of Parliament's growing financial crisis. When, on 13 August 1642 Essex issued a warrant to Gerrard to pay him £1,500, Estwicke received the first £60 on the same day and the balance three days later. A further warrant to pay him £1,500 was issued on 1 September. However these payments did not cover his costs; a warrant dated 4 October 1642 stated that Estwicke had spent £2,130 3s for which he had received £1,650, not from Gerrard, but from the treasurers for the propositions. Gerrard was ordered to reimburse the treasurers and pay Estwicke £470, which he received on 23 November. This incident suggests that Estwicke and his colleagues did not have the resources to cover a large deficit on their own, to pay their suppliers they needed prompt funding from Parliament's treasurers. On the same day Gerrard was ordered to pay Estwicke £600 per week for twelve weeks, but the payments he received were delayed and inadequate. A similar fate befell a similar warrant in November, while no payments at all were made on a warrant of the 5 December.⁶

An audit of Estwicke's accounts made on 28 April 1643, showed a deficit of £12,163 13s 8d and reveal that he had not received any money since 3 December. In the following month another warrant was issued to pay him £1,000 a week, but nothing had been paid to him by 10 August when Parliament passed an Ordinance ordering that he be paid £10,000 from the receipts of the Twentieth Part in London, Westminster and Middlesex. This money was a long time coming. He was still receiving money on this order in March 1645. It is likely that the contractors who supplied Estwicke and his colleagues had to wait a very long time for the repayment of their bills.⁷

A similar picture of late payments and deficits emerges when other aspects of the supplying of Parliament's armed forces in the early years of the war are examined. In the summer of 1642 two Londoners, Owen Rowe and John Bradley, were put in charge of the supplies of arms and equipment which had been brought to the metropolis from Hull for Parliament's forces. Subsequently they were also charge with buying additional material. Here there is clear evidence of substantial purchases from London craftsmen. In September

⁵ PRO SP 28/146, Accounts of Stephen Estwicke.

⁶ PRO SP 28/1A, ff. 85-v; PRO SP 28/2A, f. 38; PRO SP 28/261, ff. 430, 432, 433, 436.

⁷ PRO SP 28/146, Accounts of Stephen Estwicke; PRO SP 28/264, f. 362; *CCAM*, i, 337; iii, 1490, 1491.

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1642 they contracted for 16,127 swords, 15,620 sword belts and carbine girdles and 7,720 bandoleers from various London craftsmen.⁸

Once again we find problems with arrears for payments. On 14 April 1643 Sir Gilbert Gerrard wrote on a bill for £77 5s due to Marmaduke Saunders for 1,030 sword belts delivered in the previous November: 'I am informed this man is very poor there is owing unto him three bills besides this, and if this be not paid he is like to be arrested'.⁹ In October 1643 the Gunmakers' Company petitioned Parliament about the large sums owed them for arms they had supplied. On 13 March 1644 the Commons was petitioned by a group of girdlers, saddlers, cutlers and other craftsmen, almost certainly concerning the money owed them for equipment they had supplied. In July 1644 and December 1645 the excise was extended to new commodities to help pay Parliament's debts for munitions. But in October 1646 the Commons was again petitioned by various craftsmen for the payment of their debts. At the Restoration, Parliament still had debts of £17,011 19s 2d to various London gunsmiths dating from the 1640s.¹⁰

In the early years of the war large amounts of munitions were imported. In 1642 Alderman Andrewes and Stephen Estwicke used their factors in France and Holland to purchase a very large quantity of arms, including 12,000 muskets and 6,000 pikes. In October Sir Gilbert Gerrard was ordered to pay bills of exchange to the value of £15,000 for them. Many of the contracts made by Rowe and Bradley for arms were with merchants, probably for imported goods. In February 1643 they purchased seventy six muskets and fifteen pairs of pistols from Jasper de Rudder, a merchant of Bruges in the Spanish Netherlands.¹¹ This, like the failures of payment, would have significantly diminished the stimulatory impact of military contracting on the London economy in the early years of the war. The import of munitions became a significant grievance to the native producers. The gunmakers' petition of October 1643 complained that imported arms were not as well tested as those produced at home.¹²

Through the work of Ian Gentles, the supply and equipment of the New Model Army is the clearest aspect of this subject. The contract book for the first year of the New Model Army's existence has survived and was printed in 1968. The accounts of the Treasurers at War show that they spent about £208,944 on provisions for the Army in England. The majority of this expenditure took place in the early part of the army's

⁸ PRO SP 28 147, ff. 562-97; PRO SP 28 261, ff. 184, 298, 426, 428.

⁹ PRO SP 28 264, f. 90.

¹⁰ HMC, Fifth Report, House of Lords MSS., 111; CJ IV, 76, 250, 681; Firth & Rait, i, 466, 806-9; CJ VIII, 242.

¹¹ HMC, Fifth Report, House of Lords MSS., 111.

¹² PRO SP 28 261, f. 284; PRO SP 28 5, ff. 377, 378.

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existence. Gentles found that £116,823 was contracted for in its first year. There were about 200 suppliers and, where the addresses are given, they seem always to have been Londoners. The evidence suggests that most of the equipment was made in London, and that many of the contracts were made directly with craftsmen rather than merchants. Only a few of the contracts for powder and match were for imported goods. Gentles found that the contracts for the New Model Army were paid promptly, but suggested that the low prices left little scope for war profiteering. Moreover the vast majority of the treasurers' expenditure went on the soldier's pay. Nevertheless, it is evident that a very substantial proportion of what was raised in the metropolis on the monthly assessment for the New Model Army, found its way back into the London economy through contracting. Indeed it is likely that, in the first year of its existence, the New Model Army resulted in a net inflow of resources into London. But this did not last as expenditure on equipment declined after the end of the first Civil War, although further sums were expended on equipment for the army's campaigns in Ireland and Scotland.¹³

Many more people were involved in supplying Parliament's armies than appear in the records of contracts and payments. Suppliers contracted to produce large quantities of equipment in a very short time. On 23 December 1645 John Thacker agreed to supply 400 pikes for the New Model Army, the first hundred of which were to be delivered by the end of that month. Much of the work was surely sub-contracted.¹⁴

Turning to the navy, it is noticeable that Parliament built no new ships in the state dockyards until 1646. Eight ships were bought for the navy between 1642 and 1645, but none of them were very large vessels, and the largest, the frigate the *Warwick*, was probably one of the two frigates purchased in Holland in early 1643. It is therefore difficult to believe that the London ship building industry received much direct stimulus from Parliament's navy in the period of the first Civil War, although in the immediate post war period Parliament did start to build new ships, and of course the Commonwealth period saw a major expansion of the navy. Nevertheless the Civil War may well have stimulated the shipping and maritime industries in the metropolis. The navy itself may not have been augmented, but large numbers of merchant ships were employed in Parliament's navy: 124 were hired in the years 1643-5, at a cost of £250,184, mostly from London ship owners.¹⁵

The navy did not escape the financial problems which beset Parliament in the early part of the war. The owners of merchant ships often had difficulties in receiving prompt

¹³ I. Gentles, *The New Model Army in England Ireland and Scotland, 1644-1653*, (Oxford, 1992), 41-2.

¹⁴ G. I. Mungeam, 'Contracts for the Supply of the "New Model Army" in 1645', *Journal of the Arms and Armour Society*, 6, (1968-1970), 64.

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payment for the freight of their ships; in December 1643 William Cockayne, the deputy governor of the East India Company, petitioned the Navy Committee complaining that he was still owed £443 12s 5d from the previous year. In the summer of 1643 the navy suffered from a major financial crisis when the Customs Commissioners refused to lend money when the summer fleet returned to base. Parliament was unable to pay the freight for the merchant ships hired for the summer fleet in that year, and they were kept on for several months after they had returned to port, while the ships' companies came to the door of Parliament clamouring for wages. Vane's accounts for 1645-6 show payments of £41,007 8s 8d to the owners of ships hired, but also record that a further £92,124 8s 1d remained due to them. At the Restoration £26,000 was still owed for ships employed by Parliament in the first Civil War.¹⁶

New ships were built in London for privateering, such as the *Constant Warwick* built by Peter Pett in his Ratcliff shipyard. The subject of parliamentary privateering is a complicated one, but without the accounts of the merchants involved we have no sure way of knowing whether privateering was profitable. Parliament first authorised privateers to attack royalist shipping in November 1642, but a year later it proved necessary to subsidise their costs from public funds. The Venetian ambassador reported that the decision of Parliament to authorise privateers had been welcomed because of the lack of alternative employment for shipping. Despite this, it is noticeable that a very substantial proportion of the privateers were provided by a small circle around the radical merchant Maurice Thompson.¹⁷

In the summer of 1644, twenty five vessels were listed as privateers receiving the subsidy. In total Parliament paid for forty eight privateering vessels during the first Civil War. Large numbers of merchantmen trading with royalist ports were taken but most were taken by the navy rather than the privateers. In June 1646 the Navy Commissioners claimed that 110 merchant vessels and thirty nine of the King's men of war had been taken by Parliament's ships. These were probably only the ships taken by the navy itself, as a list of ships adjudged prizes in the Court of Admiralty records about 239 vessels from 3 December 1643 to 13 June 1646, which suggests that the privateers took about ninety

¹⁵ R. C. Anderson, *List of English Men of War, 1509-1649*, (1959), 305-366; K. R. Andrews, *Ships, Money and Politics, Seafaring and Naval Enterprise in the reign of Charles I*, (Cambridge, 1991), 191.

¹⁶ BL E405(8), G. Greene, *A Declaration in Vindication of the Honour of the Parliament, and of the Committee of the Navy and Customs against all Traducers*, (1647), 11-12; BL Harl. MS. 165, f. 159v; J. R. Tanner, (ed.), *Two Discourses of the Navy, 1638 and 1659, by John Hollond*, (Naval Record Society, 1896), 138-140; Bodl. Rawlinson MS. A221, ff. 18, 302; PRO E 351/2285; *CJ* VIII, 244.

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ships. (This is probably an underestimate as the High Court of Admiralty list did not include ships taken in the first year of the war). The accounts of the Collectors of Prize Goods from February 1644 to April 1649 show total receipts of £123,202 18s 2d, of which £76,188 1s 10d was received by the end of July 1646, but they only paid out £10,722 13s 9d to the owners of private vessels. In contrast, the value of prize goods taken by privateers during the war with Spain in the late sixteenth century ranged from £100,000 to £200,000 a year.¹⁸

Privateering vessels were very expensive, one such ship cost between £1,500 and £1,600 to purchase and fit out. They therefore needed to take a large number of prizes to become profitable. In February 1644 a group consisting predominantly of London merchants sent out a squadron of five ships, four prizes were taken, but the costs exceeded the returns, and the ships were recalled in the following November. Even Maurice Thompson had his fingers burnt in privateering. In January 1644 he sent out the *Hopeful Mary* as a privateer. It took four vessels, two of which were sold for £1,300, but the other two were not adjudged good prizes and were released. Later in that year the *Hopeful Mary* was seized by the French authorities. According to one deponent in a subsequent Chancery case, the profits from the prizes failed to compensate for the costs that Thompson and his partners incurred. In April 1645 the owners of the *Discovery*, a privateer which operated in the Irish Sea, claimed that they had delivered £7,447 8s 8d worth of goods to the forces under the command of Lord Inchiquin in Ireland, for which they had not received payment.¹⁹

Andrews found that the most profitable Elizabethan privateering ventures were those which combined trade with privateering. There is evidence of similar ventures in the Civil War period; in 1643 the master of the *Mary Bonadventure* took a letter of marque from Parliament with him when he sailed on a trading voyage to West Africa and the Caribbean. But these types of expeditions were exceptional. Most privateers operated in conjunction with Parliament's navy in the Irish sea or the Channel, and did not engage in

¹⁷ A. W. Johns, 'The Constant Warwick', *MM*, 18, (1932), 254; *LJ* V, 467; Bodl. Rawlinson MS. A221, f. 261; *Firth & Rait*, i, 347-51, 392-3; *CSPV*, 1642-3, 220; S. Groenveld, 'The English Civil Wars as a Cause of the First Anglo-Dutch War, 1640-52', *IJ*, 30, (1987), 548.

¹⁸ *Powell & Timings*, 139-40; BL E340(31), *The Answer of the Commissioners of the Navie to a scandalous Pamphlet published by Mr. Andrewes Burrell*, (1646), 10; PRO HCA 34/1; PRO E 351/2513; K. R. Andrews, *Elizabethan Privateering: English Privateering during the Spanish War, 1585-1603*, (Cambridge, 1964), 128.

¹⁹ PRO C 24/699/67; Andrews, *Ships, Money and Politics*, 192 n. 20, 194; Groenveld, 'English Civil Wars as a Cause of the First Anglo-Dutch War', 551 & n. 37; E. J. Courthorpe, (ed.), *The Journal of Thomas Cunningham of Campvere, 1640-1654*, (Edinburgh, 1928), 73-4, 101; PRO C 24/699/46; PRO C 24/704/52; PRO SP 28 265, ff. 2, 9.

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trade. In all the evidence concerning the voyage of the *Hopeful Mary*, for example, there is no mention that she ever engaged in trade.²⁰ The largest single naval private enterprise in this period, the 'sea adventure' initiated in 1642 against the Irish rebels, also proved a disappointment, and, by June 1643, had run out of money.²¹

Parliament was not the only bad debtor in the 1640s. On 1 December 1643 the Common Council received a petition from various carpenters, bricklayers, smiths and other craftsmen who had worked on the fortifications which had been built around London, claiming £7,433 15s 3d arrears. In the following April a further petition, probably from the same group of craftsmen, claimed roughly £7,500 for work on the forts around the metropolis. A year later another petition was delivered to the Common Council for the payment of the arrears due for building the fortifications, and in the following December yet another petition was delivered by the craftsmen employed on the fortifications.²²

In general there is little evidence that military contracting changed the structure of the London economy. Parliament's contracting for munitions seems to have been very similar to Charles I's. Contracts for swords were shared between members of the London Cutlers' Company and outsiders like Benjamin Stone, as they had been during the Bishops War. Many of the men who supplied Parliament had also been involved supplying the Caroline regime with arms, such as the gunfounder John Browne.²³

Some contracts were made with the livery companies. In April 1645 the Army Committee contracted with the Cutlers' Company to provide 3,200 swords, and with the Saddlers' Company to provide 600 saddles for the New Model Army. At the same time some of the livery companies were in dispute with army suppliers who were not free of the City, but nevertheless traded within its liberties. The Saddlers' Company was in dispute with Elizabeth Betts, who supplied saddles to the New Model Army, but was the widow of a foreigner. The gunmakers were particularly concerned about non freemen taking up their trade during the war. Perhaps the great growth in demand for arms brought many into the trade whose established trades had been disrupted by the war.²⁴

²⁰ Andrews, Elizabethan Privateering, 135; PRO HCA 24 106 332; Andrews, Ships, Money and Politics, 197-198.

²¹ PRO SP 28 7, f. 486; Andrews, Ships, Money and Politics, 197.

²² CLRO Jour. 40, ff. 80v, 91-2, 136, 156.

²³ M. C. Fissel, The Bishops' Wars, Charles I's Campaigns against Scotland, 1638-1640, (Cambridge, 1994), 100, 103-6; Gentles, New Model Army, 42; PRO SP 28/261, ff. 329, 428.

²⁴ Mungeam, 'Contracts for the Supply of the "New Model" Army', 66, 80, 81, 114; GL MS. 5385, Saddlers Company, Court Minutes, 1605-1665, ff. 247, 255 260v, 262v; CLRO Rep. 57/2, f. 81; GL MS. 12071 3, Armourers' Company, Court Minutes, 1621-1675, f. 144v; There is no record of the contracts made directly with the company's in their own records, probably they were informally distributed among the membership.

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Peter Edwards has emphasised the importance of a small group of Smithfield market dealers in providing horses for the Parliament's armies. Between 3 April and 26 August 1645 they sold 6,708 horses for the New Model Army. He has argued that those who were most involved in supplying the armies were not particularly committed to the cause, but prominent, long established, traders who needed some means of maintaining their businesses in the war years. On the other hand he has also argued that the contractors tended to operate outside the existing markets and fairs, and suggested that the war encouraged the growth of private trading in horses, accelerating changes in economic practices and structures.²⁵

A closer examination of the provision of shoes for the armies will enable the impact of army contracts to be investigated in more detail. Alan Everitt has argued that the Civil War was the foundation of the Northampton shoemaking industry. Although the Northampton shoemakers did receive contracts to supply the Army in Ireland in 1642 and, on at least a couple of occasions, for Parliament's armies in the 1640s, no evidence has been found that they supplied Parliament with shoes on a regular basis. It has not been possible to establish who made the shoes for Parliament's armies in the first part of the war because they were supplied by Stephen Estwicke, and none of his contracts have survived. It is possible that Estwicke was purchasing shoes in Northampton, but the contract book for the New Model Army shows that in 1645 shoes were purchased in London, mostly from members of the London Cordwainers' Company. They may have sub-contracted some of the work to Northampton shoemakers, but the contracts had to be fulfilled quickly. In February 1645 the Army Committee placed a contract for 8,000 pairs of shoes stipulating that they were to be delivered to the Tower within a fortnight, which implies that they were to be made locally.²⁶

The contracts made for supply of the army in Ireland in 1642 may indicate why the London shoemakers dominated the contracts for the New Model Army. In May 1642 the Northampton shoemakers came to London in person to make contracts with the Commissioners for the Affairs of Ireland, which was clearly a cumbersome way of doing business. However the major reason may have been pricing. The shoes from the Northampton shoemakers were only slightly cheaper than those provided by the Londoners, at most the difference was only 2d a pair, and these prices excluded the cost of

²⁵ P. Edwards, 'The Supply of Horses to the Parliamentary and Royalist Armies in the English Civil War', *Historical Research*, 68, (1995), 61-65.

²⁶ A. M. Everitt, *The Local Community and the Great Rebellion*, (1969), 14; V. F. Snow & A. S. Young, (eds.), *The Private Journals of the Long Parliament*, Vol. 3: *2nd June to 17th September 1642*, (New Haven, 1992), 422; *CJ* III, 493; PRO SP 28 305 unfol.; *CSPD* 1648-9, 227, 230; Mungeam, 'Contracts for the Supply of the "New Model" Army', 75-6.

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transport. The contacts with the Northampton shoemakers specified delivery at Northampton and, given that the main depot for the New Model Army was at Reading, contracting with the London shoemakers may have proved cheaper than contracting with those from Northampton. This suggests that the cost differentials between manufacturing in London and elsewhere in England were not very significant in the middle of the seventeenth century.²⁷

The Cordwainers' Company was not usually directly involved in contracting, although the accounts of the Treasurers for Goldsmith's Hall record receipt of £60 from the company for a discount on payment of £1,575 for a contract for boots for the Scottish Army. The discount was possibly for prompt payment. There is no record of contracts being made directly with the company for the supply of English forces, although the company was employed to check the quality of shoes delivered for the army.²⁸

The most important contractor for shoes for the New Model Army was Jenkin Ellis. Sometimes the contracts are in his name only, but generally there are others named with him. The recurrence of the same names and phrases like 'Jenkin Ellis and his Company' suggests a reasonably stable partnership, although in early 1646 they appear to have combined together with seven other contractors to fulfil an exceptionally large contract for 7,000 pairs of shoes. It is likely that where only his name occurs he was acting as representative for the partnership. They received contracts to supply 3,000 pairs of shoes in February 1645, a further 4,000 in the following April, 2,000 in July, 4,000 in September, 2,000 in October and 4,500 in the following January. They provided 19,500 of the 32,000 pairs of shoes contracted for by the Army committee in the first year of the New Model Army's existence. They were not new to army contracting, in February 1645 Parliament ordered the Committee at Haberdashers Hall to pay Jenkin Ellis and one of his regular partners, John Mings, £375 for 3,000 pairs of shoes they had provided for Waller's Army. Ellis and his partners also provided shoes for the Scottish Army in 1643 and 1644.²⁹

Ellis was a liveryman in the Cordwainers' Company by 1641, and served as warden in the company in 1647. He obtained his freedom by service in the early 1620s, so he must have been at least in his forties. His partners were also respectable members of their craft. John Mings, had entered the livery of the Cordwainers' Company in March

²⁷ V. F. Snow & A. S. Young, (eds.), The Private Journals of the Long Parliament, Vol. 2: 7th March to 1st June 1642, (New Haven, 1987), 46; Snow & Young, Private Journals of the Long Parliament, Vol. 3, 388, 422; PRO SP 28/1B, f. 672; PRO SP 28/1C, f. 194; PRO SP 28/1D, f. 451; Gentles, New Model Army, 40.

²⁸ PRO E 351 1966; GL MS. 7351/2, Cordwainers' Company, Wardens' Accounts, 1636-1678, accounts 1645-6; CSPD 1649-50, 412, 561.

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1641. He also obtained his freedom by service in the early 1620s and was clearly a craftsman, having been admitted to keep shop as a master on sight of his work in 1623. Another of Ellis' partners, Francis Marriot, was not as senior in the company hierarchy, he did not become a liveryman until 1646-7. He had also been made free by service, and was admitted a master by virtue of his proof work in October 1626. He had served as searcher of leather in 1642 and was elected a steward for the company's feast day in August 1645. All three were clearly well established craftsmen. There is little evidence here that contracting for the armies was altering the structure of London society.³⁰

Nor is there evidence that Ellis and his partners were able to make large profits on the contracts for shoes for the army. Parliament paid 2s 3d a pair for the shoes for the New Model Army, in contrast to 2s 5d or 2s 6d a pair paid for shoes for the army in Ireland in 1642 and 2s 10d a pair paid by the Clothworkers' Company for shoes in 1640-1.³¹

Ellis and his partners were not the only members of the Cordwainers' Company to supply shoes to the New Model Army. Contracts also went to some younger members. Jeffrey Badger had been admitted a master on sight of his work in July 1641. He, together with John Jones and two more senior members of the company, Lawrence Standley and Robert Botley, had provided shoes for the forces in Ireland in the summer of 1642. They also provided shoes for the Scottish Army as well as the new Model.³²

Contracts also went to shoemakers who do not appear in the Cordwainers' Company records and who may not have been freemen, although it is possible that they were free of another company. Some of them were suburban craftsmen such as Thomas Taylor, who lived in Covent Garden, and Edward Chipperfield who lived in Holborn. Other non-free shoemakers worked within the liberties of the City, the Edward Johnson who contracted for shoe for the New Model Army in 1645 was probably the same Edward Johnson who was listed as a unfree shoemaker living in Martins le Grand in 1641. The Cordwainers' Company accounts for 1645-6 contain payments to the company's informer concerning the prosecution of one Crafts of Blackfriars, probably the Richard Crafter of Blackfriars who supplied shoes to the New Model Army. Nevertheless the majority of the shoes provided for the New Model Army came from members of the Cordwainers'

²⁹ Mungeam, 'Contracts for the Supply of the "New Model" Army', 75, 78, 83, 89, 109, 115; PRO SP 28 37, f. 356; PRO SP 46/106, ff. 3, 4, 29, 35, 49; LJ, VII, 192.

³⁰ PRO E 179 251 22; GL MS. 7351 1, Cordwainers' Company, Wardens' Accounts, 1595-1636, unfol.; GL MS. 7351 2 Cordwainers' Company, Wardens' Accounts, 1636-78, unfol.; GL MS. 7353/1, Cordwainers' Company, Court Minutes, 1622-1653.

³¹ Snow & Young, Private Journals of the Long Parliament, Vol. 3, 388; CH, Wardens' Accounts, 1639-1649, Quarter Wardens' accounts, 1640-1.

³² Mungeam, 'Contracts for the Supply of the "New Model" Army', 109, 105; GL MS. 7353/1, Cordwainers' Company, Court Minutes, 1622-1653; PRO SP 46/106, ff. 3, 29, 49.

5. Supplying Parliament's armed forces.

Company.³³

Contracting for Parliament's army strengthened pre-existing hierarchies as senior members of the company received contracts from the authorities and then distributed the work among the other members of the craft. Although this was probably not an employer-employee relationship it does imply a degree of power over those to whom the work was sub-contracted. Nevertheless it is unlikely that military contracting contributed to the decline of independent craftsmen in London. Most Cordwainers' continued to become masters in late seventeenth century London. The economic structure of the craft already contained significant inequalities before the war. In 1630 the company minutes refer to 'chamber workers' and journeymen taking on apprentices. Wealthier members of the company bought up stocks of leather and sold it to their less prosperous colleagues.³⁴

In conclusion, supplying parliamentary forces during the Civil War may have helped to compensate for the deleterious impact of the Wars on the metropolitan economy, but those involved frequently found difficulties in receiving prompt payment for what they supplied. Although royalist propagandists claimed that London merchants were growing rich from contracting, there is little evidence to support this. Neither is there much evidence to suggest that London merchants made large profits from Parliamentary privateering. It never reached the same scale as its Elizabethan predecessor and in some cases the privateers lost money. It is, nevertheless, clear that after the improvement of Parliament's financial administration in 1645, the London economy began to benefit from contracts for the armed forces, and even if this was not a road to great riches, many metropolitan craftsmen would have done well. This must, in part, have counteracted the impact of Parliamentary taxation, by ensuring that not all the money raised was lost to the local economy.

³³ Mungeam, 'Contracts for the Supply of the "New Model" Army', 89, 99, 109; PRO E 179 252 1; GL MS. 7351 2 Cordwainers' Company, Wardens' Accounts, 1636-78, unfol.

³⁴ GL MS. 7353 1, Cordwainers' Company, Court Minutes, 1622-1653, f. 100; L. A. Clarkson, 'The Organisation of the English Leather Industry in the late Sixteenth and early Seventeenth Centuries', *EcHR*, 2nd Series, 13, (1960), 251; T. R. Forbes, 'Weaver And Cordwainer: Occupation in the Parish of St Giles Cripplegate, London in 1654-1693 and 1729-1743', *Guildhall Studies in London History*, 4, (1980), 123.

6 Economic Warfare

So far this thesis has examined the ways in which the war had a direct influence on the London economy, how Parliament's taxation, finance and contracting created new problems and opportunities within the metropolitan economic structures, and the influence of these factors has been found to be generally limited. However there is another side to the equation. It is also essential to examine the indirect economic impact of the war. The first chapter demonstrated that London's prosperity was dependent on the health of its links with the rest of the country and the wider world, and the second chapter showed that there has been growing evidence that the Civil War was very disruptive in provincial England. It will be suggested in this chapter that it was through the disruption of those links that the war had its most significant impact on the London economy.

It was inevitable that the Civil War would disrupt London's trade networks, for badly paid soldiers and financially straightened garrison commanders, carriers or merchant shipping lying in harbour was bound to present a tempting target. But as it became clear that the Civil War would not be over quickly, both sides began to consider strategies of economic warfare. As the war developed the belligerents began to recognise the importance of economic factors in winning the war, there was a growing belief that economic blockades would undermine the financial resources of their opponents, thereby contributing to their defeat. This view found favour earliest among the Parliamentarians, who began to restrict trade with royalist controlled territories in January 1643.¹

The royalists initially believed that cutting off trade with London would do more damage to those parts of the country under their control than to the metropolis itself. As the preceding chapters have made clear, the economy of London was of vital importance to Parliament's war effort, a point of which the royalists were well aware. They came to believe that the destruction of the prosperity of London was vital to their success. In the summer of 1643 the royalists, therefore, tried to sever London's internal trade networks by forbidding all commerce with the capital. At the same time the King attacked London's overseas trade by authorising royalist privateers, and trying to prevail on foreign powers to take action against London merchants.²

Royalist economic warfare was never totally effective but it did cause great damage to the London economy. In the early part of the first Civil War the most effective part of the

¹ CJ II 930, 931.

² Larkin, 826 n. 2; Clarendon, *The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England*, W. D. Macray, (ed.), (6 vols., Oxford, 1888), iii, 29; BL E329(15), *Lord Digby's Cabinet Opened*, (1646), 13, 15.

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strategy was the blockade of domestic trade, but it was unpopular in the royalist parts of the country, also the re-opening of trade with London brought with it the prospect of raising much needed revenues from excise duties and other levies. This led to the blockade being largely abandoned in the latter part of the war. The attempt to stop London's external trade was not very effective in the first Civil War, although there is evidence that royalist privateering was becoming increasingly effective from 1645. In the later 1640s, however, a number of factors came together to bring London's overseas trade to crisis point: privateering became increasingly effective, the revolt of Parliament's navy delivered a fleet into the hands of the royalists and the increasingly radical turn of events in England, culminating in regicide, caused growing alarm among foreign princes. All this took place at a time when Dutch international trade and merchant shipping was recovering from the impact of the Thirty Years War, and was, therefore becoming an increasing threat to English trade and shipping.

(i) The Blockading of Internal Trade

Local parliamentary commanders, like their royalist counterparts, were obstructing London's domestic trade before economic blockades became official policy. On 3 January 1643 a group of London tradesmen petitioned the Commons, stating that in the previous September some York shopkeepers bought goods from the petitioners which were shipped by water, and then seized by Parliament's forces at Hull. Unlike the King, Parliament was not convinced that trade with the enemy was in their interests. The Commons ordered that the goods should be returned to the petitioners, but they clearly would not allow them to be sent to their customers.³

The first substantial step to halt internal trade was taken on 14 January 1643 when Parliament passed an Ordinance banning the coal trade between the North East and London. The royalists had re-imposed all the old impositions on the coal trade and placed an extra tax of £30-50 on every laden collier leaving the Tyne. Parliament decided that this could not be tolerated, they forbade the trade and decided to blockade Newcastle and Sunderland.⁴

In mid January Parliament prohibited all trade between London and Oxford, and other areas occupied by the King's army, because money and munitions were being sent to the royalists. The trade of the clothiers of Reading, though not of those western clothiers who sent cloth through Reading, was embargoed. In March the corporation of Reading decided to petition the King to seize the goods in the town belonging to the West Country

³ CJ II 912.

⁴ J. Hatcher, The History of the British Coal Industry, Vol. 1, Before 1700: Towards the Age of Coal, (Oxford, 1993), 85-6; Firth & Rait, i, 63.

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clothiers until he had procured free trade for them. Finally at the end of October Parliament passed an Ordinance forbidding all communication with those parts of the country controlled by the royalists.⁵

In June 1642 Charles I issued a proclamation ordering that all persons and goods should have free passage throughout the Kingdom. Many individual royalist commanders ignored the King's commands. In the summer of 1642 a journeyman sent by Francis Rowe, a Cheapside mercer, to collect debts in Worcester had the goods he had distrained taken from him by the royalist garrison commander. In November 1642, in York, another royalist commander, Francis Neville, seized bonds for debts owed to a London grocer George Hadley from Hadley's apprentice, Adam Bland. Neville then extracted the money owed from Hadley's creditors. Incidents like these had a major impact on London's domestic trade; perhaps at least as much because of the fears they created as by the seizures themselves.⁶

In the winter of 1642, carriers, particularly those carrying cloth from the West Country to London, came increasingly under attack from the royalist garrisons which had been established around Oxford, as the King himself acknowledged in a further proclamation issued on 8 December. The King again ordered all his forces not to obstruct trade and promised all those who had lost goods, compensation.⁷ But once again a lack of discipline among the King's subordinate commanders meant that the execution of this proclamation was rather arbitrary. Western clothiers whose carriers were attacked in early 1643 were able to obtain the restitution of their goods from the royalist headquarters in Oxford, although some needed to pay a fee.⁸ In January a petition from the inhabitants of Berkshire to the King complained that the London dealers were prevented from attending the Reading grain market, and on 3 March the King himself wrote to the Governor of Reading ordering him to prevent the carriage of supplies to London. In the same month Prince Rupert plundered wagons taking goods from London for Bristol, worth in total £2,500.⁹ In May it was reported that Oxford shopkeepers were growing rich dealing in

⁵ CJ II 930, 931; J. M. Guiding, (ed.), Reading Records. Diary of the Corporation; Volume IV, Charles I and the Commonwealth (1641-1654), (1896), 75, 79; Firth & Rait, i, 327-8.

⁶ Larkin, 755-7; PRO C 24/696/56, f. 17; PRO C 2 CHAS1/N9/25; PRO C 24/709/29; PRO C 24/710/92.

⁷ Larkin, 825-6.

⁸ BL E244(46), England's Memorable Accidents, 2-9 Jan. 1643, 144; BL E94(9), Certain Informations, No. 10, 20-27 March 1643, 79.

⁹ BL E85(6), The Humble Petition of divers of the Knights, Gentry and other inhabitants of the County of Berkshire, (1643), 5; I. G. Philip, (ed.), Journal of Sir Samuel Luke, Scoutmaster General to the Earl of Essex, 1643-4, (4 vols., Oxfordshire Records Society, 1947-53), i, 20; HMC Eleventh Report, vii, Reading MSS., 215.

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plundered cloth.¹⁰

In other regions the traders were even less fortunate. In the north the royalist commander, the Earl of Newcastle, maintained the Newcastle coal trade with London to help finance his forces, but otherwise he ignored the King's orders concerning free trade. In February 1643 he rejected a petition from the Derbyshire lead miners for free trade with London via Hull. The royalist garrison at Wakefield prevented all trade between London and the West Riding cloth towns. The Fairfaxes were able to clear the royalists out of the West Riding in the end of January, but their defeat at Atherton Moor in the following June brought the clothing towns under royalist control, and the trade with London was again cut off.¹¹

In the first half of 1643 there were numerous reports in the London newsbooks of attacks on carriers from royalist garrisons in the Midlands, where royalist and parliamentary garrisons were interdispersed, making communications particularly vulnerable.¹² Henry Hastings, the commander of Ashby de la Zouch, became notorious, earning himself the title 'Rob-Carrier' in the London press.¹³ On some occasions those aggrieved were able to obtain restitution. In around April 1643 cloth sent by Isaak Knipe to London was seized at Newark, but Knipe was able to obtain their release.¹⁴

On 17 July 1643 Charles I issued a proclamation forbidding all trade from the provinces to London, and in October trade from London to royalist territories was also embargoed. In December the King forbade the paying of debts to inhabitants of the metropolis, instead debtors were ordered to pay their debts to the royalist Exchequer, which only served to legitimise what was already common practice among local commanders. In November 1643 one of the scouts of Essex's army reported that in Reading the townsmen were forced to pay over the debts they owed to Londoners to the royalists, and there had been similar reports in the London press from Bristol in the previous summer.¹⁵

The verdict of Clarendon was that the royalist blockade fell victim to the venality of the local garrison commanders who levied tolls for safe conducts, and made seizures for

¹⁰ BL E105(17), Mercurius Civicus, No. 5, 1-8 June 1643, 34.

¹¹ BL E90(3), Certaine Informations, No. 5, 13-20 Feb. 1643, 35-6; H. Heaton, The Yorkshire Woollen and Worsted Industries from the Earliest Times to the Industrial Revolution, (Oxford, 1965), 208-211.

¹² BL E86(3), Speciall Passages, No. 44, 17-24 Jan. 1643, 198; BL E89(14), Certaine Informations, No. 4, 6-13 Feb. 1643, 26; BL E96(12), A Continuation of Certain Special and Remarkable Passages, 6-13 April 1643, unpag.

¹³ BL E101(2), Certaine Informations, No. 16, 1-8 May 1643, 121.

¹⁴ PRO HCA 13/59, ff. 161v-164.

¹⁵ Larkin, 932-4, 961-4, 986-7; Philip, Journal of Sir Samuel Luke, iii, 198; BL E64(7), Certaine Informations, No. 29, 31 July-7 Aug. 1643, 223.

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their own profits.¹⁶ There is considerable evidence that the blockade was never totally effective. In December 1643 the King found that special licences issued to supply his household were being used to continue trade from London to Oxford, and he revoked all the licences. Yet in February 1644 the Privy Council set up a committee to investigate the continued allegations that trade with London continued with the connivance of the royalist garrisons, or through the corruption of officers of the King's army.¹⁷ In the 1690s Jonathan Priestly remembered that his uncle Thomas, a West Riding clothier 'bought cloth; travelled to London with eight or nine horses all the time of the Civil Wars; sometimes he and others that were with him hired convoys, and sometimes they went without, and were never taken, he or his horses or goods, all that dangerous time.'¹⁸ On Parliament's side there is evidence from reports received by Sir Samuel Luke, Scoutmaster to the Earl of Essex, and the London newsbooks, that trade continued between London and Oxford throughout 1643. How much trade went unobserved can only be guessed at, but before the imposition of the royalist blockade the contraband trade appears to have been considerable; in June one newsbook reported that illicit trade led to a substantial increase in activity on some routes.¹⁹

An embargo does not need to be totally impervious to be effective, and although the royalist blockade was never completely effective, the evidence suggest that at first it made a major difference to London's communications with the royalist occupied provinces. Early in August 1643 London newsbooks reported that it had become very difficult to get any news from the west country because, since the issuing of the proclamation, all post and carriers had been stopped. It is striking that in the second half of 1643, stories about the attacks on carriers become very scarce in the London newsbooks, in contrast with the previous six months, suggesting that very few carriers were daring to break the blockade. This indicates that initially the royalist blockade was vigorously enforced.²⁰

There is considerable evidence that the blockades from both sides caused a major decline in English internal trade. In September 1643 the Mayor of Reading wrote that his

¹⁶ Clarendon, History of the Rebellion, iii, 292.

¹⁷ BL 669 f. 7 (59), His Majesties Declaration Whereby to Repeale and make voyd all Licenses by Himselfe granted for bringing any Goods or Commodities, from the Cities of London and Westminster, (Oxford, 1643); Privy Council Register, Vol. XII, 1640-1645, (Facsimile edition, 1968), 224.

¹⁸ J. Priestley, 'Some Memoirs concerning the Family of the Priestleys', in Yorkshire Diaries and Autobiographies in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, (Surtees Society Publications, 77, 1883), 23.

¹⁹ Philip, Journal of Sir Samuel Luke, i, 45; ii, 158; iii, 206, 207; BL E106(13), Mercurius Civicus, No. 6, 8-16 June 1643, 41.

²⁰ BL E65(4), Mercurius Civicus, No. 11, 3-11 Aug. 1643, 87; BL E65(8), Certaine Informations, No. 30, 7-14 Aug. 1643, 227.

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town could not repay its loans or pay new taxes, in large part because of the destruction of their trade. In the following month Charles I was petitioned by inhabitants of Oxfordshire stating that they were unable to pay their taxes unless the royalists would accept payment in corn, or allow them to have free trade with London. In December 1643 the inhabitants of Henley petitioned the Privy Council that their malt trade with London was dead because of the prohibition of trade.²¹ Justices of the Peace of northern Wales complained that their region was becoming impoverished because of the ending of the cattle trade with London. On 20 April 1644 the Corporation of Reading petitioned the King requesting that merchants from London be allowed to come to Reading to make purchases. In May 1644 clothiers from Worcester, Reading and elsewhere, argued before the Privy Council for the re-opening of trade with London, or at the least that Reading should be made a free Mart.²²

In much of the midlands the scattered pattern of royalist garrisons meant that they could attack trade between Parliamentary towns. In September 1644 it was reported that no carrier would risk the roads of the east midlands without a convoy, but a convoy added to costs. In March 1644 one group of carriers from Manchester was offered a convoy south by the Stafford garrison, at a cost of 10s a pack, the carriers refused, only to lose eighty packs of goods to the royalists of Lichfield.²³ Often trade with London was only possible when the local Parliamentarians were doing well, in February 1644 the defeat of local royalists enabled Melton Mowbray carriers to reach London for the first time for many months.²⁴

In June 1644 Mercurius Civicus reported that 'the Cavaliers have plundered most of the carriers which have gone out from London'.²⁵ In fact this report coincided with the first signs of the loosening of the blockade, in the same month it was reported in the London newsbooks that the Worcester clothiers had obtained permission from the King to trade with London.²⁶ By the new year there is clear evidence that the royalist blockade of London had been abandoned. This does not mean that trade returned to normal. The royalist authorities taxed internal trade heavily, the Worcester clothiers paid a levy of over 10s a cloth. By 1645 a regular system of 'license money' had been established to tax the trade

²¹ HMC Eleventh Report, Part VII, Reading MSS., 216; Philip, Journal of Sir Samuel Luke, iii, 198; Privy Council Register, Vol. XII, 1640-1645, 219.

²² HMC Eleventh Report, Part VII, Reading MSS., 216; Privy Council Register, Vol. XII, 1640-1645, 226; R. Hutton, The Royalist War Effort, 1642-6, (1982), 136, 164.

²³ BL E254(8), A Perfect Diurnall No. 60, 16-23 Sept. 1644, 479-80; BL E38(4), The Military Scribe, No. 4, 12-19 March 1644, 29; HMC Thirteenth Report, Portland MSS., i, 130.

²⁴ BL E31(20), Mercurius Anglicus, No. 1, 31 Jan.-7 Feb. 1644, 4.

²⁵ BL E52(15), Mercurius Civicus, No. 57, 20-27 June 1644, 555.

²⁶ BL E252(49), Perfect Occurrences, No. 27, 21-28 June 1644, unpag.; BL E53(11), The Weekly Account, No. 44, 26 June-3 July 1644, unpag.

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with the enemy, which was levied over and above customs and excise. Initially the additional duty amounted to fifteen per cent of the value of the goods, although it was later reduced to ten per cent.²⁷

Permission to trade with the enemy did not always guarantee that traders would not be plundered by royalist garrisons. In June 1644 the Worcester clothiers were plundered, in the following December there were complaints in the Common Council that the royalist garrisons in Hampshire and Berkshire were preventing cloth from reaching London. In May 1645 it was reported in the London press that a group of Wiltshire clothiers, who had obtained license to take their wares to London, on entering a bond to pay on their return £400 for excise to the governor of Devizes, were subsequently forced to pay the £400 there and then to the governor of Donnington Castle, only to lose their cloth, carts and horses to royalist cavalry from Wallingford.²⁸

Internal trade was also hampered by the damage done by the war to the transport infrastructure; strategic bridges were destroyed and highways deteriorated due to abnormally heavy use. The upkeep of roads and bridges was neglected as a result of the general decline in traditional administrative activity in the war years, surveyors of the highways were not appointed and communal obligations lapsed. In January 1645 the Commons ordered the Committee of the Associated Counties of Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Berkshire to repair the locks on the Thames which had been broken, preventing barges carrying foodstuffs reaching London.²⁹

Despite the successes of the New Model Army in 1645, the London newsbooks were still reporting attacks on carriers at the end of the year.³⁰ As late as May 1646 there were reports that royalist soldiers from Wallingford had plundered two men travelling to London near Reading.³¹ But gradually the royalist garrisons were besieged, and taken, and the internal trade routes began to re-open, which became a theme of thanksgiving sermons in 1646. In April Hugh Peters remarked on 'the blessed change we see, that can travel now from Edinburgh, to the lands end in Cornwall, who not long since were blocked up at our doores! To see the highwayes occupied again; to heare the carter whistling to his toiling team; to see the weekly carrier attend his constant mart; to see the hills rejoycing, the vallies

²⁷ BL E252(49), Perfect Occurrences, No. 27, 21-28 June 1644, unpag.; Calendar of Clarendon State Papers, (4 vols. Oxford, 1869), i, 294; HMC Sixth Report, House of Lords MSS., 56

²⁸ BL E53(11), The Weekly Account, No. 44, 26 June-3 July, unpag.; CLRO Jour. 40, f. 119; BL E284(15), Mercurius Veridicus, No. 5, 10-16 May 1645, 35.

²⁹ J. S. Morrill, Cheshire, 1630-1660: County Government and Society during the 'English Revolution', (Oxford, 1974), 91-2; P. Tennant, Edgehill and Beyond, The People's War in the Southern Midlands, 1642-45, (Stroud, 1992), 151, 152; CJ IV, 7; LJ IX, 55, 65.

³⁰ BL E313(16), Mercurius Civicus, No. 135, 18-24 Dec. 1645, 1182

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laughing!³²

The impact of the second Civil War on the London economy was felt principally through the revolt of the navy, the land fighting was probably over too quickly to have much impact on internal trade, although the Court of Aldermen were concerned that the food supplies from Essex and Kent would be blocked. The exception to this was the siege of Colchester, one of the principal centres of the new draperies. In June 1648 the bay and say makers of the town petitioned the royalist commanders for free passage to London, stating that for the previous three weeks passage had been blocked. Their request was supported by the royalists but rejected by Fairfax, who, however, did allow a weekly market on Lexden Heath, outside the town.³³

(ii) Foreign States, the English Revolution and the Trade of London

In his reply to the City's Propositions for Peace of the winter of 1642-3 the King threatened that, if London continued in its allegiance to Parliament, he would withdraw his protection from London merchants overseas, and instruct his representatives abroad to proceed against them as enemies of the King.³⁴ One royalist correspondent wrote: 'Either the last clause of denying the his protection to the merchants will work, or inevitably prove the ruin of all trade. It is a high strain and of dangerous consequence, but no course must be left unattempted; if this will not work with the merchants nothing will'.³⁵

In February 1643 the King approached the Merchant Adventurers for a loan of £20,000, which was to be remitted by bills of exchange to Holland to be paid to the Queen. The company informed the Commons which naturally forbade it. In order to allay the company's fears of reprisals the Commons ordered the Navy Committee to consider sending convoys for the company's ships and decide how to protect the property of the members in Holland. Nevertheless the Merchant Adventurers were sufficiently alarmed to petition Charles I for some assurance of his continued protection abroad, to which the King replied that if they remained loyal then they had nothing to fear.³⁶

³¹ BL E337(3), Perfect Occurrences, 19th week, ending 8 May 1646, unpag.

³² BL E330(11), H. Peters, Gods Doing and Mans Duty, (1646), 24; see also BL E337(12), S. Torshell, The Palace of Justice Opened and set to view, (1646), 2.

³³ CLRO Rep. 59, f. 235; Rushworth Collections, vii, 1152; HMC Fourteenth Report, ix, Round MSS., 285.

³⁴ A Speech made by Alderman Garroway, at a Common-Hall, in W. Oldys, (ed.), Harleian Miscellany, (10 vols., 1808-13), v, 180, 183.

³⁵ HMC Thirteenth Report, Portland MSS., i, 85.

³⁶ CJ II, 982; BL 669 f. 7 (5), To the King, the Petition of the Fellowship of Merchant Adventurers, (1643); BL E92(3), Certain Informations, No. 7, 27 Feb.-6 March 1643, 55; BL E95(12), Certain Informations, No. 12, 3-10 April 1643, 9.

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In February 1644 a Dutch edition of the King's proclamation prohibiting trade with London was sent to the Netherlands, together with a letter calling for an embargo on the Merchant Adventurers in the Netherlands, but the King's efforts to sever trade between London and the Netherlands were destined to be disappointed. The Prince of Orange wished to aid Charles I, but he was opposed by the States of Holland who were supported by the Calvinist church. The Regent class was in political sympathy with Parliament and did not wish to disrupt trade, whilst the Dutch Calvinist Church were, until the rise of the Independents, supporters of the religious objectives of Parliament.³⁷

The only country where the King was successful in the summer of 1643, was Denmark. This had serious implications for London's trade because Christian IV controlled entry into the Baltic through the Sound, and had a fortress on the mouth of the Elbe at Gluckstadt. Earlier in 1643 he had used his naval power to force Hamburg to acknowledge his sovereignty over the river, he therefore controlled access to Hamburg, the Merchant Adventurer's staple in northern Germany. At the end of August the King of Denmark ordered that all ships belonging to parliamentary ports be seized on the Sound, in Norway and at Gluckstadt.³⁸

Joseph Avery, the King's agent in Hamburg, and the deputy of the Merchant Adventurers, reported that the ships were seized in retaliation for the capture by Parliament's navy of a ship, belonging to Christian IV, carrying arms for the royalists. This is also the reason given by the royalist newsbook Mercurius Aulicus, which adds that the action began in Gluckstadt on the initiative of the governor, and was only later extended to the Sound and Norway by the King. On the other hand the parliamentary newsbook Certaine Informations argued that the dispatch of the Danish ship to Newcastle was intended to give the Danish King an excuse to seize English merchant shipping, and Thomas Thynne wrote that the seizure of ships was caused by the King's proclamation that all who traded with London were rebels.³⁹

There are good reasons for believing this last explanation is the correct one. Rumours had been circulating that Christian IV, the King of Denmark, would intervene militarily on behalf of Charles I, his cousin, since the beginning of hostilities, but in March 1643 it was reported from Amsterdam that 'As for his [Christian IV's] designs for England, it is believed that underhand he will endeavour to do what he can to assist the King, but will never engage himself very far in any open way against Parliament except he

³⁷ Larkin, 973 n.1; P. Geyl, Orange and Stuart, 1641-72, (1969), 12-13.

³⁸ R. C. Anderson, Naval Wars in the Baltic: During the Sailing-ship Epoch, (2nd edition, 1969), 45; CJ III, 226, 230

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may do it with the consent of his Kingdom'.⁴⁰

On 10 October a petition from the Eastland Company to the House of Lords stated that the King of Denmark had seized five of their ships, one outward bound and four returning, they also stated that they had other vessels in the Baltic ready to return, but which could not dare to pass the Sound. In early November the London newsbooks reported that the King of Denmark was continuing to refuse English ships passage through the Sound, although he was coming under pressure to do so from Sweden, Poland and his own estates.⁴¹

In Glückstadt the Merchant Adventurers' cloth ship and cargo were seized by the King of Denmark's officers. According to one London newsbook the cloth was worth £30,000. This seems to have been an exaggeration, Avery wrote that the Merchant Adventurers had to buy back their ships and goods for 15,000 Imperial thalers (about £3,125), which he says was almost as much as they were worth, and added that some of the goods were retained by the King.⁴² Under pressure from at home and abroad Christian IV abandoned his embargo, probably by the end of the year, but he refused either to give compensation for the losses of the London merchants or satisfactory guarantees of continued free trade. In retaliation the Parliamentary authorities seized the *Golden Sun*, belonging to the King of Denmark, when it put into Portsmouth on its return home from the East Indies in July 1644.⁴³

Christian IV was distracted from pursuing this dispute by the war with Sweden that began in December 1643, when the Swedish army entered Holstein. Early in 1644 it was reported in the London press that intercepted letters from royalist agents to Digby and Nicholas said that their efforts to advance the King's cause had been stymied by Sweden's recent victory over Denmark.⁴⁴ In April 1645 settlement was finally reached with the King of Denmark. The English merchants were promised 174,000 Imperial thalers (about £36,350) in compensation, of which the *Golden Sun* and its cargo was to constitute part, and the rest was to be paid in three yearly instalments, and by June 1647 the treaty had been

³⁹ PRO SP 75 16, ff. 168-v; CSPD 1660-1, 296; BL E68(3), Certaines Informations, No. 36, 18-25 Sept. 1643, 291-2; BL E68(4), Mercurius Aulicus, 10-16 Sept. 1643, 516; CSPD 1644, 195.

⁴⁰ HMC Lord Montagu of Beaulieu MSS., 159

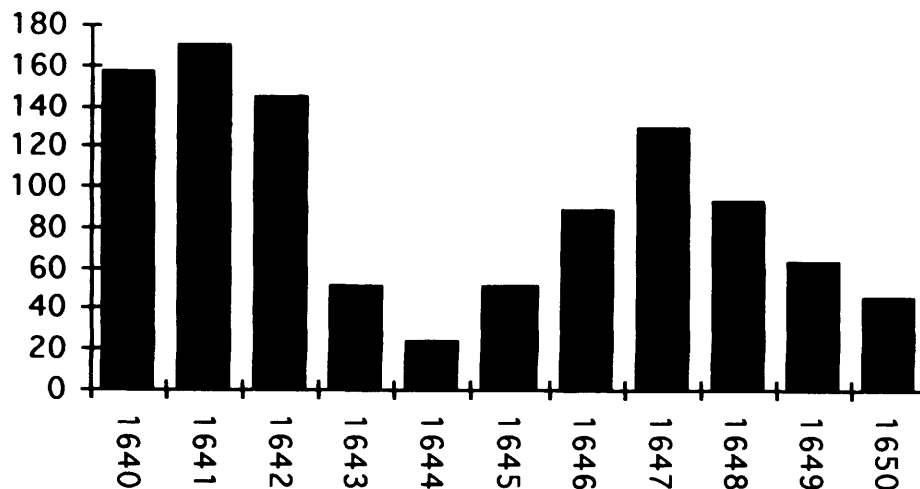
⁴¹ HLRO House of Lords Main Papers, 10th October 1643, Petition of the Eastland Company; BL E75(3), Certaines Informations, No. 42, 30 Oct.-6 Nov. 1643, 330; BL E75(30), Certaines Informations, No. 43, 6-13 Nov. 1643, 338; BL E75(18), Mercurius Civicus, No. 24, 2-9 Nov. 1643, 188.

⁴² BL E68(3), Certaines Informations, No. 36, 18-25 Sept. 1643, 292; PRO SP 75 16, ff. 168-v, 170v. The exchange rate, 4.8 thalers to the pound sterling, is taken from G. Parker, (ed.), The Thirty Years War, (1984), xii.

⁴³ PRO SP 75 16, ff. 170v, 202v, 205; CSPD 1644, 357.

confirmed.⁴⁵

Figure 1. English ships passing westward through the Sound, 1640-1650⁴⁶



The interruption of trade with the Baltic and Hamburg was short-lived, but its impact lasted longer. Many merchants were reluctant to trade in the affected area until some formal settlement had been reached. Sven-Erik Astrom found that the number of English merchants ships visiting Hamburg reached its nadir in the years 1644-5.⁴⁷ In July 1644 the Merchant Adventurers claimed that, as a result of this incident, they had lost more than £40,000, and were 'debarred of the better halfe of their Trade to Hamburg'.⁴⁸ The numbers of English ships passing through the Sound westward fell from 145 in 1642 to fifty two in 1643, and twenty six in 1644. The export of English cloth to the Baltic also decreased, from 42,000 pieces in 1642 to 8,000 in 1643 and 5,000 in 1644. Hinton argued that the interruption was not the result of the Civil War but a by-product of the Danish-Swedish War. However he does not seem to have taken into account the seizure of English ships at the Sound. It is, therefore, necessary to revise Hinton's conclusion and attribute a large part

⁴⁴ Anderson, *Naval Wars in the Baltic*, 47, 62; BL E31(11), *The Kingdoms Weekly Intelligencer*, No. 42, 30 Jan.-7 Feb. 1644, 322.

⁴⁵ M. Sellers, (ed.), *The Acts and Ordinances of the Eastland Company*, (Camden Society, 1906), 159-166; *47th Annual Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records*, (1886), 75.

⁴⁶ R. W. K. Hinton, *The Eastland Trade and the Common Weal*, (Cambridge, 1959), 228, appendix D.

⁴⁷ S. Astrom, *From Cloth to Iron. The Anglo-Baltic Trade in the late Seventeenth Century*, (2 vols. Helsinki, 1963-1965), i, 30.

⁴⁸ BL Add. MS. 4191, f. 37; *CJ* III, 551.

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of the decline in English trade in the Baltic to the English Civil War.⁴⁹

The only other occasion when the royalists were successful in causing significant disruption to London's foreign trade in the first Civil War, took place in the Ottoman Empire. In May 1646 Sir Sackville Crowe, the English Ambassador, seized the goods of members of the Levant Company in Istanbul and Symrna, imprisoned their factors and prevented the departure of ships. Crowe claimed that his objective was to obtain payment of debts which he claimed were owed him by the company. In fact Crowe was acting under instructions from Charles I to raise money for his dwindling war effort.⁵⁰ In the event the factors were able to outbid the ambassador for the support of the Turkish officials and, as a result, obtained their own release and recovered their principals' goods and ships. Nevertheless Crowe caused considerable disruption to the Levant trade. Some of the goods seized were not recovered until the following July and many of the ships were held for several months. In a petition to the Committee for the Navy the company claimed that the cost of the whole affair, including their losses due to the diminution of trade, was £100,000. The result of the incident on the Levant Company's trade can be seen in the company's receipts for impositions, a toll levied on the trade of members in the privileged areas. Receipts fell from £3,884 in 1645 to £1,654 in 1646.⁵¹

The reaction to the execution of Charles I meant that London overseas merchants faced fresh troubles in 1649. In September 1649 it was learnt that in Russia the Czar had commanded all the English merchants to sell up and leave within the year, not to return except in the King of England's name and by his patents. According to Whitelocke this was the result of the work of Sir John Culpepper, who had been sent as ambassador by Charles II, but other authorities suggest that the exclusion of the English was the result of the machinations of the Dutch, who played on the Czar's horror of the regicide to exclude their rivals.⁵²

The most serious reaction to the execution of Charles I came from France. Already, before the execution, the French government had issued a proclamation in the name of Louis XIV calling for a European coalition to wage a crusade against the new regime. The

⁴⁹ Hinton, *Eastland Trade*, 50-1.

⁵⁰ PRO SP 105 150, f. 112v; my attention was first brought to the royalist dimension of this incident by D. Goffman, 'The Denouement of the Civil War in the Levant', Paper given at Institute for Historical Research, University of London, 7th June 1992; see also BL Egerton MS. 2533, ff. 429-432, 438-9v.

⁵¹ PRO SP 105 150, ff. 121-3, 134; PRO SP 105 143, ff. 117, 143-145, 217-v, 219; PRO SP 105 159, ff. 86, 87, 114, 140, 244; A. C. Wood, *A History of the Levant Company*, (Oxford, 1935), 91.

⁵² Whitelocke, *Memorials*, iii, 107, 223; During the Protectorate the Russia Company claimed that their expulsion was obtained by Lord Culpepper the Royalist agent at the Russian Court, another version states that the Dutch offered to pay 15 per cent duties from Archangel in return for the expulsion of the English,

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French banned English exports, and in retaliation the Commonwealth forbade the import of French wines, wool and silk, though they stopped short of banning imports of linen cloth. The vessel the *Mercury*, which belonged to a group of London merchants, had been captured by the French in November 1644. The owners tried to obtain her release through the French Courts and, though they obtained judgement in their favour, the French admiral refused to release her.⁵³

Towards the end of 1648 French warships were sent out to attack English shipping in the Mediterranean, beginning an unofficial naval war which continued until the middle of the next decade. In December the *Greyhound* was taken off Sardinia, by a French man of war, ostensibly because she was carrying Spanish goods, though the Levant Company claimed that the goods were English. Not long after, the *Talent* was destroyed by another French warship. The *Talent* and her goods were valued at £60,260, and the value of the *Greyhound* was put at £32,763 2s.⁵⁴

In February 1649 the Levant Company submitted to the Council of State details of their losses to the French, amounting to eight ships which, with their lading, were worth £300,000 and they claimed that their whole trade was threatened. It was not only the Levant merchants who suffered, as other English shipping in French ports was seized. By April 1650 the Levant Company and other Mediterranean merchants estimated that their losses from the attacks of the French and pirates totalled nearly £1 million.⁵⁵ In May a London merchant wrote 'this year few or none goes for the straits as formerly because the French take many of our ships'. Merchants instead preferred to go to Bilbao instead and purchase Mediterranean goods indirectly. It looked as though the Mediterranean trade, one of the most dynamic aspects of England's trade in the early Stuart period, would be lost.⁵⁶

In September 1650 the Levant Company decided to petition the Council of State for a convoy for their ships, which were about to depart. To pay for this they proposed a twenty per cent extra levy on the customs.⁵⁷ The Council of Trade reported to the Council of State that they believed that the Mediterranean trade had been almost lost because of the attacks of the French. The Rump ordered the Committee for the Navy to prepare the convoy, and to pay for it they abolished the fifteen per cent discount which had been

see W. R. Scott, The Constitution and Finance of English, Scottish and Irish Joint-Stock Companies to 1720, (3 vols., Cambridge, 1910-12), ii, 66-7.

⁵³ T. Carte, A Collection of Original Letters and Papers, (2 vols., 1739), i, 195-7; Whitelocke, Memorials, iii, 92; CSPD, 1649-50, 16; PRO HCA 24/109/137.

⁵⁴ PRO HCA 13/61, ff. 359v-362, 393; PRO HCA 13/62, examinations of Edward Crasse and Richard Binge, 3 July 1649.

⁵⁵ CSPD 1649-50 11-12, 274, 460, 564; CSPD 1650, 106-7.

⁵⁶ G. F. Steckley, The Letters of John Paige, London Merchant, (London Record Society, 1984), 19.

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allowed merchants on the customs since the summer of 1642. In 1651 Mazarin tried to open negotiations with the Commonwealth, but the unofficial naval war continued. In September 1652 Blake destroyed a French fleet which had been dispatched to relieve besieged Dunkirk, and brought about the town's surrender. Thus persuaded, Mazarin agreed to recognise the Commonwealth, and a final settlement was eventually concluded in 1655.⁵⁸

(iii) Privateering and other threats to London shipping

Although the actions of pro-royalist foreign powers undoubtedly caused considerable disruption to specific aspects of London's trade, the overall impact on the metropolitan economy was mitigated by the fact that these attacks did not all come at once, and many aspects of overseas trade were not affected at all. London's shipping was more frequently and directly threatened from the royalists in the 1640s, from privateers on the high seas, and when ports and harbours fell to the forces of the King.

In December 1642 London merchant ships returning from Spain were forced into royalist held Falmouth by storms, where they were seized by the local royalists.⁵⁹ This event led a group of London merchants to petition Parliament January 1643, adding that they were expecting shipment of at least £200,000 in silver from Spain.⁶⁰ Then, on the 17th of that month, forty ships were driven into the control of Pendennis Castle, in Cornwall. These were probably the ships referred to in the merchants' petition as they carried enough money to enable the local royalist commanders to pay their soldiers' arrears, and give them a fortnights' pay in advance.⁶¹ It was the early part of the war and the King did not wish to embark on a full scale economic war on London and, as a result, some merchants may have got their goods returned. The owners of the goods on board the *Elias and Elizabeth*, which was one of the ships which had been driven into Falmouth, obtained a letter from Charles I, ordering that half of the goods from the ship be released, and that they be given a bond for

⁵⁷ PRO SP 105 151, ff. 40, 40v; *CJ* VI, 489.

⁵⁸ *CSPD* 1650, 379, 417; *CJ* VI, 490; *Firth & Rait*, ii, 444; B. Capp, *Cromwell's Navy, the Fleet and the English Revolution, 1648-1660*, (Oxford 1989), 71, 93.

⁵⁹ *BL* E244(26), *England's Memorable Accidents*, 19-26 Dec. 1642, 124-5; *CLRO* MCD1/83; *PRO* HCA 13 58, ff. 631v-632v.

⁶⁰ *PRO* SP 16 497 4.

⁶¹ *CJ* II 932; *Powell & Timings*, 58; M. Coate, *Cornwall in the Great Civil War and Interregnum, 1642-1660*, (2nd edition, Truro, 1963), 39, 41, 117; J. R. Powell, *The Navy in the English Civil War*, (1962), 33.

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payment for the remainder.⁶²

As the royalists took further ports in 1643, they took more London ships. It was reported that forty ships belonging to Londoners fell into royalist hands when Dartmouth was captured.⁶³ As late as August 1648 the *Rose*, returning from Montserrat to London carrying sugar and tobacco, was lost to the royalists when she was driven by the weather into the Scilly Isles.⁶⁴ A few London merchant ships were lost when their masters defected to the royalists, the most spectacular example of which was when the East India Company ship the *John* was brought to Bristol, and subsequently set out as a privateer by its master Muckwell. in 1644.⁶⁵

The greatest royalist threat to London shipping in the 1640s came from privateering. No historian has attempted a comprehensive account of royalist privateering in the 1640s, although Jane Ohlmeyer has published a useful survey of Irish privateering. This is not the place to offer such an account. It can be argued that Irish privateering is not directly relevant for a study of the English Civil War, but it is very difficult to separate the two, partly because parliamentary sources rarely made the distinction, but also because the commissions issued to Irish privateers authorised them to attack the enemies of Charles I as well as the Irish rebellion, and there is evidence of Irish and royalist privateers working together.⁶⁶

The evidence for the impact of royalist and Irish privateering is very fragmentary. There are no complete lists of prizes from which the total losses of London shipping can be established. Between 1642 and 1650 sixty nine English ships were condemned as prize by the Spanish Admiralty in Flanders, but the vast majority of the prizes would have been dealt with by the Irish or royalist authorities.⁶⁷ Ohlmeyer found evidence from literary sources of 250 vessels taken by the Irish privateers, from March 1642 to July 1650, but this may be only a fraction of the total.⁶⁸ Appleby calculated that between 118 and 121 ships were captured by privateers operating from the Channel Islands, but this may also be a considerable underestimate. A list of prizes from the royalist admiralty in Ostend between

⁶² CI.RO MCDI 83.

⁶³ CSPV, 1643-7, 34.

⁶⁴ PRO HCA 24 109 56.

⁶⁵ CCMEIC, 1644-49, vii, 71; PRO HCA 13/60, examinations of Christopher Lansdale, John Potts and Simon Beer, 16th August 1645.

⁶⁶ J. H. Ohlmeyer, 'Irish Privateers During the English Civil War, 1642-50', *MM*, 76, (1990), 119-131; PRO HCA 13 59, ff. 300v, 304.

⁶⁷ R. Baetens, 'The Organisation and Effects of Flemish Privateering in the Seventeenth Century', in *Acta Historiae Neerlandicae, Studies on the History of the Netherlands*, (The Hague, 1976), 68-9.

⁶⁸ Ohlmeyer, 'Irish Privateers', 127.

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March 1649 and August 1650, records fifty four vessels, and goods from three others.⁶⁹ Most of the records generated by the Irish and royalist admiralties have been lost. To assess the impact of privateering on the trade of London it is necessary to rely on more qualitative sources.

In 1642 the Confederation of Kilkenny began to recruit privateers from the Spanish Netherlands, and London shipping came increasingly under threat. In May 1642 the English merchant vessel the *Marigold*, en route for Bilbao, was taken by an Irish frigate. From the end of 1642 royalist privateering began to develop from bases in Cornwall and the north west.⁷⁰ The records of the East India Company show that the privateers were causing considerable alarm in the London merchant community by early 1643.⁷¹ Another sign of increasing concern about privateers in London in 1643 was the coverage they were beginning to get in the London newsbooks. The attacks of the Cornish privateers were receiving considerable attention from early February.⁷² In the following month the Channel was said to be infested with Irish and royalist privateers, and Falmouth was described as a 'new Algiers'.⁷³ By May the London press was reporting that the attacks of the privateers from Dunkirk and Falmouth were causing increasing complaints among the merchant community.⁷⁴

In the course of 1643 the capture of ports such as Bristol, Dartmouth and Scarborough, strengthened the royalist naval resources. By the following year Parliament's Lord Admiral, the Earl of Warwick, reported that the royalists had 250 ships. Ohlmeyer has argued that in the 1640s privateering communities sprung up in Waterford and Wexford with a total of fifty to sixty frigates employed by the privateers.⁷⁵ The Irish and royalist privateers were present in all waters around England. They were most common on the western shores, in early 1644 it was reported that royalist privateers were interrupting all trade with France, but no area was immune. In June 1643 the Navy Committee was informed that two privateers were lying in the mouth of the Thames taking ships as they

⁶⁹ J. C. Appleby, 'Neutrality, Trade and Privateering, 1500-1689', in A. G. Jamieson, (ed.), A People of the Sea: The Maritime History of the Channel Islands, (1986), 102; S. Groenveld, 'The English Civil Wars as a cause of the First Anglo-Dutch War, 1640-52', HJ, 30, (1987), 558 n. 67.

⁷⁰ Ohlmeyer, 'Irish Privateers', 120-2; BL E84(4), The Kingdomes Weekly Intelligencer, No. 1, 27 Dec. 1642-3 Jan. 1643, 2-3; BL E94(9), Certaine Informations, 20-27 March 1643, No. 10, 79.

⁷¹ W. Foster, (ed.), The English Factories in India, 1642-45, (Oxford, 1913), 95; CCMEIC, 1640-3, 320.

⁷² BL E88(20), The Kingdomes Weekly Intelligencer, No. 6, 31 Jan.-7 Feb. 1643, 47.

⁷³ BL E247(4), A Perfect Diurnall, No. 40, 13-20 March 1643, unpag.; BL E94(9), The Kingdomes Weekly Intelligencer, No. 13, 21-28 March 1643, 102.

⁷⁴ BL E101(2), Certaine Informations, No. 16, 1-8 May 1643, 123-124; BL E249(5), A Perfect Diurnall, No. 49, 8-15 May 1643, unpag.

⁷⁵ Coate, Cornwall in the Great Civil War, 38; Powell, Navy in the English Civil War, 27-8, 37-8, 43, 51, 62; Powell & Timings, 85; Ohlmeyer, 'Irish Privateers', 123.

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went out to sea. Parliament's authorities at first left the northern and Scottish coasts unguarded, but they paid the price for the neglect. By April 1644 the Committee for Both Kingdoms was receiving reports that vessels were frequently being lost in these waters, and they requested Warwick to provide a guard.⁷⁶

On 16 August 1644 the company of the *Dolphin*, a ship belonging to the East India Company returning to England, learnt from another ship that 'the King's forces of shipping on the west part of England, dayly do encrease' and that 'his [the King's] protection was withdrawn from his subjects, and they thereby left as a spoile and pray to our own and other nations, and the west parts of England in generall infected with rovers, both English Dunkerkers, and others, that little safety for a single ship (but even by accident) could be expected'. It was concluded that, as the *Dolphin* had lost contact with its companion the *Discovery*, it would be safer for them to return to Surat.⁷⁷

Complaints about privateering increased substantially in 1645. In January the Common Council was petitioned concerning the threat from the privateers to the coastal trade with East Anglia.⁷⁸ At the end of April one London newsbook reported that 'those that come along our coast say that our seas are full of Dutch and other strangers, and of his Majesty's party but he saith he met with no ships of the parliaments until he came into the Downes'.⁷⁹ In May 1645 the London newsbooks were full of reports about the depredations of the privateers. One lamented, 'from Sea we have worse newes then by land: for the devilish Dunkirkers doe much spoyle by their nimble running Frigots, and have of late taken divers small vessels from us which makes them stronger, and our selves weaker'.⁸⁰ Another that, 'the Dunkirkers and others have taken 22 small ships of Scottish and English (some with coales) within these 15 daies'.⁸¹

There was renewed agitation in the Common Council about privateering in the summer of 1645, on 7 June 1645 they approved a petition to Parliament calling for the navy to be re-organised to provide constant convoys to merchant shipping, arguing that trade was depressed because of the lack of escorts for merchant shipping. On 28th of that month the Common Council received a petition from the maritime community which stated that many merchants were facing ruin unless sufficient convoys were provided.⁸²

⁷⁶ BL E33(10), *Certaine Informations*, No. 56, 8-15 Feb. 1644, 437; Bodl. Rawlinson MS. A221, f. 138; CSPD 1644, 111.

⁷⁷ Foster, *English Factories in India, 1642-45*, 188.

⁷⁸ CLRO Jour. 40, f. 120.

⁷⁹ BL E281(5), *The Moderate Intelligencer*, No. 9, 24 April-1 May 1645, 69.

⁸⁰ BL E284(17), *The Scottish Dove*, No. 82, 9-16 May 1645, 646.

⁸¹ BL E284(19), *The True Informer*, No. 4, week ending 17 May 1645, 27.

⁸² CLRO Jour. 40, ff. 131v, 135-v.

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In late 1645 and 1646 the royalist held ports in the west country fell to the victorious New Model Army, and in June 1646 the Navy Commissioners claimed that the King had only six men of war left. But the newsbook complaints about losses at sea continued. In late October 1645 it was reported in the London press that 'several Merchants ships have been lately taken by the Dunkirks [frigates], and his Majesty of Englands Royal pyrates, coming from Spain, and other parts. If we suffer this, it will cause a great decay of trading'.⁸³ Many Cornish privateers simply moved their base of operations to the Channel Islands where there was a substantial increase in privateering activity in 1645 and 1646, in May 1646 it was reported that between six and eight frigates were based at Jersey. By late 1646 the number of privateers from Wexford and Waterford was increasing as the fall of Dunkirk to French forces in October encouraged frigates to move to Ireland.⁸⁴

London merchants complained that Parliament's navy was failing to provide adequate protection from the privateers. In January 1646 Richard Best, writing from London to his colleague John Turner, a merchant resident in Tenerife, said that it was 'gods mercy' that Turner's ship had arrived safely in London 'our men of warr being very faulty for lokeing to cleare the co[a]st'. He had heard of two ships from Oporto which had been attacked only four days previously. Best feared that the navy was not being properly maintained, he warned 'ther[e] is much feare of greate leakage in most of the fleete'.⁸⁵

In the early part of 1647 there were numerous complaints about the attacks of the privateers on the south coast, and Parliament's representative in France reported that the Prince of Wales was issuing numerous letters of marque in Jersey.⁸⁶ In May Mazarin issued an edict forbidding all privateers from entering French ports, and he was able to pressurise the Prince of Wales to revoke all letters of marque. The activities of the Channel Island privateers came to a halt and proceedings were begun to return captured English ships in French ports to their owners. The situation was again reversed when the Prince rescinded the prohibition on privateering in August, and Mazarin's edict against royalist privateering was not fully enforced. A Stuart Admiralty was established in French-held

⁸³ BL E307(37), Mercurius Civicus, No. 127, 23-30 Oct. 1643, 1115, 1117.

⁸⁴ Powell, Navy in the English Civil War, 121-2, 129; Ohlmeyer, 'Irish Privateers', 127; BL E340(31), The Answer of the Commissioners of the Navie to a scandalous Pamphlet published by Mr. Andrewes Burrell, (1646), 19; Appleby, 'Neutrality, Trade and Privateering', 102; BL E334(2), The Moderate Intelligencer, No. 59, 16-23 April 1646, 397; BL E337(28), The Scottish Dove, No. 134, 13-20 May, 663; BL E513(20), A Perfect Diurnall, No. 169, 19-26 Oct. 1646, 1355-6.

⁸⁵ PRO C 110/151/2, Best to Turner, 10 January 1646.

⁸⁶ BL E515(4), A Perfect Diurnall, No. 190, 15-22 March 1647, 1520-1; PRO HCA 13/61, ff. 291v, 342v; BL Add. MS. 4200, f. 37.

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Dunkirk.⁸⁷

The last two years of the 1640s were the worst for privateering. In February 1648 the new commander of Parliament's navy, Thomas Rainsborough, complained that the Irish privateers were increasing, but ships from the Irish squadron had to be sent to south Wales to help put down the rising, and this forced the local parliamentary commander to end the blockade of the Irish ports. Worse was to follow as the mutiny of the fleet on the Downs in May 1648 meant that ships had to be drawn away from protecting merchant shipping from the privateers. In the course of 1648 there were frequent complaints about the damage done by the privateers, complaints which increased rather than diminished in the following year.⁸⁸

At the end of 1648 it was reported that a fleet of eleven Irish frigates 'lie hovering up and down the narrow seas, seizing on divers merchants ships'.⁸⁹ In July 1649 the Council of State wrote to the commander of the North Sea squadron to inform him that there were fifteen English merchant ships at the Sound, carrying grain for the dearth stricken home market, which would not dare the journey home because the Irish men of war were lying in wait for them. In August eight merchantmen were taken off Flamborough Head, and one of Popham's correspondents wrote that the coasts of Flanders were worse than Algiers.⁹⁰ In September the Council of State was informed from Rotterdam 'if spiedie care be not taken, by layinge of ships before Dunkirk and Ostend, they [the privateers] will growe potent and wholly spoyle all trade to these partes, and also the fishing trade, . . . , and also all trade along the cost from Newcastle to the Downs'.⁹¹

The correspondence of London merchants in the late 1640s shows continued anxiety about the threat from privateers.⁹² In March 1648 Best wrote to Turner that 'thos[e] Rebelyous Irish w[i]th other Roagues are abroad in frigotts and have taken many small ships'.⁹³ In the autumn of 1648 a petition from the 'well-affected masters and commanders of ships' to the House of Commons stated that 'their Trade is wholly destroyed, some merchants not daring, and others absolutely refusing, to ship their goods with them'. They

⁸⁷ Powell, *Navy in the English Civil War*, 136, 137, 143-4; Groenveld, 'English Civil Wars as a cause of the First Anglo-Dutch War', 558; Appleby, 'Neutrality, Trade and Privateering', 102; BL Add. MS. 4155, ff. 242, 266-8; BL Add. MS. 4200, f. 42.

⁸⁸ Powell & Timings, 301, 314; CSPD 1648-9, 284-5, 288, 324; *HMC Thirteenth Report, Portland MSS.*, i, 499.

⁸⁹ BL E477(11), *A Message sent from His Highnesse the Prince of Wales, to the Citizens of London*, (1648), 2.

⁹⁰ Carte, *Collection of Original Letters and Papers*, i, 248; CSPD 1649-50, 200, 222-3; *HMC Leyborne Popham MSS.*, 34, 35; Capp, *Cromwell's Navy*, 61-2.

⁹¹ Birch, *Thurloe State Papers*, i, 117.

⁹² Steckley, *Letters of John Paige*, 1, 2, 10, 25; PRO C 110/151/2, Best to Turner, 25 May 1647.

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called on the Commons to appoint constant convoys between the Thames and the Netherlands and France.⁹⁴

Privateering affected a wide cross section of the London merchant community. In 1644 the *Mary and Dorothy* was taken by Irish privateers when returning from Amsterdam towards London, freighted by a group of London merchants including the former custom's farmer Sir Paul Pindar, she carried alum, hemp, potash and other goods together with £3-4,000 in cash, presumably profits from trading in the Mediterranean as she had initially been employed taking cloth to Italy. Fortunately for Pindar and his colleagues, the *Mary and Dorothy* was soon retaken by a parliamentary vessel, although they had to pay a salvage fee for the restoration of their ship, but others were not so fortunate. In 1645 ships carrying goods belonging to the Guinea Company and members of the Merchant Adventurers were lost to privateers operating out of the Flanders ports.⁹⁵

Privateering did not affect all trade equally, the coastal trades and those with England's closest neighbours suffered the most. It is clear from the correspondence of John Paige that it was the smaller ships which were considered most vulnerable to the privateers in the late 1640s. A list of vessels brought by privateers to Ostend, from 1648 to 1650, in the State Papers' collection, shows that the majority of the ships taken tended to be small vessels carrying cereal crops, coal and similar commodities, probably engaged in the coastal trades.⁹⁶ In August 1649 the newsbook The Moderate Intelligencer reported that the Irish frigates dared not encounter merchant ships which went well manned and armed, but instead attacked colliers, and those engaged in the coastal trade or which traded with Holland, France and Denmark.⁹⁷ Long distance trades did suffer some losses; in December 1643 the *George* of London, returning from a voyage to the West Indies, was taken by royalist privateers. Her cargo was valued at £4,000 or more.⁹⁸

A number of measures were deployed which diminished the threats to trade. Parliament began a ship building programme to expand the size of the navy, which was massively increased during the Commonwealth. By the end of 1651 the navy had doubled in size. New frigates were particularly important for combating the privateers; in 1646 and 1647 at least nine were launched, and more were added in the early years of the Commonwealth. In November 1650 the Rump agreed to send out thirty seven ships to act

⁹³ Ibid. Best to Turner, 13 March 1648.

⁹⁴ Rushworth Collections, vii, 1258-9.

⁹⁵ PRO HCA 13 59, ff. 256-8, 300v, 304; CJ III, 568; PRO C 24/701/43; CSPD 1644-5, 433.

⁹⁶ Steckley, Letters of John Paige, 2, 10; PRO SP 18/9, ff. 223-225.

⁹⁷ BL E572(26), The Moderate Intelligencer, No. 233, 30 Aug.-6 Sept. 1649, 2239.

⁹⁸ PRO HCA 13 59, f. 244.

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as a constant, standing convoy for English merchant ships.⁹⁹

The advance of Cromwell's army in Ireland deprived the privateers of their bases. On 12 October Wexford, 'the Dunkirk of Ireland' fell and in November 1649 one of the most notorious of the privateers, Captain Plunket, was captured when he sailed into Cork, unaware that it had fallen. In March 1651 Waterford fell, followed by the last Irish privateering port Galway, in April 1652. In 1651 the other major privateering bases fell. The re-conquest of Scilly was completed by 3 June, on 17 October an expeditionary force under Robert Blake set sail to take the Channel Islands, and in that autumn the Isle of Man also fell to the forces of the new regime. In 1650 the Dunkirk merchants had decided against sending out privateers in the name of Charles II when they realised how large Parliament's summer fleet was.¹⁰⁰

(iv) *The Revolt of the Fleet*

The mutiny of Parliament's navy on the Downs in May 1648 has been widely discussed, but the focus is usually upon the protagonists. Although the impact on trade is generally acknowledged, it has never been fully explored.¹⁰¹ On 26 May Parliament's sailors at the Downs mutinied taking control of Rainsborough's flagship, the *Constant Reformation*, and the other five ships then stationed there. Parliament appointed Lord Admiral Warwick in order to re-establish its authority over the fleet, but he found that more ships had joined the mutiny while others refused to serve until they were paid. On 10 or 11 June the rebel ships left the Downs for Helvoetsluys in Holland, a month later the Prince of Wales arrived to take command.¹⁰²

For the first time the royalists possessed a fleet of major fighting ships, opening the prospect of a much wider sea war. The importance of the fleet to the City was clear to all; one royalist remarked 'this city must go with the fleet, and neither can nor dare do other'. With a fleet the royalists could hope to blockade the port of London. Whereas previously the threat to merchant shipping was principally to the smaller ships and the local trades,

⁹⁹ Capp, *Cromwell's Navy*, 52; A. W. Johns, 'The Constant Warwick', *MM*, 18, (1932), 254; J. S. Corbett, *England in the Mediterranean. A Study of the Rise and Influence of British Power within the Straits, 1603-1713*, (2 vols., 1904), i, 183-4, 194-5.

¹⁰⁰ R. C. Anderson, 'The Royalists at Sea in 1649', *MM*, 14, (1928), 327; Ohlmeyer, 'Irish Privateers', 130; Birch, *Thurloe State Papers*, i, 142; Capp, *Cromwell's Navy*, 64-71; R. C. Anderson 'The Royalists at Sea in 1650', *MM*, 17, (1931), 143, 157; J. R. Powell, 'Blake's Reduction of Jersey in 1651', *MM*, 18, (1932), 65.

¹⁰¹ Capp, *Cromwell's Navy*, chapter 2; R. C. Anderson, 'The Royalists at Sea in 1648', *MM*, 9, (1923); Powell, *Navy in the English Civil War*, chapters. 10-12; D. E. Kennedy, 'The English Naval Revolt of 1648', *EHR*, 77, (1962).

¹⁰² Capp, *Cromwell's Navy*, 20-23; Anderson, 'Royalists at Sea in 1648', 34-36.

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now the royalists were in a position to threaten the largest and most heavily armed merchant vessels.¹⁰³

In June 1648 it was suggested at a Court of the East India Company that, because of the revolt of the fleet, the *William*, which was about to be dispatched, should be sent around the north of Scotland so as to avoid the Channel. Although this idea was rejected it suggests the degree of alarm that was being felt in the London merchant community. In early July there was considerable concern among the merchants of the Levant Company that the *Sampson*, which was about to set sail for Istanbul laden with cloths, would be taken. Though the ship was dispatched many merchants decided it was too risky to send their goods in her.¹⁰⁴ In a petition to Parliament, the City argued that unless the situation was resolved:

'navigation will be destroyed, seamen desert us, the merchants inforced to leave off Trading, Cloathing and other manufactures of this Kingdom fall to the Ground, Wool (which is the staple commodity of the land) remain unsold, the mint stand still, Customs and other Profits by merchandising will be much abated, if not destroyed, corn, salt, coal, Fish Butter, cheese and all other provisions brought by sea to this City and Kingdom stopped; the innumerable Number of the poorer sort, depending only upon the Manufactures, wanting Work and Bread (as is greatly feared), will in a very short Time become tumultuous in all parts of the Kingdom, and many enforced to remove themselves and their families into Foreign Parts, and there to settle the manufacture of this Kingdom, never to be regained'.¹⁰⁵

On July 17 the royalist fleet left Helvoetsluys and returned to the Downs from where they intercepted merchant shipping going to and from London. Among them were two ships belonging to the Guinea Company returning from Africa, the *Star* and the *Cormitant*. The *Star* carried £12,000 in gold.¹⁰⁶ Also taken was a ship from New England, and the *Love*, returning from the Adriatic, both with valuable cargoes.¹⁰⁷ On 24 July the Merchant Adventurers had obtained permission to dispatch their cloth ship the *Damsell* and two smaller vessels, and they were all taken by the royalist fleet: their cargo included not only cloth but also forty five barrels of indigo worth £2,500 belonging to the radical merchant Richard Shute. The value of the Merchant Adventurer's cloth taken by the

¹⁰³ Quoted in Capp, *Cromwell's Navy*, 23.

¹⁰⁴ CCMEIC, 1644-9, 274; PRO SP 105 150, ff. 188-v, 200v.

¹⁰⁵ LJ X 427.

¹⁰⁶ PRO HCA 24 110 74.

¹⁰⁷ Capp, *Cromwell's Navy*, 23; PRO HCA 13/61, ff. 225-231v; CSPD, 1648, 262.

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royalists was put by one royalist source at £40,000.¹⁰⁸ At least four other vessels were seized by the revolted fleet, the *Chapman* of London, the *Elizabeth and Susan*, the *Thomas and Margaret*, a ketch returning from France and the *Concord*, which was bound for New England. This would suggest that at least eleven vessels were taken.¹⁰⁹ The total value of the ships taken by the Prince is uncertain, but a royalist source claimed that the fleet took prizes worth £100,000 to £120,000, which may not be much of an exaggeration.¹¹⁰

On 29 July the Prince wrote to the City of London demanding a 'loan' of £20,000 to support his fleet, in return for which he promised to release the ships he had taken. The letter was passed on to Parliament, and on 3 August the Commons ordered the Merchant Adventurers to break off communications with the Prince. On the following day they declared all those who assisted the Prince of Wales traitors, and on the same day the Common Council ordered a committee, which had been set up to consider the letter from the Prince, to cease its deliberations. On 5 August the Prince addressed himself to Parliament proposing to release all seized shipping in return for money for his fleet, but he can have had little hope of success.¹¹¹

Despite Parliament's proclamations, there is considerable evidence of negotiations between London and the Prince. On 10 August the Scottish peer the Earl of Lauderdale wrote from the Prince's flagship on the Downs: 'Heer are ships taken to a great value for which London is treating to send money abroad' but whether 'London' here means the municipality or individual merchants is not clear.¹¹² On 11 August the Levant Company agreed to send a representative to Dover to try to procure a free passage for their ships to either London or Holland, no doubt by bribery. In the middle of August Lawrence Lowe, a London merchant, was employed by the Guinea Company and other merchants in getting the release of their ships. The owners of the *Love* employed Captain Ryder for the same purpose.¹¹³ Negotiations between the Merchant Adventurers and the Prince of Wales clearly also continued.¹¹⁴

As a result of these contacts, most of the ships were returned to their owners in return for a composition. But the report of Strickland, Parliament's representative in the Netherlands, on 26 October that 'divers of the merchants, whose ships were taken in the

¹⁰⁸ LJ X 393, 417; HMC Pepys MSS., 219; Powell & Timings, 378; PRO HCA 13/61, ff. 275v, 345v, 363v-4, 425, 458v-9; PRO HCA 24/109/89, 182, 216.

¹⁰⁹ PRO HCA 13/61, ff. 345, 375, 376, 505v.

¹¹⁰ Powell & Timings, 376.

¹¹¹ Calendar of Clarendon State Papers, i, 432; CJ V, 660, 662; CLRO Jour. 40, ff. 291v, 292v, 293; LJ X, 426.

¹¹² S. R. Gardiner, (ed.), The Hamilton Papers 1638-50, (Camden Society, new series, 27, 1880), 238.

¹¹³ LJ X, 417; PRO SP 105/150, ff. 381, 383-4; PRO HCA 13/61, ff. 230v, 279v-280.

¹¹⁴ CSPD 1648-9, 234.

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Downs have Compounded for them', suggests that many merchants did not compound for their ships until after the return of the fleet to Holland.¹¹⁵ Compounding meant that the revolt did not stifle all London's trade, but the losses inflicted on London merchants were considerable. The royalist source mentioned above stated that £30,000 was taken for the release of the ships. Other evidence substantiates this figure. A letter from a London royalist printed in Perfect Occurrences says that the City had sent £20,000 to ransom the ships seized by Prince Charles. In September another newsbook reported that the ship from New England alone had compounded for £2,000, and when Nicholas Trence, master of the *Chapman*, tried to get his ship released, £2,000 was proposed as payment for discharge for ship and goods, on the grounds that they were worth £7,000.¹¹⁶

The royalists attempted to extract money from the Merchant Adventurers in Rotterdam in return for the release of their ships. On 26 July 1648 the Duke of York wrote to the merchants of Rotterdam requesting a loan of £1,000 a month for his upkeep. On 5 August the company's deputy presented him with 12,000 guilders, and took the opportunity to press a petition for the release of their ship. This was not forthcoming, and on 30 August it was reported that the Rotterdam merchants were refusing to accept any of his bills until the cloth ship came into harbour. The *Damsell* was eventually returned to its owners, according to Clarendon in return for £12,000. In December 1649 Strickland noted the indebtedness of the Merchant Adventurers' Company in Rotterdam, though not why; perhaps this was due to the payment of a large composition to the royalists for the *Damsell* and her companions.¹¹⁷

Not all the goods and ships taken by the royalists were returned to their owners. Of the forty five barrels of indigo taken in the *Damsell*, twelve were not recovered and the recovery of the other thirty three barrels cost Richard Shute £200-£250, plus 8055 guilders for composition.¹¹⁸ In September it was reported that goods taken from some of the ships seized by the Prince's fleet were being sold, including goods from the *Star*.¹¹⁹ The Guinea company recovered the *Star* but were unable to get any restitution for the gold she carried. The *Cormatine*, worth £6,000-£10,000, and the *Love* were added to the royalist fleet,

¹¹⁵ H. Cary, (ed.), Memorials of the Great Civil War From, 1642 to 1652, (2 vols., 1842), ii, 44.

¹¹⁶ Capp, Cromwell's Navy, 33; Powell & Timings, 376; BL E525(20), Perfect Occurrences, No. 86, 18-25 August 1648; BL E464(25), The Moderate Intelligencer, No. 183, 14th-21 Sept. 1648, 1544; PRO HCA 13 61, f. 345.

¹¹⁷ HMC Pepys MSS., 219, 222, 225; Clarendon, History of the Rebellion, iv, 363; Cary, Memorials of the Great Civil War, ii, 206.

¹¹⁸ PRO HCA 13/61, ff. 345v, 458v-9; PRO HCA 24/109/182, 216

¹¹⁹ BL E464(25), The Moderate Intelligencer No. 183, 14-21 Sept. 1648, 1544;

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although the *Love* was to be retaken by Warwick's fleet at Helvoetsluys in November.¹²⁰

On 29 August the royalist fleet sailed for the Thames, but, after a stand off with the parliamentary fleet, it then returned to Holland, arriving at Helvoetsluys on 1 September. On 19th of that month Warwick arrived with Parliament's navy, and blockaded the royalist fleet until 21 November. He then returned to England with his entire fleet, leaving the royalists to resume their attacks on English merchant shipping.¹²¹ In January 1649 six vessels were sent out from Helvoetsluys by the royalists to capture prizes to raise funds. Among those taken was a ship from Hamburg bound for London, which was said to be worth £40,000, and said by one royalist source to have contained silver for the use of the East India Company. No mention of this can be found in the company's minutes, but the company did obtain rials from Hamburg in the 1640s, and in April 1649 they were informed that rials were very scarce in Dover, so this story may be accurate.¹²²

A royalist source states that a ship was taken belonging to merchants of Rotterdam who were said to have been willing to pay £2,000, had the royalists been willing to return her. Anderson has cast doubt on this story on the grounds that it is unlikely that the royalists would have brought a captured Dutch owned ship to a Dutch port, however if we assume that the merchants of Rotterdam referred to were the English Merchant Adventurers of that city, then this contradiction is resolved as the ship would have been English.¹²³ Walter Strickland, Parliament's representative in the Netherlands wrote despairingly: 'thus Prince's men bring in our merchants like slaves and captives'. He bewailed the lack of activity of Parliament's navy and wrote that English merchants were reduced to beggary.¹²⁴

Nevertheless Warwick had successfully contained the mutiny, and although the revolt cost a number of merchants a very considerable amount of money it never brought London's overseas trade to a total halt. The royalist fleet would remain at large until 1653 and took a considerable number of London merchant ships, but it would never again be able to blockade the Thames, and was chased by the increasingly effective Commonwealth fleet further and further away from English home waters.¹²⁵

¹²⁰ PRO HCA 24 109 33; PRO HCA 24 110 74; R. Spalding, (ed.), The Diary of Bulstrode Whitelocke, 1605-1675, (Oxford, 1990), 220 & n; Anderson, 'Royalists at Sea in 1648', 45.

¹²¹ Capp, Cromwell's Navy, 40; Powell, Navy in the English Civil War, 184, 186-7.

¹²² Anderson, 'Royalists at Sea in 1649', 321; Carte, Collection of Original Letters and Papers, i, 205; CCMEIC 1644-9, 168, 320.

¹²³ Carte, Collection of Original Letters and Papers, i, 208; Anderson, 'Royalists at Sea in 1649', 321n. 3.

¹²⁴ Powell & Timings, 405.

¹²⁵ Capp, Cromwell's Navy, 63-5; Anderson, 'Royalist at Sea in 1649', 320-338; idem, 'Royalists at Sea in 1650', 134-168; idem, 'The Royalists at Sea in 1651-1653', MM, 21, 1935, 61-90.

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(v) Conclusion

In summary it can be shown that economic warfare could and did cause considerable damage to London's trade networks. Although no part of London's trade was entirely cut off for any considerable period of time, it is clear that it was frequently significantly diminished. London's commerce was very diverse, and at no stage were all parts of the network affected at once. Internal trade was intensely disrupted during the first Civil War, but the worst period was probably only from the summer of 1643 to the summer of 1644, and some aspects of internal trade were entirely unaffected.

The actions of foreign governments could have a disastrous affect on particular trades, but their activities were too uncoordinated to have a general affect on the economy. The war at sea only began seriously to disrupt English trade from the middle years of the decade, when the worse disruption of internal trade was already over, but this threat was never fully realised. The mutiny was contained, and the fleet prevented from establishing a totally effective blockade on the Thames. The key factors were that Parliament had access to far more maritime resources than the Irish and royalists, while the French were distracted by their own political troubles, and their war with Spain. The Rump was therefore able to build up her fleet and defeat her maritime enemies, in so doing they salvaged London's overseas trade.

Two major periods of disruption in London's trade can be identified, 1643 to 1644 as a result of the blockade of internal trade, and 1648-9 when the revolted fleet, privateers, and the naval war with the French, threatened London's maritime trade. The Civil War, therefore, struck at the heart of London's ability to function within the national economy both as principal port of England, and as the centre for the distribution goods to the nation. The next two chapters will examine the extent of the damage caused by these two periods of disruption on London's domestic and foreign trade.

7 Domestic Trade and Consumption

The Civil War crisis in London's domestic trade can be divided into two aspects. Firstly, the disruption of trade to London from the provinces. This can be largely attributed to the economic blockades established by both the royalists and the Parliamentarians in 1643. As a result the pattern of disruption reflected the division of the country between the two warring parties. The royalist controlled areas tended to be further away from London so the trades most affected were the long distance ones, especially those in cloth, cattle and coal. Trade links with areas closer to London generally remained open throughout the war, and goods received predominantly from those parts, especially grain, never seem to have been in short supply.

The second aspect to the wartime crisis in London's domestic is the decline in demand for goods sold by Londoners themselves. This is more problematic. It is difficult to distinguish clearly between demand for goods from London in the provinces, and demand in London itself, partly because many London tradesmen were active in both retailing and wholesaling, and partly because much of the goods bought by provincial customers were sold in London. Members of the gentry took the opportunity of visits to London to catch up on their shopping, and metropolitan tradesmen sold their goods to provincial shopkeepers both through their London shops and through provincial fairs.¹

It is therefore difficult, and perhaps impossible, to distinguish between London demand and provincial demand. However this raises the problem, to what extent did the decline in demand originate outside the metropolis, as a result of the blockading of internal trade and the devastation brought about by the war, and to what extent did it originate within London, as a result of the massive increase in taxation and other economic difficulties.

By late 1642 the royalist attacks on carriers were creating shortages of cloth in London. On 29 November 1642 George Warner's factor in Hamburg wrote to his principal: 'I take note what you write of the stopping of Cl[oth] from London by reason of the Kings Armie lieing thereabouts, I pray God to turne all things for the best and settle the disturbances of the kingdome, and then I hope trade may revive againe'.² In 1643 this was intensified by the royalist blockade of London. On 25 November the Levant Company, which generally exported cloth from the west country, wrote to their treasurer in Istanbul, John Wolfe: in

¹ L. Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy, 1558-1641*, (Oxford, 1965), 387-9; PRO C2/CHASIN3/41.

² PRO SP 46 84, f. 296.

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the ship which they had just dispatched 'there goes little store of cloth and that at much dearer rates, and yet hereafter likely to be dearer. We could not get any vests of such cloth and colours you desire, the kingdom and this city especially being in such disturbances'.³ In March 1644 the East India Company informed their representatives in Surat that, thanks to the Civil War 'Broad Cloath and other Wollen Manufactures' were very difficult to obtain in London.⁴ The following August the Levant Company decided to send the *Hercules* to Turkey with 800 cloths, but they had only managed to load 400 by May 1645. This evidence comes from the foreign trade sector, but it reflects the repercussions of the crisis in London's domestic trade.⁵

In 1644 there was considerable agitation in London against Parliament's restrictions on trade with the royalists. In January a group of London shopkeepers complained to the Court of Aldermen that goods, which they had recently sent to their chapmen in Wickham, had been seized by Parliamentary soldiers. The following September a petition was presented to the Common Council requesting the re-opening of trade with royalist controlled parts of the kingdom. Although the Aldermen were initially sympathetic to this agitation, sympathy soon cooled, probably because they realised that if Parliament lifted their trade restrictions, but the Royalists continued to embargo London, then the only probable beneficiaries would be foreign merchants.⁶

Towards the end of 1644 there are signs that the efforts of the royalists to reroute the western cloth trade away from London were beginning to bear fruit, the Common Council was becoming concerned that cloth was being shipped from Exeter and Dartmouth to the Netherlands 'whereby the trade is much carried away from this city to the impoverishment thereof'. In January 1645 a petition was prepared for Parliament stating that the Dutch had recently sent ships to Dartmouth, that they had returned to Holland and Zealand with four ships laden with western cloth, and that they were preparing another fleet.⁷

The receipts of hallage at Blackwell Hall, the principal cloth mart of the kingdom, support the argument that the Civil War seriously disrupted the cloth trade to London. As early as 11 January 1643, the treasurer of Christ's Hospital complained to the Court that the revenue from the Blackwell Hall cloth mart had declined substantially, which he attributed

³ PRO SP 105/111, f. 148v.

⁴ BL OIOC G/40/12, f. 64v.

⁵ A. C. Wood, *A History of the Levant Company*, (Oxford, 1935), 54.

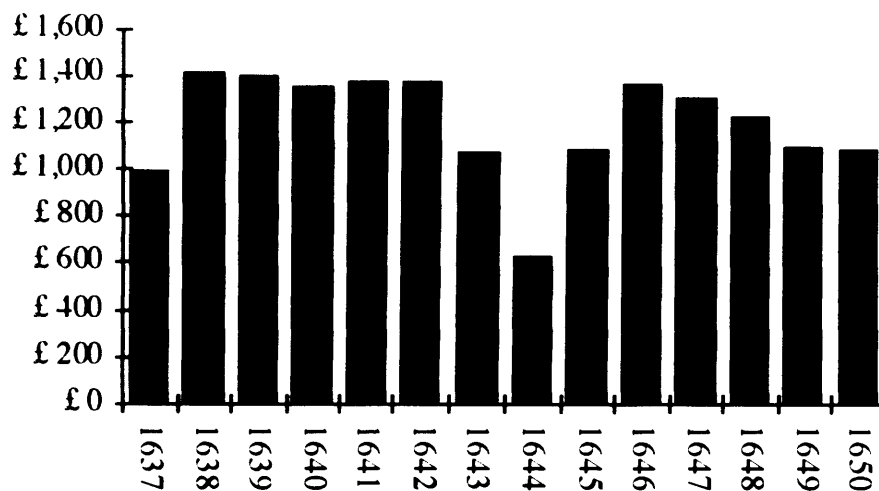
⁶ CLRO Rep. 57/1, f. 44; CLRO Jour. 40, f. 104v.

⁷ CLRO Jour. 40, ff. 119, 121v-122; I. Roy, *The Royalist Ordinance Papers, 1642-1646, Part 2*, (Oxfordshire Record Society, 1975), 42; BL Egerton MS. 1048, f. 32.

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in large part to a reduction in the volume of goods being traded.⁸ Receipts fell, from over £1,300 in the year to August 1642 to £1,062 6s 5½d in the year to August 1643. The major decline came after the King prohibited trade with London in the summer of 1643. Receipts fell to £626 19s ½d in the following year, suggesting that the amount of cloth going through the hall fell by more than a half in the first two years of the war.⁹

Figure 2. Hallage receipts, Blackwell Hall, 1637-50¹⁰



It was northern and western cloth which was traded at the Blackwell Hall, and these were the cloth making regions most directly affected by the war. The war probably had a much less traumatic affect on the East Anglian cloth trade. The aggregate figures may hide the true extent of the decline in business done at the mart, as the tolls were relatively higher on new draperies than on the old. In the year to August 1645, receipts rose to about £1,078, and in the year after, they were restored to pre-war levels, reflecting a combination of the establishment of parliamentary control over the northern cloth districts, and the end of the blockade of the western cloth trade by the royalists.¹¹

⁸ GL MS. 12806/4, Christ's Hospital, Court Minutes, 1632-1649, f. 381. The fall in receipts was also attributed to increased avoidance of the tolls, but it is possible that the decline in receipts created an increased sensitivity to the existing levels of evasion.

⁹ D. W. Jones, 'The "Hallage" Receipts of the London Cloth Markets, 1562-c.1720', *ECHR*, 2nd Series, 25, (1972), 569.

¹⁰ Jones, 'Hallage' Receipts', 569, figures for the year to August.

¹¹ Jones, 'Hallage' Receipts', 569, 576.

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It was the disruption of the coal trade which caused most concern to the municipality and Parliament. When Parliament prohibited the coal trade with Newcastle in January 1643, the Lord Mayor certified that there were five months of supplies of coal in London, and the Scots gave assurances that sufficient coal could be provided by the Firth of Forth coal mines, but this proved unrealistic.¹²

In fact, in 1643 a good deal of Newcastle coal did find its way to London. Much of this came from Newcastle ships captured by Parliamentary vessels. Considerable illicit trade continued, though how much is uncertain. On 14 February 1643 it was reported that seventeen colliers had arrived in the Thames. On 9 June 1643 the minutes of the Navy Committee record the bonds of seven masters for the sale of 156 cauldrons of coal, at the prices fixed by Parliament. All the evidence suggests that it is unlikely that the illicit coal trade was sufficient to meet London's needs. In the year from Michaelmas 1642 only 53,403 tons of coal was shipped from Newcastle, compared to 470,375 in the year from Christmas 1633.¹³

The coal which reached the London market was sold at as high a price as possible. Parliament tried to set the price of coal at 23s the cauldron in order to stop speculation, but repeated orders to enforce the set price suggest that there were considerable difficulties in keeping prices down. Even those colliers who had entered into bonds with the Navy Committee, were found to be selling their coal well above the fixed price. Traders sought to evade the price restrictions by selling by short measure, in April 1644 the Justices of Middlesex complained that those selling fuel were failing to observe the lawful measures.¹⁴

In January 1643 the newsbooks stated that coal prices had risen from 22s per cauldron to 34s. Prices paid by Westminster College rose from 22s 4d per cauldron in 1642 to 37s 3d in 1643, and prices rose even higher in the City, where 46s a cauldron was being quoted in June of that year.¹⁵ Rising fuel prices also had repercussions for other parts of the economy, trades as diverse as brewing, brickmaking and cookery were all affected by rising fuel prices, and the increased costs were inevitably passed on to the consumer. In June 1643 the gunmakers of London petitioned the Commons that they could not continue

¹² Powell & Timings, 58-9; J. U. Nef, The Rise of the British Coal Industry, (2 vols., 1932), ii, 286-8.

¹³ Bodl. Rawlinson MS. A221, ff. 126, 131, 133, 134, 135-6, 141; C. Thompson, (ed.), Walter Yonge's Diary of Proceedings of the House of Commons, 1642-5, Vol. 1, 1642-1643, (Wivenhoe, 1986), 312; J. Hatcher, The History of the British Coal Industry, Vol. 1 Before 1700: Towards the Age of Coal, (Oxford, 1993), 489 table 14.1 (a).

¹⁴ BL 669 f. 7 (21), An Order Concerning the Price of Coales, (1643); CMSB 1638-44, 182.

¹⁵ BL E246(1), A Perfect Diurnall, No. 34, 30 Jan-6 Feb. 1643, unpag; BL E246(13), A Perfect Diurnall, No. 35, 6-13 Feb. 1643, unpag; E. Freshfield, (ed.), The Vestry Minute Books of the Parish of St Bartholomew Exchange in the City of London, 1567-1676, (2 parts, 1898), i, 1; Hatcher, History of the British Coal Industry, 582 table B.5.

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manufacturing armaments unless they were provided with coal.¹⁶

The high price of coal caused concern at the highest levels in London. On 13 July 1643 the Court of Aldermen was informed that the wharfmongers had bought up all the supplies of coal, and would not sell except at very high prices. The Court established a committee to investigate the state of the coal trade in London, and enforce the Ordinance of Parliament for restricting the price of coal.¹⁷ It seems highly likely that the committee concluded that not enough coal was reaching London to satisfy the City's needs. On 18 July Alderman Adams, a member of the committee, told the House of Commons of the 'Great and pressing Necessities that lay upon the City in regard of the Necessity of Coals; which will so pinch the poor, that the Consequences thereof will be full of Horror and Danger'.¹⁸

The illicit Newcastle to London coal trade became much more difficult after the King prohibited all trade with London in July 1643, and by 1644, Parliament's blockade of Newcastle was much more effective. In the year following Michaelmas 1643, only 188 ships left Newcastle carrying a total of only 2,321 tons of coal, and only one ship left between May and November 1644. In comparison a total of over 3,000 vessels had left the port in 1641.¹⁹

The response of many Londoners to the shortage of fuel was to take the law into their own hands. Wood was stolen from the forests and woods in the vicinity of the capital, the royal forest at Enfield Chase apparently proving particularly favoured. When the Woodward, John Butcher, together with the High Constable and Petty Constable tried to search Winchmore Hill hamlet, on the edge of the Chase, for stolen wood on 13 November 1643 they were attacked by the local inhabitants; in the following March a number of men from Edmonton broke into the Chase armed with bills and long clubs, and cut down and carried away trees in front of the keeper.²⁰

Also vulnerable were episcopal estates; in May 1643 the Committee for Sequestration ordered that the Archbishop of Canterbury's woods at Croydon and near London be preserved from spoil and destruction by 'rude and disorderly people coming from London and elsewhere'.²¹ In July 1644 Thomas Taylor of Hornsey was committed to the house of correction by the Middlesex Justices for being 'a common wood stealer', and

¹⁶ GL Pam 8764, Sea Coale, Char-Coale And Small Coale, or A Discourse betweene a Newcastle Collier, a Small Coale-man, and a Collier of Croyden concerning the prohibition of trade with Newcastle, (1643), 5-6; CJ III, 141.

¹⁷ CLRO Rep. 56, f. 209.

¹⁸ CJ III, 171.

¹⁹ Hatcher, History of the British Coal Industry, 86, 489 table 14.1 (a).

²⁰ D. Pam, The Story of Enfield Chase, (1984), 63-5.

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particularly for stealing wood belonging to the manor of the Bishop of London.²²

It was not only royal and episcopal estates which suffered. In December 1643 the Court of St Thomas' Hospital agreed to sell trees on land they owned in Shoreditch, because they were in danger of being cut down and carried away by poor people. Stealing wood was so common that, on 26 October 1643, the House of Commons ordered that, to prevent the destruction of woods near London, Sir John Hippisley was to take care that firewood was provided for the guards around London to prevent them stealing wood.²³ An Ordinance was passed appointing officers to take wood from royal, episcopal or sequestered estates within sixty miles of London for the supply of the poor. In so doing they hoped to control the process of plunder, and direct it onto the estates of their political enemies rather than their friends, and to make sure it did the least long term damage.²⁴

By the summer of 1644 the Venetian ambassador reported that most trees round London had been felled.²⁵ The writer of one tract on this problem stated that 'the cold makes some turne thieves that never stole before, steal Posts, seats, Benches from Doores, Rails nay the very stocks that should punish them'. He proposed a number of alternatives to coal, including dung mixed with sawdust, which he admitted was 'somewhat noisome'.²⁶ Parliament became concerned that stocks of timber might be permanently impaired. In September 1644 the Commons ordered a committee to consider the Ordinance for felling wood for the city and to bring in an Ordinance for suspending it, if they thought it should be necessary for the preservation of the timber and woods of the Kingdom. A further Ordinance was passed for the cutting of peat and turf for fuel in July 1644.²⁷

On 21 March 1644 trade was reopened with Sunderland. Before the war the Sunderland coal trade had only been a fraction of that of Newcastle. In October 1644 it was reported that colliers from Sunderland sent only small quantities of coal to London to keep prices high. Christ's Hospital paid 32s per cauldron for Sunderland coal in 1644, whereas in 1642 it had been able to purchase 'seacoal' for 20s per cauldron. The Court of Aldermen ordered that the Woodmongers' Company inform them of any attempts to raise prices, and also continued its efforts to prevent speculation in timber fuel. On 14 November 1644 trade with Newcastle was finally reopened, but it was reported that, because of the damage to the collieries during the war, it would take several years for production to recover to pre-war

²¹ PRO SP 20/1, f. 20v.

²² CMSB, 1638-1644, 197.

²³ GLRO H1/ST/A1/5, St Thomas' Hospital, Court of Governors Minute Book, 1619-1677, f. 78; CJ III, 288.

²⁴ Firth & Rait, i, 303-5.

²⁵ CSPV 1643-7, 106.

²⁶ BL 669 f. 10 (11), Artificial Fire, or Coale for Rich and Poore, (1644).

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levels, and prices would remain high.²⁸

As a result, the plundering of the woods around London continued. In February 1645 John Browne, Clerk of Parliament, petitioned the House of Lords that his woods at Twickenham were being despoiled. In Enfield, wood continued to be taken by the local inhabitants; in 1645 forty three were prosecuted in the manor Court for stealing wood, in the following year forty four.²⁹ Nevertheless, by 1645 the evidence is that the price of coal was falling in London. In that year, Christ's Hospital was able to buy coal at 22s and 23s per cauldron; in the following year the prices paid fell further, to 20s 6d and 18s and in 1647 the Hospital paid 17s 3d.³⁰

Despite all the efforts of the City authorities and Parliament, Londoners had suffered from very substantial increases in fuel costs during the war years. A petition approved by the Common Council of the City of London on 17 December 1644 stated that the high cost of fuel had been a major factor in impoverishing the inhabitants of the City and increasing the number of the poor. The fuel crisis must therefore have acted to depress demand, and adversely affected manufacturing industry in London.³¹

One aspect which was of very great concern to the authorities was the supply of food.³² In the seventeenth century, grain supplies came predominantly from counties near to London, and were carried by water, either along the coast from Kent and East Anglia, or down the Thames or the Lea rivers. The royalists interrupted the Thames trade and there is some evidence of upward pressures on grain prices, but the main sources of London's grain supplies remained firmly under Parliament's control during the first Civil War and, thanks to the good harvests of the war years, these areas were able to fill the gap caused by the interruption of the Thames trade.³³

Cattle for the London market was commonly brought from the highland regions of the north of England, Wales and Scotland. Many of these areas were either occupied by the royalists in the Civil War or had royalist forces stationed between them and London. By the latter part of the war there were clear signs of a shortage of meat in London. In February

²⁷ CJ III, 619; *Firth & Rait*, i, 481-2.

²⁸ *Firth & Rait*, i, 397-8, 569-70; CSPD 1644-5, 103, 220; GL MS. 12819/6, Christ's Hospital, Treasurers' Accounts, 1632-1644, 1642 accounts, f. 39, 1644 accounts, f. 48; CLRO Rep, 57/1, ff. 227v, 228v-9, 236.

²⁹ *HMC Sixth Report, House of Lords MSS.*, 46; Pam, *Story of Enfield Chase*, 65.

³⁰ GL MS. 12819/7, Christ's Hospital, Treasurers Accounts, 1645-1652, 1645 accounts, f. 45, 1646 accounts, f. 43, 1647 accounts, f. 17.

³¹ CLRO Jour. 40, f. 118.

³² See for example CSPD 1644, 74.

³³ W. Prideaux, (ed.), *Memorials of the Goldsmiths' Company*, (2 vols., 1896), i, 210; B. Schofield, (ed.), *The Knyvett Letters, 1620-1644*, (1949), 151; B. Mitchell, *Abstract of British Historical Statistics*, (Cambridge, 1988), 769.

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1645 the Lord Mayor and the Court of Aldermen wrote to the Speaker arguing for powers to restrict slaughtering to conserve stocks. Later in the same month the Lord Mayor issued a precept to enforce the observance of the fish days to reduce the consumption of meat.³⁴

London also became cut off from its usual sources of lead and tin ore. In November 1643 the East India Company informed their representatives in Surat that they had no hopes of sending them any lead, which they had previously exported in considerable quantities to India, unless peace was made soon. In March 1644 they informed them that lead was not 'at any reasonable Rate to be p[ro]cured by reason of the stopp of that commodity in coming from the mines in Darbyshire'.³⁵ The royalists stopped the shipment of tin from Cornwall to London, not only as part of the general blockade, but also so that tin could be diverted to France to pay for the import of munitions. As a result tin had to be imported into London from Amsterdam, with a resulting substantial increase in price.³⁶

Further evidence of the decline of internal trade in the early part of the English Civil War comes from the decline in profits received by St Bartholomew's Hospital from the tolls at the City Beams. These tolls were payable for all goods brought to London markets by non freemen, and sold by weight. Receipts from the Great Beam at Cornhill fell from £184 16s 8d for the year to Michaelmas 1642, to £117 10s 8d for the year to Michaelmas 1643, a fall of more than a third. Receipts at the Iron Beam fell further, from £35 to £16 2s in the same period. It is clear that a broad spectrum of domestic trade to London was interrupted during the early part of the war and that it caused major problems for the economy, although the disruption is less noticeable in the short distance trades and was largely concentrated in the early part of the war.³⁷

³⁴ Whitelocke, Memorials, i, 385; GL Bay H 10.3 No. 2, A Perfect Diurnall, No. 80, 3-10 Feb. 1645, 203; CLRO Minutes of Common Hall, i, 240v.

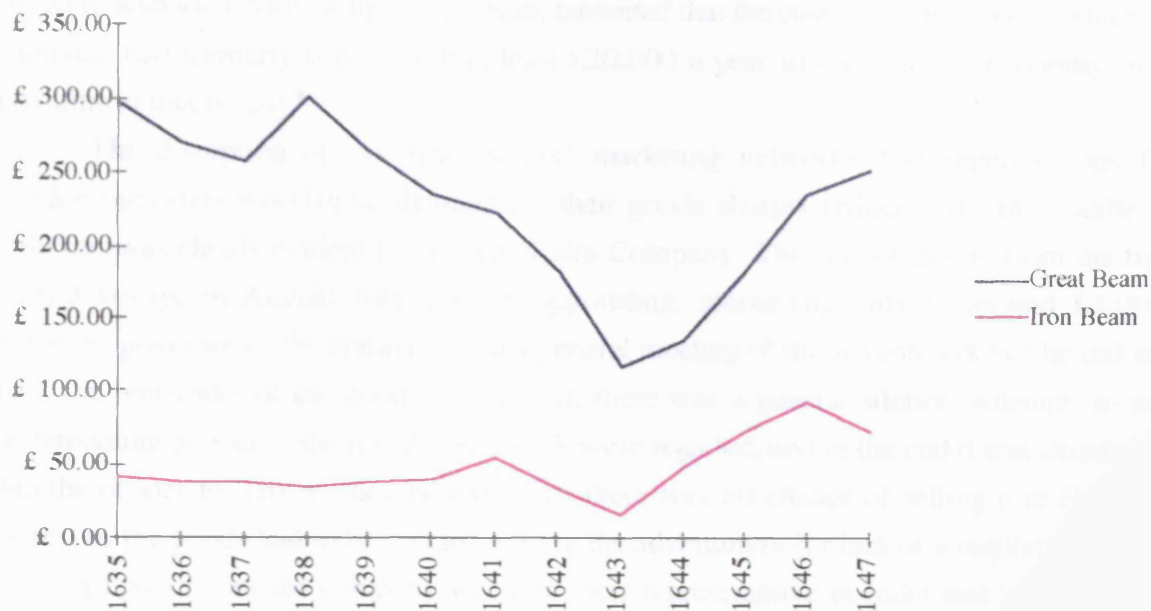
³⁵ BL OIOC G/40/12, ff. 54, 64v.

³⁶ M. Coate, Cornwall in the Great Civil War and Interregnum, 1642-1660, (2nd edition, Truro, 1963), 38, 117, 184; BL 669 f. 10 (45), I. S., A Declaration of Sundry grievances concerning Tinne and Pewter, worthy the consideration of Parliament, (1646).

³⁷ Barts HB 1/5, Treasurers' Ledgers, 1629-42, unfol.; Barts. HB 1/6, Treasurers' Ledgers, 1643-55, unfol.

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Figure 3. Receipts from the Great Beam and Iron Beam, 1635-1647³⁸



The same disruption of London's domestic commercial networks which can be observed obstructing the passage of food and raw materials to the metropolitan economy also brought major economic difficulties to the wholesalers who supplied the national markets. The booksellers of the Stationers' Company were dependent on the national distribution of certain standard publications, they therefore suffered badly when the internal trade links between London and the provinces were disrupted. The result was a substantial fall in apprenticeship recruitment and admissions of freemen: thirty five apprentices were bound in 1642 compared to sixty seven in 1641, only eleven were bound in the second half of the year, and in 1643 only twenty four were bound. The numbers made free, fell from forty nine in 1641 to twenty two in the next year, twenty one in 1643 and twenty three in 1644.³⁹

City tradesmen, like the tailor William Perkins, who had previously supplied gentry and aristocratic clients, found their customers reluctant to spend because of their declining rental incomes. They also suffered from the sequestration of royalists as this made it

³⁸ Source Barts HB 1/5, Treasurers' Ledgers, 1629-42, unfol.; Barts. HB 1/6, Treasurers' Ledgers, 1643-55, unfol., receipts for the year to Michaelmas. Changes in jurisdiction in 1648 mean that the receipts from that date are not comparable with those for period covered by this chart; CLRO Rep. 59, ff. 111-113.

³⁹ C. Blagden, 'The Stationers Company in the Civil War Period', *The Library*, 5th Series, 13, (1958), 16; C. Blagden, *The Stationers Company: A History 1403-1659*, (1960), 286 and n.

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impossible to recover debts. Perkins found himself imprisoned for debt in April 1647.⁴⁰ Perkins' experience may have been extreme, but it was not unusual, in 1645 the City tailor turned newsbook editor, John Dillingham, lamented that the custom of the gentry, which he estimated had formerly been worth at least £20,000 a year to the London economy, was now almost totally lost.⁴¹

The disruption of the wholesalers' marketing networks had repercussions for London importers who found demand for their goods sharply reduced. By the middle of 1643 this was clearly evident in the East India Company. The sale of goods from the first general voyage in August was very disappointing, amounting only to around £4,000. When the governor of the company told a general meeting of the adventurers that he did not think the remainder of the goods would sell, there was a general silence. Attempts to sell the remaining pepper to the fourth joint stock were rejected, and in the end it was decided to ship the pepper to Italy as they believed that there was no chance of selling it in England; the rest of the goods had to be divided among the adventurers for lack of a market.⁴²

In November the company wrote to their representative in India that 'all trade and commerce in this kingdome is almost fallen to the ground through our owne unhappie divisions at home', they feared that if large quantities of goods were brought back in their next voyage 'wee might lacke sales'.⁴³ Things were little better in the new year. In March 1644 the company wrote that 'the marketts in all places are much declined and commodities much fallen in their wonted prize and reputation'.⁴⁴

Consumer spending in London was depressed by the general reduction in trade, which reduced the income of merchants and tradesmen, and by the reluctance of those with money to spend because of the uncertainties of the future.⁴⁵ The decline in consumer spending in London is suggested by a massive reduction in the size of the 1643 St Bartholomew's Day Fair. By the middle of the seventeenth century the Fair had grown from being primarily a cloth market, to part of the entertainment industry and a major retailing event. In 1648 John Evelyn recorded that he 'saw the celebrated follies of Bartholomew Fair'. Clearly many of the customers at the fair were not Londoners, but the

⁴⁰ L. Stone, Family and Fortune, Studies in Aristocratic Finance in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, (Oxford, 1973), 146-52; J. Broad, 'Gentry Finances and the Civil War: The Case of the Buckinghamshire Verneys', ECHR, 32, (1979), 186-9; HMC Ormonde, New Series, vol. i, 53-4, 112, 114, 115.

⁴¹ BL E292(3), The Moderate Intelligencer, 26 June-3 July 1645, 143.

⁴² CCMEIC 1640-3, 342, 345, 347-8, 349.

⁴³ W. Foster, The English Factories in India, 1642-45, (Oxford, 1913), 123.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* 125.

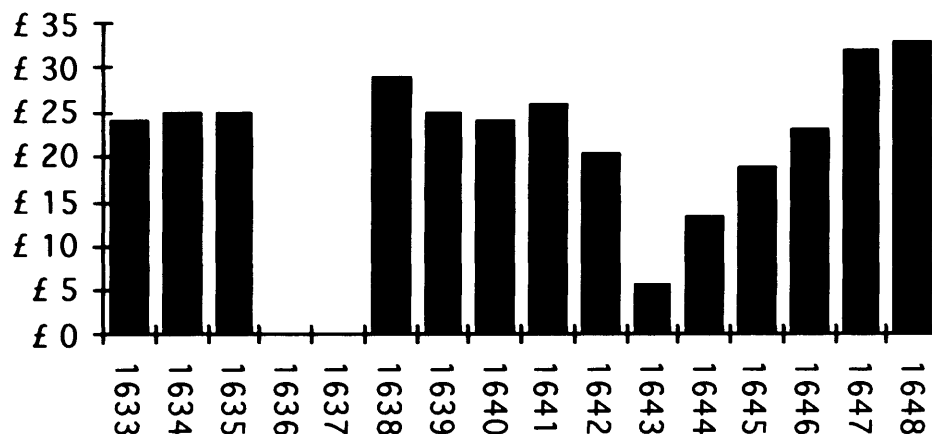
⁴⁵ W. Lithgow, 'The present Surveigh of London and England's State, 1643', in Lord Somer's Tracts, (16 vols., 1748-52), iv, 536.

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majority probably were. If so, a decline of this scale would have to have originated within the metropolitan economy.⁴⁶

The 1643 St Bartholomew's Day Fair was very small. The search of the Goldsmiths' Company found only one goldsmith's stall,⁴⁷ receipts for Pickage in the City Cash Book for the 1643 Fair amounted to £5 13s 6d, compared with £20 10s 9d the year before and over £25 for 1641.⁴⁸ It is unlikely that the great reduction in the size of the Fair in 1643 was due to official disapproval. Although the traditional wrestling and shooting matches had been forbidden in 1642, the new rulers of London made little attempt to further interfere with the Fair in the 1640s, it was not until 1653 that any general attempt was made to reform it.⁴⁹

Figure 4. Pickage from the St. Bartholomew's Day Fair, 1633-48⁵⁰



The St Bartholomew's Day Fair was not the only London market to suffer a reduction in business during the Civil War. In February 1645 the lessee of the Stocks market complained to the Court of Aldermen of the City that he had lost money because 'the fish markets throughout London and especially in the Stocks is much decayed', which the

⁴⁶ W. Bray, (ed.), *The Diary and Correspondence of John Evelyn*, (4 vols., 1887-9), i, 298.

⁴⁷ Prideaux, *Memorials of the Goldsmiths*, i, 213.

⁴⁸ CLRO Cash Books, vol. 1/4, ff. 28v, 123; vol. 1/5, f. 31v.

⁴⁹ CLRO Rep. 56, f. 1; CLRO Rep. 62, f. 370v.

⁵⁰ CLRO Cash Books, vols. 1/1-1/6, the 1636 and 1637 fairs were cancelled because of the plague.

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court agreed was the case.⁵¹

The decline in consumption hit the City Tavern keepers very badly. According to one deponent in Chancery, since the beginning of the war, the tavern keeper of the 'King's Head', on the corner of Chancery Lane and Fleet street, sold less French wine in a week than he had previously sold in a day, and the kitchen was not a quarter as profitable as it had been.⁵² Taverns like the 'King's Head', close to the 'West End' and legal quarter, were probably particularly hit by the declines in landowner custom, but their experience does not seem to have been unusual. The accounts of the Vintners' Company show sharp declines in their receipts for quarterage, the enrolment of apprentices, and the admission of freemen in the early part of the war, reaching a nadir in 1643-4. However, as has already been noted, demand for beer seems to have remained buoyant during this period, suggesting that the decline was more a feature of the 'upper' end of the market rather than of mass consumer goods such as ale and beer, it also suggests that the excise, which fell heavily on beer, was not the primary cause of the decline.⁵³

It has been shown that in the later part of the war the royalist blockade became increasingly ineffective, and was eventually abandoned. The result was a significant revival in domestic trade. The profits received at St Bartholomew's for the Great Beam rose to £137 10s 11d in the year to Michaelmas 1644 and to £182 18s 5d in the year to Michaelmas 1645, not far short of the 1642 total.⁵⁴ The improvement in the cloth trade is shown by an increase in the receipts for hallage at Blackwell Hall, rising to £1,356 in the year to August 1646, almost up to pre-war levels. There is little sign that this increase came from the export market, English industry found it difficult to recapture export markets lost in the war. The revival might have been the result of the release of pent up demand now that the war was coming to an end, or perhaps, as the New Model Army advanced into the west country, clothiers increasingly considered it safe to send stock, which had lain on their hands during the Civil War period, to London.⁵⁵ Consumer spending also began to improve in London. Pickage received for the 1644 St Bartholomew's Fair amounted to £13 4s 11d, more than twice the 1643 total. In 1645 £18 18s 8d was collected, though this was still less than the pre-war totals.⁵⁶

The revival was short-lived. The receipts from the national excise on old and new

⁵¹ CLRO Rep. 57/ 2, ff. 56v-7.

⁵² PRO C 24/697/28.

⁵³ GL MS. 15333/4, Vintners' Company, Wardens' Accounts, 1636-1658, unfol.

⁵⁴ Barts HB 1/5, Treasurers' Ledgers, 1629-42, unfol.; Barts. HB 1/6, Treasurers' Ledgers, 1643-55, unfol.

⁵⁵ Jones, "'Hallage' Receipts", 569.

⁵⁶ CLRO Cash Books, vol. 1/5, ff. 31v, 135.

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draperies fell by over fifteen per cent in the year September 1647 compared to the previous year. The slump is most apparent in London, which accounted for about three quarters of the receipts, receipts in the country rose slightly, probably reflecting the increasing geographical scope of Parliament's excise after the end of the war.⁵⁷ The Wiltshire cloth industry was clearly depressed from 1647.⁵⁸ The receipts of hallage at the Blackwell Hall mart fell to under £1,100 in the year to August 1649, a fall of nearly a fifth on the 1646 total.⁵⁹

The extent of the crisis in the London cloth trade in the late 1640s should not be exaggerated, it was probably primarily a decline in the export trade. With the exception of the period of the second Civil War, the internal trade of England remained open, and, if Kerridge is right that a third of English cloth was exported, the majority of English cloth was sold in the home market. The receipts of Hallage were certainly declining in the late 1640s, but the slump was significantly smaller than the fall in the first Civil War. The Hallage receipts may underestimate the impact of the second Civil War on the cloth trade, because the trade from Colchester did not pass through Blackwell Hall. Nevertheless the evidence suggests that although the late 1640s saw a slump in the cloth trade, it never reached the depths of the crisis of the first Civil War.⁶⁰

The cloth trade does not seem to have been typical of domestic trade in general. In December 1646 Lady Verney wrote to her husband that 'the town was never so full as it was now' and she complained about the expense of living in London, a clear sign of the recovery in consumer spending.⁶¹ The receipts of Pickage at the St Bartholomew's Day Fair in the immediate post war period suggest that there was a substantial recovery in consumer spending, receipts rose to £23 2s 10d in 1646 and to £31 18s 2d in 1647 and £33 2s 9d in 1648. The sums collected in the two later years were higher than any other year since 1633, when this series of records begins. This suggests that there was a release of pent up consumption which had been restricted in the war years.⁶² Unfortunately the City Cash books no longer record the totals received for Pickage at St Bartholomew's Fair after 1648, but it is possible that the 1649 Fair was smaller. When the Goldsmiths' Company searched the Fair they found only four goldsmiths within its precincts.⁶³

⁵⁷ PRO SP 46/122B, f. 1.

⁵⁸ G. D. Ramsay, The Wiltshire Woollen Industry in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, (1945), 112-3; BL E568(20), J. Lilburne, An Impeachment of High Treason, (1649), 37.

⁵⁹ Jones, "'Hallage' Receipts', 569.

⁶⁰ E. Kerridge, Textile Manufactures in Early Modern England, (Manchester, 1985), 220; Jones, "'Hallage' Receipts', 569, 576.

⁶¹ HMC Seventh Report, Verney MSS., 454.

⁶² CLRO Cash Books, vol. 1/5, f. 237; vol. 1/6, ff. 29, 130.

⁶³ Prideaux, Memorials of the Goldsmith's, i, 261.

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In the second half of the decade the coastal trade of London came under increasing threat from royalist and Irish privateers. Privateering was a greater threat to the smaller lightly defended vessels used in the coastal trades, than to the larger, better armed ships used for foreign trade. In January 1645 the Common Council of the City of London was petitioned by a group of merchants and tradesmen of London, complaining that many ships plying the coastal trade from the ports of East Anglia had been taken by privateers and that, as a result, merchants and seamen were discouraged and prevented from bringing provisions to the City. If something was not done, they said, there would soon be shortages of food in London, especially of fish, butter and cheese, which, they stated, could not be obtained from other places.⁶⁴ In the latter part of the decade there is evidence that the privateers' attacks on English coasting trade had a significant impact on the London economy. The attacks on the Newcastle colliers from Newcastle led to substantial rises in the price of coal in the capital. The prices paid by Christ's Hospital for coal rose from 17s 3d per cauldron in 1647 to between 23s and 27s in 1649.⁶⁵ Nevertheless London wholesalers rapidly re-established their dominance of English internal trade. In 1651 a conference of northern merchants complained that virtually all the trade in their region was engrossed by Londoners, and proposed that they should be excluded from all fairs and markets north of the Trent.⁶⁶

To sum up, it is clear that, although the economic blockades established by both sides were never totally watertight, they were sufficiently effective to have a major impact on the London economy. The evidence suggests that the decline in demand reached its nadir in the period when the blockades were most effective. The blockades also had an indirect impact on metropolitan demand by reducing the income of many tradesmen. Other problems contributed to the crisis in London's economy. Undoubtedly increased taxation also had a major impact, especially the excise, but the crisis in internal demand pre-dated the introduction of the new tax and it has been suggested that demand for beer, on which the excise fell very heavily, remained buoyant during the Civil War. Two other factors substantially diminished demand: the reluctance of those who had money to spend because of uncertainties about the future, and the general economic disruption of the war in provincial England, which led to a reduction in consumer spending, especially among the

⁶⁴ CLRO Jour. 40, f. 120.

⁶⁵ B. Capp, Cromwell's Navy, the Fleet and the English Revolution, 1648-1660, (Oxford, 1992), 61; GL MS. 12819 7, Christ's Hospital, Treasurer's Accounts, 1645-1652, 1647 accounts, f. 18, 1649 accounts, f. 18.

⁶⁶ F. W. Dendy and J. R. Boyle, (eds.), Extracts from the Records of the Merchant Adventurers' of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, (2 vols., Surtees Society Publications, 93, 1895 and 101, 1899), i, 164-7.

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gentry and nobility.

In the short term, the Civil War caused considerable disruption to London's domestic trade, but this disruption was only partial, some parts of the country were never occupied by the royalists, such as East Anglia, and trade with the royalists probably never entirely ceased. This was particularly important because it meant that London's grain supplies were never cut off, had they been, the economic impact of the Civil War would have been far worse than it was. We are dealing with a crisis rather than a total collapse, but there can be little doubt that the Civil War caused a considerable reduction in London's domestic trade. The next two chapters will examine the way in which the disruption of domestic trade in turn disrupted metropolitan overseas trade and manufacturing, creating a domino affect which reached most, if not all, of the inhabitants of London.

8 International Trade and Shipping

From 1642 to 1650 the overseas trade of the City of London was generally depressed, and it suffered two severe crises, in 1643 and in 1648. The crisis in London's overseas trade in the early 1640s was mostly the result of the repercussions of the crisis in England's internal trade, detailed in the previous chapter, rather than direct obstructions. The crisis of the late 1640s was the result of factors which directly operated on overseas trade itself, but it was only partly the result of continued military and political conflict. The increasing threat from royalist and Irish privateers, the mutiny in the navy, and the international reaction to the regicide, all had a significant impact on London's foreign trade. This period also saw the end of the eighty year conflict between the Netherlands and Spain which heightened the threat to English commerce from the Dutch, especially in the Mediterranean. The question therefore arises, to what extent the crisis of the late 1640s was a consequence of the Civil War, or to what extent it was a result of the Treaty of Munster.¹

The impact of economic crisis on the international merchant community may have been mitigated by the greater range of economic options open to them, compared with other sectors of London society. They, alone, could readily disengage from the domestic economy. Importers were able to redirect their shipments to foreign markets. There were also allegations that members of the Merchant Adventurers' Company invested in cloth manufacturing in the Netherlands in the 1640s. Moreover for the international merchants, it was relatively easy to move their capital out of the national economy altogether.² Probably none of these options was as profitable as their pre-war trade, war torn Europe was hardly the ideal investment opportunity, but they did put the international merchant in a better position to survive the war than those Londoners engaged primarily in the domestic economy, whose plight was made worse by the employment of those options.

(i) Overseas Trade, 1642-1650

Trying to quantify the impact of the disruption of trade on the economy of London is fraught with perils. Comparing customs receipts from the Civil War period with those from previous years is difficult, because Parliament ended the King's system of farming the customs and, in July 1642, issued a new book of rates. This replaced tonnage and poundage and the impositions with a new consolidated set of rates, but the new rates were

¹ PRO SP 105/112, f. 34.

² E. Kerridge, Textile Manufacture in Early Modern England, (Manchester, 1985), 31; BL Stowe MS. 759, f. 81.

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not a simple combination of the two levies. The old 6s 8d rate on old draperies was maintained and the impositions on the new draperies were abolished, and the rates in the 1642 book are the same as the previous tonnage and poundage rates. The rates on other exports, such as lead and tin, were increased. Parliament reduced the rates on imports of foodstuffs and raw materials and increased those on imports of manufactured goods and luxuries, over and above the combined imposition, and tonnage and poundage rates. Even when the 1642 book of rates reduced the customs on imports, the rates were often still higher than the previous tonnage and poundage rates. On the whole the new system shifted the taxation burden towards imports, and, as has been noted, Parliament discounted the new rates by fifteen per cent.³

In 1640 Charles I received over half a million pounds from the customs. This figure is not directly comparable with the customs receipts for the 1640s and 1650s for the reasons outlined above, but it would be very surprising if Parliament's customs administration was less efficient than that of the Personal rule. Giles Greene, the chairman of Parliament's Navy and Customs Committee, claimed that the new system was more productive and reduced costs.⁴ It is, therefore, striking testimony to the depressed state of English foreign trade in the 1640s and 1650s that at no time did the annual gross receipts from the customs reach more than £482,820, and receipts did not exceed £300,000 until 1653.⁵

The accounts of the Customs Commissioners from 25 May 1641 to the 2 July 1642, record total receipts of £441,636 from the impositions and tonnage and poundage, of which £323,149 were collected in the port of London, seventy three per cent of the total.⁶ In the period from 21 January to 25 December 1643 Parliament's Customs Commissioners collected £165,690. Allowing for the fifteen per cent discount, and for another month to make up a whole year, this makes roughly £212,650. These figures suggest that England's foreign trade fell by roughly a half in the early part of the Civil War, which may be an underestimate as they do not allow for increased valuations in the new book of rates, over and above the combined the tonnage and impositions totals⁷

³ BL E405(8), G. Greene, A Declaration in Vindication of the Honour of the Parliament, and of the Committee of the Navy and Customs against all Traducers, (1647), 4-5; Goldsmiths Library BL 1635 668, The Rates of Merchandizes as they are set down in the Book of Rates, (1635), [1635 book of rates], unpag; Goldsmiths Library BL 1642 790, The Rates of Merchandizes, (1642), [1642 book of rates], 7, 42, 64, 83.

⁴ Greene, Declaration in Vindication, (1647), 7.

⁵ F. C. Dietz, English Public Finance 1485-1641, (2 vols., 2nd edition, 1964), ii, 376; M. Ashley, Financial and Commercial Policy Under the Cromwellian Protectorate, (1962), 57.

⁶ PRO E 122/230/8, ff. 4, 10.

⁷ Ashley, Financial and Commercial Policy, 57.

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These conclusions are supported by contemporary reports. On 6 December 1642 Giles Greene reported to the Commons from the Navy Committee that 'for money in expectancie the committee hath conferred with the custome house which from £20,000 p[er]. month they have not receaued £10,000 p[er]. monthe. And the reason of this abatem[en]t is decaye of trade'.⁸ In January 1643 Parliament appointed a group of new Customs Commissioners, all highly committed to their cause, but when a loan for the navy was sought early in March 1643, the new commissioners replied that they could not advance any money because of the decay of trade. In April Greene told D'Ewes privately that the customs receipts did not total £150,000 per year, whereas before the war they had reached £400,000 or £500,000.⁹ When Parliament again approached the commissioners for a loan in the following August they replied discouragingly 'that trading in respect of these troublesome Times did much decay'.¹⁰

During the Civil War the frequent changes in Parliament's Customs Commissioners mean that few of their accounts cover a full year, making analysis of trends difficult, but going by monthly averages, the lowest period of receipts was the first months of the war, the period from July 1642 to January 1643 when receipts from the port of London came to less than £10,000 per month. However this is somewhat deceptive. Undoubtedly London's foreign trade fell substantially during this period, but the decline was most concentrated in the imports. Greene reported that the main cause of the decline in receipts was that importers were sending their goods to Holland, instead of bringing them home. This was probably because of fears for the safety of London after Edgehill. As the customs duties fell most heavily on imports, this had a disproportionate affect on receipts. The following year saw a major fall in exports, but the impact on the total customs receipts is masked by a partial recovery in imports.¹¹

⁸ C. Thompson, (ed.), Walter Yonge's Diary of Proceedings in the House of Commons, 1642-1645, Vol. 1, 19th September 1642- 7th March 1643, (Wivenhoe, 1986), 164-5.

⁹ Ibid. 341; CJ II, 901, 927, 1001, 1003, 1004; BL Harl. MS. 164, f. 354.

¹⁰ BL Harl MS. 165, f. 154v.

¹¹ PRO E 122/226/17/4; Thompson, (ed.), Walter Yonge's Diary, 164-5.

Figure 5. Customs collected in the Port of London, 1642-1650¹²

	Total Receipts	Receipts per month
July 1642-January 1643	£ 72,762.19	£ 10,394.60
January-December 1643	£ 135,763.80	£ 12,342.16
December 1643-February 1645	£ 180,480.37	£ 12,891.45
February 1645-December 1645	£ 150,371.91	£ 15,037.19
December 1645-December 1646	£ 207,324.25	£ 17,277.02
December 1646-December 1647	£ 192,665.55	£ 16,055.46
December 1647-December 1648	£ 144,711.58	£ 12,059.30
December 1648-July 1649	£ 115,243.59	£ 16,463.37
July 1649-June 1650	£ 215,382.36	£ 19,580.21

The accounts of the treasurers of the Plymouth duty allow the overseas trade of London in 1644 to be studied in greater detail. This account gives monthly totals for receipts of a ten, subsequently twenty, per cent, surcharge on the customs imposed to fund the Plymouth garrison. The receipts are divided into five categories, imports of wines and currants, other imports by English merchants, other imports by alien merchants, exports of short cloths and other exports. From these figures the total customs for the port of London can be extrapolated. The results are tabulated below. The evidence suggests that English trade had improved slightly in 1644 compared with the previous year. In 1643 receipts in the port of London averaged about £12,342 per month, but in 1644 the average rose to about £12,891. These figures do not, therefore, reflect the nadir of London's overseas trade during the Civil War.¹³

Figure 6. The overseas trade of London, 1644¹⁴

Imports of wine and currants	£50,625
Other imports, English merchants.	£78,891
Other imports, foreign merchants.	£15,707
Exports of cloth.	£15,383
Other exports.	£21,318.

¹² PRO E 122/226/17/4; PRO E 351/643-50

¹³ PRO E 351/643; PRO E 351/644.

¹⁴ PRO E 122/236/14.

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These statistics suggest that the equivalent of 46,148 shortcloths were exported from London in 1644, representing a fall of over forty five per cent when compared to 1640, a massive decline in what was still England's largest export.¹⁵ The figures for other exports are more difficult to interpret. Before the war three quarters of the 'other exports' were new draperies, and the customs in the 1642 book of rates were the same as the previous subsidy rates, so comparisons between the 1644 receipts and those for the subsidy before 1642 may be valid.¹⁶ In the year to the end of June 1642, £28,958 was collected for the subsidy on other exports, under the old book of rates, which indicates that exports other than the old draperies had fallen by about seventeen per cent by 1644.¹⁷ This section of English exports was not as badly affected by the Civil War as the old draperies, but it is probable that the fall in 'other exports' is underestimated by these figures, some export duties, such as those on lead, were put up in the 1642 book of rates.

English exports declined very substantially in the Civil War from their already depressed state on the eve of the conflict. However the fall was not immediate on the commencement of hostilities. Between July 1642 and January 1643, exports of cloths had averaged about 5989 per month, but in 1644 they averaged about 3846 a month. Other exports had also fallen, although not as sharply. The largest fall in exports probably took place in 1643, and is most likely to have followed on from the King's embargo of trade with London in July, by 1644 the situation may well have been beginning to improve slightly, but the ravages of war are still evident.¹⁸

There is less quantifiable evidence for London's import trade, but there can be little doubt that this sector also suffered major problems. By 1644 receipts from imports by English merchants averaged about £6,574 per month, compared with only about £5,516 per month from July 1642 to January 1643, suggesting that importers were no longer sending their goods to the Netherlands instead of London, but trade was still depressed. Millard has shown that at constant prices, in 1644 imports of wines by English merchants into the port of London totalled £174, 972, compared with £307,578 in 1637. As has been shown in the previous chapter demand for imports declined sharply in Civil War London, so there is every reason for supposing that the experience of the wine trade was not untypical.¹⁹ Importers had the option of re-exporting their goods, but this was not an ideal

¹⁵ For cloth exports in 1640 see F. J. Fisher, 'London's Export Trade in the Early Seventeenth Century', in his *London and the English Economy, 1500-1700*, P. Corfield, & N. Harte, (eds.), (1990), 121 table 1.

¹⁶ Ibid. 122 table 4.

¹⁷ Figures for 'other exports' 1641-2 derived from PRO E 122/230/9.

¹⁸ PRO E122/226 17 4, these figures have been inflated by 15 per cent to take into account the discount.

¹⁹ Ibid. A. M. Millard, 'The Import Trade of London, 1600-1640', (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of London, 1956), appendix 3, table 6.

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solution to the weakness of domestic demand, the directors of the East India Company were of the opinion that, as a result of the Thirty Years' War, most European markets were little better than England.²⁰

The official record of dividends paid by the East India Company give a false impression of profitability in the Civil War period. The first general voyage, begun in 1641, made 'divisions' amounting to 221 per cent of the original stock by the time it was wound up in 1648. This suggests a profit of 121 per cent over seven years, or an average annual return of slightly over seventeen per cent, more than double the statutory rate of interest and higher than the ten to fifteen per cent profit rate which, Richard Grassby has argued, was the usual rate for experienced merchants in the first half of the seventeenth century.²¹ However these figures are misleading because the first two divisions, in August 1643 and July 1644, were made in goods rather than money. Each investor received an amount of commodities equivalent to his or her stock, at a set valuation, but as the evidence suggests that the goods divided were valued at substantially more than they were actually worth at the time, the real profit to the investors was almost certainly much less than official divisions suggest.²²

On the 18 August 1643, a general meeting of the investors in the first general voyage were told that the attempts to sell the goods brought back from India had failed and it was decided, as a result, to sell the pepper to the fourth joint stock, and divide the rest between the investors. On the 28th it was decided to make divisions equivalent to 125 per cent of each investors stock, fifty per cent in rich indigo, twenty five per cent in cirques indigo, thirty per cent in calicos and twenty per cent in cinnamon.²³ The rich indigo was valued at 6s 8d per pound, and the cirques at 4s 8d, but in their correspondence with their agents in Surat, the company stated that rich indigo fetched no more than 4s 6d at that time, and the cirques no more than 3s 6d. The true value of the rich indigo was only about two thirds of its nominal value, the cirques indigo three quarters. Whereas in theory the investors were to have received indigo equivalent to three quarters of their investment, in practice they received only slightly more than half.²⁴

The calicos were also over valued, they were 'for lacke of markett given out upon

²⁰ W. Foster, The English Factories in India, 1642-45, (Oxford, 1913), 123, 125.

²¹ W. R. Scott, The Constitution and Finance of English Joint Stock Companies to 1720, (3 vols., Cambridge, 1910-13), ii, 120; R. Grassby, The Business Community of Seventeenth Century England, (Cambridge, 1995), 240.

²² CCMEIC, 1640-3, 345; CCMEIC, 1643-9, 34. The Company usually sold its goods at auctions called 'courts of sale'.

²³ CCMEIC, 1640-3, 342, 345.

²⁴ BL OIOC B/21, f. 24; BL OIOC G/40/12, f. 48v.

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dividends at $2\frac{1}{2}$ upon their prime cost'.²⁵ It is very difficult to establish the true value of the calicos distributed to the investors, partly because of the sheer diversity of the product. Rowland Wilson received twenty four different kinds in his dividends.²⁶ Where comparisons can be made between the values at which the calicos were distributed to the investors and prices at the courts of sale, the company's auctions, the latter are consistently lower. On 6 September 1643 Mr Mead purchased 480 pieces of 'Synda No. 2' at 7s 6d a piece as part of a large purchase of calicos, in addition he received an abatement of 15d a piece on his whole purchase so in practice he paid 6s 3d. In contrast the 'Synda No. 1' cloth, received by Rowland Wilson as part of his dividends, was valued at 9s 9d. Equally, comparisons between the values given for various types of 'Merculees' cloths received by Wilson and the prices paid by James Martin for the same types in February 1644 suggest that the cloths were divided at between sixty nine and seventy seven per cent of their true value. Moreover the calicos were sold to Mead and Martin at four six months, so the prices for immediate payment would have been substantially less. Only the cinnamon was divided among the investors at its true value. If we assume that the calicos were on average valued at seventy per cent of their true value, then this suggests that the total divisions in August 1643 were in reality worth only 93.5 per cent of the investors stock, rather than 125 per cent, which may well be an overestimate.²⁷

On the 12 July 1644, a further division of twelve per cent was made on the first general voyage, again in goods. Indigo was to be distributed at 4s 8d a pound, but again it was over valued as it was decided that if there was not enough to go round, those who did not receive any indigo were to have money instead, at a rate of 3s 6d per pound, which was probably the indigo's true value. If so, the indigo was worth only three quarters of the price at which it had been distributed. All subsequent divisions were made in money, but this suggests that total divisions on the first general voyage were more like 186.5 per cent than 221 per cent, and the profit was 86.5 percent over the seven years of its existence, that is over ten per cent a year, which is more than the rate of interest and within the usual range of profit rates for the period, but it is notable that the investors only started making significant profits after the first Civil War was over.²⁸

The second general voyage, begun in 1648, made a 48.5 per cent profit in five years, or nearly ten per cent per year. Although over the statutory interest rate, it is less than the usual mercantile profit rate in the first half of the seventeenth century. Moreover the East

²⁵ Ibid. f. 49; 'prime cost' presumably means the original price in India.

²⁶ BL OIOC H/6, f. 117.

²⁷ Ibid.; BL OIOC B/21, ff. 42, 127; BL OIOC G/40/12, f. 51v.

²⁸ CCMEIC, 1643-9, 34.

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India Company argued that the general voyages made relatively high profits, because many of their charges had been born by the third and fourth joint stocks, and they had not been encumbered with shipping, forts or houses. The returns on the general voyages do not, then, genuinely represent the unprofitability of the East India trade in this period.²⁹

The fourth joint stock had begun in 1642 with a subscription of £105,000. The small size of the original stock forced the adventurers to borrow money, both in India and in England. Together with the losses of the ships the *Discovery* and the *John*, the result was, that by 1645 the stock possessed net assets of about £60,000, a depreciation of over forty per cent. The adventurers began to receive divisions in 1647, and in total, divisions of about 180 per cent of the total subscription had been made by the time the stock was wound up in 1663. The profit was, therefore, about eighty per cent over twenty one years, or less than four per cent per year. The East India Company was not, of course, typical of London's overseas trade, but in some respects it was more fortunate than others, the only loss sustained by the company which can be attributed directly to the Civil war itself was the *John*, and the company was able to insure its ships relatively cheaply.³⁰

As the war began to turn in Parliament's favour, the international trade of the port of London began to improve. By 1646 receipts in the port of London had risen to £17,277 per month, despite the Sackville Crowe affair which significantly diminished the trade of the Levant Company in that year, compared with only £12,342 in 1643, although in 1647 receipts fell to about £16,055 per month.³¹ Nevertheless in April 1647 a petition to the Common Council from merchants, and others involved in shipping and navigation, argued that 'there hath beene a general and Great decay of trade and commerce by sea to and from this Citie of these last three or four years'.³² Further evidence of the weakness of the recovery in overseas trade comes from the receipts received by the Vintners' Company from their tacklehouse porters. The porters possessed a monopoly of the carriage of all wine, from the ships in the port to anywhere in the metropolis. and the company received a set proportion of the fees they collected. The receipts recorded in the company accounts can, therefore, be used to establish the trend in imports of wine into London. As we would expect, receipts fell drastically in the early part of the first Civil War, from nearly £54 in 1641-2 to less than £16 in the 1643-4, but although receipts then rose again, they peaked at

²⁹ Scott, *Joint Stock Companies*, ii, p 122; Grassby, *Business Community*, 240; *CCMEIC*, 1650-1654, 359.

³⁰ Scott, *Joint Stock Companies*, ii, 119, 120, 127 & n. 9 & 11, 128 & n. 2; The Insurance premiums paid by the East India Company were 5% or less in the 1640s, *CCMEIC*, 1640-1644, 322; *CCMEIC*, 1644-1648, 28, 45, 48, 53, 81, 143, 260.

³¹ PRO E 351/643-7; see p. 143 above for the Sackville Crowe affair.

³² CLRO Jour. 40, f. 213.

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less than £43 in 1647, significantly lower than pre war totals.³³

In 1648 the recovery in foreign trade came to an end. A pamphlet published in June 1648 complained about 'the sensible decay of forraigne Traffick, which even before the late great alteration in the Navy [the revolt of the fleet], was shrunk to a third part lesse then formerly it was wont to be, as may be demonstrated by the customes; and (as it is justly feared) will now fall to nothing'. These fears were not entirely confirmed, but in 1648 receipts for customs in the port of London fell to £144,712, about £12,059 per month, lower even than in 1643. Clearly the mutiny in the navy had a profound effect on the volume of London's trade.³⁴

The customs' receipts suggest a rapid recovery in overseas trade during the early years of the Commonwealth. The account from 22 July 1649 to 24 June records total receipts of £215,382, suggesting a substantial increase in trade had taken place during the early part of the Commonwealth. These figures have to be treated with some caution as it was the first year's accounts of new Customs Commissioners, who were much more rigorous in their collections, to such an extent that in February 1650 and May 1651 the Levant Company petitioned the Navy Committee complaining about the new procedures in the custom house.³⁵

In the account for 1649-50, the figures for the port of London are broken down into a number of sub headings, which, together with other weekly accounts, allow a more detailed examination of London's overseas trade from the 25 June 1649 to 24 June 1649. The accounts, inflated to take account of the continued fifteen per cent discount, have been tabulated below.³⁶

³³ GL MS. 15333 4, Vintners' Company, Wardens' Accounts, 1636-1658, unfol; A. Crawford, A History of the Vintners Company, (1977), appendix C, 271-3. The Vintners' accounts run from midsummer to midsummer.

³⁴ PRO E 351/648; BL E449(10), The necessity of the speedy calling a Common Hall, (1648), 3.

³⁵ PRO E 351/650; PRO SP 105/151, ff. 33, 67v, 72; PRO SP 105/144, ff. 15, 32.

³⁶ PRO E 351/650 covers the period from 22nd July 1649 to 24 June 1650; PRO E 122/226/15, ff. 82, 87, 90 and PRO E 122/226/16, ff. 85-7 cover the period from 25th June 1649 to 22 July 1649.

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Figure 7. The overseas trade of London, 1649-50³⁷

Imports of wines and currants	£ 69,642
Other imports, native merchants.	£ 150,241
Other imports, foreign merchants.	£ 19,997
Exports of cloth.	£ 16,151
Other exports.	£ 28,238

If the trade figures for 1649-50 are compared with those for 1644, the nature of the recovery of London's overseas trade in the post war period can be established. The first point to be made is that it is evident that the greatest recovery had taken place in the import trades. Imports by English merchants of goods, other than wines and currants, had risen by forty seven per cent, and imports of wines and currants by twenty seven per cent. The recovery in exports is less impressive. Exports other than old draperies rose by a quarter but the receipts are still less than for the subsidy in 1641-2, while the increase in short cloth exports was only five per cent. The 1649-50 receipts suggest that the equivalent of only 48,454 shortcloths were exported in that year, still substantially less than the immediate pre war figures.

There is plenty of corroborating evidence that cloth exports were depressed in the late 1640s. In a pamphlet defending the privileges of the Merchant Adventurers, published in early 1648, Henry Parker claimed that the number of ships sent by the company to Hamburg had fallen from twenty each year, to only six. He argued that a major cause of the decline was 'the late obstructions and calamities of Civil War in our Kingdome, concurring with other annoyances done us by the Kings Agents abroad, and military commissions upon the seas'.³⁸ In the 1640s it was widely argued that, as a result of the Civil War, craftsmen employed in the cloth industry were forced to go abroad, encouraging the development of competitor industries in Holland and Germany. As a result it was difficult for the English industry to re-establish itself. Nevertheless the war probably only hastened the existing decline of exports of English cloth to northern Europe, rather than precipitating it.³⁹

The export figures lend substance to the complaints of contemporaries about the

³⁷ The sources are those detailed in the previous footnote.

³⁸ BL E425(18), H. Parker, *Of a Free Trade*, (1648), 35-6; Parker was secretary to the Merchant Adventurers' at Hamburg from 1646 to 1649.

³⁹ BL E32 (16), J. B[atty], *The Merchants Remonstrance*, (1644), 2-10; E. Kerridge, *Textile Manufacture in Early Modern England*, (Manchester, 1985), 31-32; G. D. Ramsay, *The Wiltshire Woollen and Industry in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, (1945), 112.

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poor state of England's trade. In a petition drawn up by the Common Council in January 1649, the new rulers of the City called on the Rump to take urgent action to restore the prosperity of trade and industry in the metropolis and the whole country which, they claimed, was almost lost.⁴⁰ In 1649 Henry Robinson wrote that 'our trade at present, touching exportation, is not one fourth part of what it was ten years ago, as will appear by the receipt of the Customs'.⁴¹ In March 1651 the Common Council drew up a petition for abatement of their proportion of the monthly assessment, claiming that 'by the general decay of trade thereof as by many greate losses of merchants and others and interruption of forreyne trades which within these last few years have been many' the City had become impoverished.⁴²

(ii) Shipping and the Invisible Cost to London's Overseas Trade

The London shipping industry was badly affected by the decline of trade. Many vessels employed in the Newcastle coal trade stood idle in the war years, but the decline was more general. In December 1643, the Venetian ambassador wrote that the Ordinance passed by Parliament, to enable merchants to send out privateers, was welcomed because there was little other employment for shipping. In 1647 the great ship builder Peter Pett testified in Chancery, that the value of shipping employed in the Spanish trade had fallen substantially in the Civil War period.⁴³

The attacks on English shipping increased the costs of shipping owners, just at the point when they faced renewed competition from the Dutch, after the Spanish ended their embargo of Dutch shipping in the summer of 1647. Even English merchants stopped using native shipping in favour of the cheaper and safer Dutch alternative. The result was the loss of a large part of the carrying trade which had previously provided substantial invisible profits for English trade. Added to those problems, London merchants, especially the Levant and Eastland Companies, became increasingly concerned about competition from imports through the Dutch entrepôt.⁴⁴

During the Civil War, London merchants had to pay charges for convoys for their ships, over and above the customs. In May 1644 the Commons resolved that it was against the law to make charges for convoying English ships. Warwick was requested in future to allow convoys for English merchants when it was convenient to do so. Merchants

⁴⁰ CLRO Jour. 40, f. 313.

⁴¹ J. Thirsk & J. P. Cooper, (eds.), *Seventeenth Century Economic Documents*, (Oxford, 1972), 53.

⁴² CLRO Jour. 41, f. 46v.

⁴³ HCA 24/109/355; CSPV 1642-3, 220; PRO C 24/704/5, f. 4; PRO C 2/CHASI/B35/16.

⁴⁴ J. Israel, *The Dutch Republic and the Hispanic World, 1606-1661*, (Oxford, 1982), 345; H. Taylor, 'Trade, Neutrality, and the "English Road", 1630-1648', *EcHR*, 2nd Series, 25, (1972), 255-60.

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continued to be charged for convoys, but, because these charges were not strictly legal, they are badly documented and it is therefore impossible to discover how much they amounted to. In the following February, the Commons again ordered that merchants should receive convoys without charge.⁴⁵ In October 1646 the Admiralty Committee ordered that the Merchant Adventurers would have to pay for pilots for their convoy to Hamburg. On the 18 October 1650 the Rump ordered that convoy money be abolished. The Act of 31 October 1650, which revoked the fifteen per cent allowance on customs, forbade any captain to charge for convoys. These charges added to costs, cutting into profit margins and made English shipping less competitive.⁴⁶

The dangers at sea led to an enormous rise in insurance premiums. In December 1647 James Howell alleged that marine insurance had risen from two per cent to ten per cent.⁴⁷ The correspondence of John Paige, who engaged in the wine trade with Spain and the Canary Islands, bears eloquent testimony to the problems London merchants experienced. On 26 December 1648 he wrote to assure a colleague in Tenerife that 'concerning insurance, I shall follow your order in effecting it at as cheap rates as I can. The times are at present very dangerous for Irish [privateers], which will be a means to make me do it with expedition', but on 6 January 1649 he wrote, that 'the times are so dangerous at present that scarce any man will underwrite a policy, being many ships of late taken by Irish men of war and the coasts of France is as dangerous as ours at present'⁴⁸ On 25 May he wrote 'I have a policy ready drawn and they ask no less than 10 per cent from Nantes to Tenerife, which, for ought I see, the profits of your goods will not afford to give such a premium. However, I shall get what I can insured, but I think it will be little under the above said rate. The times are now very dangerous, and insurers will hardly underwrite upon any ship under 16 or 18 guns. Ten days since there was a ship of London, 14 guns, taken at her coming out of Nantes by one of the Prince's [Rupert's] frigates, so by that you may see the coast of France is very dangerous'.⁴⁹

On 22 January 1650 he wrote that he had been unable to get insurance for the voyage of the *Blessing* to London, even for a ten per cent premium, because the ship was small, and news had just arrived that Rupert was in the Channel. On 3 September he wrote: 'I shall now endeavour to insure your adventures homewards, which will cost somewhat dear, being our coast at present is very full of French men of war and likewise of Ostend men of war. And further I must tell you that many insurers of late have broken so that now

⁴⁵ *CJ* III, 431, 509; *CJ* IV, 56.

⁴⁶ *PRO Adm.* 7/673, ff. 13, 18; *Firth & Rait*, ii, 444, 505-8; *CJ* VI, 310, 493, 550; *CSPD* 1650 379.

⁴⁷ J. Howell, *Epistolae Ho-Eliaenae*, (1737), 431.

⁴⁸ Steckley, *The Letters of John Paige*, 1.

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it is a difficult thing to get in good men, but I doubt not but I shall do as well as others.' On 15 November he wrote that 'insurance is very high upon the news' that Rupert had left Lisbon and had taken a couple of ships from Malaga.⁵⁰

Hinton argued that the cheaper shipping of the Dutch meant that, after the conclusion of peace with Spain, they would always have been able to undercut English shipping even had there been no attacks on English shipping at this time, although he concedes that the attacks made the situation much worse than it would otherwise have been.⁵¹ As early as January 1648, only six months after the end of the Spanish embargo, the Levant Company petitioned the House of Commons complaining about the competition from the Dutch. The company called for new restrictions of the employment of foreign shipping and also the prohibition of imports of Levant goods other than directly from their place of origin.⁵² Nevertheless a close examination of the evidence suggest that the roots of the crisis in English trade pre-date the Treaty of Munster, and points to the significance of political and military pressures. However the impact of the civil wars on English shipping may well have been masked before 1647 by the lack of competition in the carrying trade. Once the Dutch were no longer excluded, they provided a safer alternative to the increasingly endangered English shipping. The Dutch may have been more the beneficiaries than the cause of the slump in London's overseas trade and shipping.

Pressure to restrict the use of foreign shipping dates back to 1645, when, in February of that year, a petition was presented to the House of Lords from 'divers masters and others, well wishers to the increase of navigation of this Kingdom', complaining that the existing statutes prohibiting the use of foreign shipping were widely ignored. This petition was largely concerned with the Baltic and Scandinavian trades, and probably reflects the impact of the seizure of English shipping by the King of Denmark in 1643, detailed in chapter six. Subsequently a settlement was reached between the representatives of Parliament and the Danish King, and the number of English ships trading in the Baltic recovered, despite the fact that the Dutch signed a highly favourable commercial treaty with Denmark later in 1645.⁵³

The Levant Company's agitation against indirect imports can also be dated back to the First Civil War, although they were initially concerned about imports through Flanders

⁴⁹ Ibid. 2.

⁵⁰ Ibid. 10, 25, 28-9.

⁵¹ R. W. K. Hinton, The Eastland Trade and the Common Weal in the 17th Century, (Cambridge, 1959), 46, 84-5.

⁵² SP 105/143, f. 105.

⁵³ LJ VII, 185; J. Israel, Dutch Primacy in World Trade, 1585-1740, (Oxford, 1989), 149.

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rather than Holland.⁵⁴ During the Civil War the Dutch penetrated the trade with England's American and Caribbean colonies. In 1643 Virginia legalised trade with the Dutch; in 1648, of the thirty one ships trading to Virginia twelve were Dutch, twelve English and the rest from New England.⁵⁵ The Dutch commercial penetration of Barbados was even greater. Dutch investment enabled the development of sugar plantations in the island in the 1640s. This again was the result of the conflict in England rather than peace between Spain and the Netherlands.⁵⁶

In 1647, the year when the Spanish embargo was lifted, the reduction in privateering activity seems to have brought about a significant recovery in English shipping, that year saw substantial increases in the number of English ships entering the Baltic and the ports of Lisbon and Faro.⁵⁷ This recovery was short-lived. From 1648 there were complaints from English ship owners in the Iberian trades, alleging that they faced ruin because of Dutch competition. They demanded that the trades be restricted to English ships.⁵⁸ The number of English ships leaving Bilbao fell from 152 in 1636-40, to 106 in 1641-5, and sixty nine in 1646-50. The evidence suggest that fears about the safety of English shipping played a key role in the decision of merchants to use Dutch shipping. In January 1649 John Rookes decided to transport the Spanish wool he had bought for his brother, from Bilbao to London on a Dutch vessel via Amsterdam, because of the threat from Rupert's ships and the privateers.⁵⁹ In the Baltic, the number of English ships passing westward through the Sound bound for England declined from 130 in 1647 to twenty two in 1651, whereas the number of Dutch ships passing east from England increased from none in 1647 to thirty two in 1650. It is unlikely that this was directly the result of the peace with Spain as the Spanish had little power over the Baltic.⁶⁰

By 1648 English merchants were coming to rely on Dutch carriers even in the most local areas of foreign trade. In the autumn of 1648 a petition to the House of Commons from 'well affected masters and commanders of ships', concerned primarily with trade with France and the Netherlands, argued that the Dutch had achieved an almost monopoly position in the carrying trade. Again it appears to have been the lack of security for English shipping which was the primary problem, the petitioners attributed the present crisis to the fact that the Dutch were no longer willing to give convoys to English shipping which they

⁵⁴ SP 105/150, f. 83; SP 105/143, f. 102v.

⁵⁵ R. Brenner, Merchants and Revolution: Commercial Change, Political Conflict, and London's Overseas Traders, 1550-1653, (Cambridge, 1993), pp, 586-7.

⁵⁶ V. T. Harlow, A History of Barbados, 1625-1685, (Oxford, 1926), 42.

⁵⁷ Hinton, Eastland Trade, (Cambridge, 1959), appendix D, 228; Israel, Dutch Primacy, 205 table 6.3;

⁵⁸ C. Wilson, Profit and Power, A Study of England and the Dutch Wars, (1956), 43.

⁵⁹ Taylor, 'Trade Neutrality, and the "English Road"', 258; PRO C 10/17/105.

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had previously been in the habit of doing.⁶¹ Steven Pincus has recently stressed that London merchants attributed their troubles to the attacks of the privateers and the French, rather than competition from the Dutch, but in reality the two issues were closely connected. Native shipping was more expensive because English ships were built for defence, in contrast to the Dutch *fluits* which were designed to maximise cargo capacity and as a result were largely unable to defend themselves. To compete, the shipping industry would have to had to adopt similar designs to but this would have made the merchant men more vulnerable to attack.⁶²

Jonathan Israel has suggested that in the Mediterranean and Iberian trades, despite the complaints of the merchants and ship owners, the English were much more successful in holding on to at least part of the gains they had made in the 1630s. Although they certainly lost their previous primacy to the Dutch, the English were not reduced to their pre 1621 position. This was probably because the rapid expansion of the navy enabled it to be deployed with increasing effectiveness in defence of merchant shipping. In early 1652 the Levant Company, supported for the first time by regular convoys to the Mediterranean, went so far as to boast that they had beaten off the Dutch competition. It is impossible to come to precise conclusions about this subject with the evidence available, but it can be suggested that England's internal conflicts had had a more profound effect on London's overseas trade in the late 1640s than Hinton allowed for, and that had it not been for the civil wars the impact of renewed Dutch competition would have been significantly diminished.⁶³

In conclusion, although the two crises in London's overseas trade which have been identified were similar, each hitting both the export and import sectors, their causes were different. The first crisis, which was at its worse in 1643-4, was caused primarily by the crisis in domestic trade and consumption detailed in the previous chapter. The combatants' economic blockades prevented cloth for export from reaching London and metropolitan wholesalers were unable to supply their provincial customers with imports; at the same time demand was depressed in London and the provinces by plunder, high taxes and uncertainty about the future.

In the later 1640s the impact of the civil wars was felt directly on overseas trade as

⁶⁰ Hinton, Eastland Trade, appendix D, 228-9. See Figure 1, p. 142 above.

⁶¹ Rushworth Collections, vii, 1258-9; CJ VI, 18; S. C. A. Pincus, Protestantism and Patriotism: Ideologies and the Making of English Foreign Policy, 1650-1668, (Cambridge, 1996), 41-3.

⁶² Pincus, Protestantism and Patriotism, 41, 98; K. R. Andrews, Ships, Money and Politics: Seafaring and Naval Enterprise in the Reign of Charles I, (Cambridge, 1991), 26-9.

⁶³ Israel, Dutch Primacy, 148-9, 204-5.

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increasing numbers of London merchant ships fell victim to the privateers, the 1648 naval mutiny and the attacks of the French. In addition London shipping owners had to pay higher insurance premiums and also charges for convoys. The result was rising costs at a time of increasing competition from the Dutch. Although imports rapidly recovered in the early Commonwealth period, much of the improvement in imports in 1649-50 probably accrued to the Dutch as it was either carried in Dutch shipping or imported through Holland, and exports remained slumped at the end of the decade. Many London merchants may have responded to the problems of the English economy by investing abroad, but it is unlikely that this offered the same returns as their pre-war trade, or to have diminished the knock-on impact of the decline in overseas trade on the economy of London as a whole.

9 Manufacturing Industry

Manufacturing industry employed the largest proportion of the London workforce in the seventeenth century, so clearly the impact of the war on this sector is of vital importance. As the first chapter showed, manufacturing was generally subsidiary to London's distributive function, so it might be expected that the wartime disruption in trade would have repercussions for industry in London, but at the same time that the demands of Parliament's armed forces for arms and equipment would stimulate London's industry. This chapter will make extensive use of the records of the livery companies, although such data are by no means ideal. Some companies had very little involvement with their trade by the mid seventeenth century, although those companies connected with industry remained closer to their trades than others — for example at the end of the seventeenth century ninety per cent of the freemen of the Pewterers' Company were still working pewterers.¹

There is evidence of severe economic problems in London industry from the autumn of 1642. In November 1642 the hempmen of Bridewell complained that their servants had joined the army, and trading was so dead that they could not sell what they made.² The problems of London craftsmen in 1643 are illustrated by the experience of the turner, Nehemiah Wallington. He suffered particularly from the collapse of credit networks as his creditors called in their debts, and from falling demand for his goods. His problems became particularly acute in the second half of the year, in November he felt compelled to sell his wares below cost price, although he was only too aware of the perils of this course.³

Wallington wrote in 1645 that 'as for my estate it is something hard with mee for our warre is deare because workmen are gon and trayding is dead and costomers hard and taxes greate'.⁴ The recruitment of the armies led to a substantial reduction in the available pool of labour in London, and in some parts of industry this caused problems. In October 1642 the Court of Assistants of the Cordwainers' Company decided to petition the London Sessions of the Peace because their journeymen had joined together to demand higher wages.⁵ On 16 September 1644 the Bakers' Company Court decided to petition the Court of Aldermen to allow them to employ foreign journeymen 'to be continued till theis distracted tymes bee over, that therby the company may be in the meantyme supplied with

¹ J. Hatcher & T. C. Barker, *A History of British Pewter*, (1974), 116.

² GL Bridewell Court Minutes, vol. 9, 1642-1658, f. 5.

³ BL Add. MS. 40883, ff. 112-v, 144, 148, 149, 167.

⁴ BL Sloane MS. 922, f. 146v.

⁵ GL MS. 7353/1, Cordwainers' Company, Court Minutes, 1622-1653, ff. 248, 326, 344, 368v.

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servants to doe theyr worke'.⁶

In the Bakers' and Cordwainers' Companies apprenticeship enrolments remained relatively stable during the war years, suggesting that where demand for labour remained strong, apprentices could be obtained. In the year to November 1642, the Bakers' had enrolled thirty seven apprentices, and in the following year, thirty six; in comparison they had enrolled forty three apprentices in 1641, but only thirty three in 1640 and twenty six in 1639. The brewing industry also seems to have been in this category. The Brewers' Company records show little sign of declining apprenticeship enrolments, fourteen were enrolled in 1642-3 compared to nineteen in the previous year, but in 1643-4 the number of enrolments rose to eighteen.⁷

The brewers, shoemakers and bakers all produced for the local market, and the brewers and bakers obtained their raw materials from counties close to London, they would not, therefore, have been as adversely affected as other sectors by the disruption of domestic trade. This does not necessarily mean these trades were unaffected by the war. Receipts for quarterage in the Cordwainers' Company declined from about £50 in 1641-42, to only £33 4s 4d in 1642-3, suggesting that the masters of the company were experiencing a drop in income during the war. Given that trade was at the heart of the London economy, even those parts of the manufacturing sector which were not directly linked to the trading sector, would have felt the impact of the disruption, if only at second or third hand.⁸

In those parts of manufacturing industry which were more reliant on London's domestic trade, the signs of economic disruption were even greater. Although the goods produced by the butchers and tallowchandlers were for the London market, they were dependant on the cattle trade for their raw materials, which, as has been noted, was severely disrupted in the war years. The minutes of the Tallowchandlers' Company contain a number of references to the adverse affect of the war on its members. The Butchers' Company accounts suggest that many members found it increasingly difficult to pay their quarterage, in 1643-4 over forty per cent of the yeomanry failed to make any payment at all.⁹ In these trades there is little sign of any shortage of labour, in both the Butchers' and Tallowchandlers' Companies apprenticeship enrolments halved in the early years of the war, added to the recruitment of the soldiers this must have led to a massive reduction in the

⁶ GL MS. 5177/4, Bakers' Company, Court Minutes, 1617-48, f. 362.

⁷ S. R. Smith 'The Social and Geographical Origins of the London Apprentices, 1630-1660', Guildhall Miscellany, 4, (1973), 203; GL MS. 5174/4, Bakers' Company, Wardens' Accounts, 1625-67, ff. 136v-137, 146v, 157, 164v, 177v; GL MS. 5442/6, Brewers' Company, Wardens' Accounts, 1617-1653, unfol; GL MS. 7351/2, Cordwainers' Company, Wardens' Accounts, 1636-78, unfol.

⁸ GL MS. 7351/2, Cordwainers' Company, Wardens' Accounts, 1636-78, unfol.

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number of apprentices. Where demand remained strong recruitment enrolments continued at their former levels, suggesting that there was a major decline in demand for labour in the war years.¹⁰

It was crafts such as the pewterers, dependent on domestic trade for their market and also their raw materials, which were particularly badly hit by the disruption of internal trade. During the war, the trade in tin and lead to London was obstructed, leading to a major increase in prices. The records of the livery company would certainly seem to confirm this, the enrolment of apprentices, admission of freemen and the opening of shops, all declined by more than a half in the early part of the war.¹¹ Also directly affected by the decline in the internal trade of England were the Clothworkers. Before the war an average of 283 apprentices were enrolled a year in the Clothworkers' Company, in each year from 1637 to 1641. By 1643 enrolments had fallen by more than a half, to 124.¹²

The war depressed the luxury industries, this too may have been a repercussion of the trade crisis, which would have severely diminished the income of London's mercantile elite. Steven Smith found that the recruitment of apprentices in the Clockmakers' Company was down by about a fifth in the war years, while in the Weavers' Company receipts for quarterage fell from £109 in the year to August 1642, to £52 in the year to August 1643, and receipts from other sources, including apprenticeship bindings, the admissions of freemen and fines, also declined substantially.¹³

The gold and silversmiths of London were particularly badly hit by the war, David Mitchell has recently used the records of testing plate at Goldsmith Hall to argue that production of plate came to an almost total halt during the Civil War. On 18 January 1643 the beadle of the Goldsmiths' Company complained to the Court of Assistants that he was unable to collect quarterage from the members of the company. He said that the economic crisis had taken away the goldsmiths' trade and, as result, many shops were shut up. In the last quarter, he claimed, he had made up the payments out of his own pocket.¹⁴

⁹ GL MS. 6153/1, Tallowchandlers' Company, Court Minutes, 1607-1648, ff. 213v, 216; GL MS. 6440/2, Butchers' Company, Wardens' Accounts, 1593-1646, part 2, ff. 582-4v.

¹⁰ Ibid. ff. 564-6v, 587v; GL MS. 6152/2 Tallowchandlers' Company, Wardens' Accounts, 1585-1653, ff. 263, 279.

¹¹ GL MS. 7086/3 Pewterers' Company, Wardens' Accounts, 1572-1663; BL 669 f. 10 (45), I. S., A Declaration of Sundry grievances concerning Tinne and Pewter, worthy the consideration of Parliament, (1646).

¹² CH, Apprentices Binding Books, 1606-40; CH, Apprentices Binding Books, 1641-1662.

¹³ Smith 'Social and Geographical Origins of the London Apprentices', 203; GL MS. 4646, Weavers' Company, Old Ledger Book, 1489-1741, ff. 82v, 83.

¹⁴ D. Mitchell, 'Innovation and the Transfer of Skill in the Goldsmiths Trade in Restoration London', in D. Mitchell, (ed.), Goldsmiths, Silversmiths and Bankers; Innovation and the Transfer of Skill, 1550-1750, (1995), 11; W. Prideaux, (ed.), Memorials of the Goldsmiths' Company, (2 vols., 1896), i, 209.

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Initially London's armaments industry was not stimulated by wartime demand. It has been shown that in the early part of the war contractors had considerable difficulties obtaining payment. As has been observed in chapter five, the native industry was too small to cope with demand, forcing the authorities to look abroad for a substantial part of their requirements. As a result, even in the metallurgical sector, increased demand for munitions did not counteract the impact of the general decline in trade. In the Founders' Company the annual enrolment of apprentices fell from an average of around twenty two a year from 1637 to 1642, to five in 1643-4, while the admissions of freemen fell from around eleven, to only one. In the Blacksmiths' Company, receipts for the presentment of apprentices fell from over £12 a year before the war, to £6 10s in the year July 1643 to July 1644. There were also falls in admissions of freemen and receipts for the proof work of new masters, while receipts from quarterage fell from £19 9s 9d in 1641-2 to £10 9s 1d in 1643-4. The records of the Cutlers' and Armourers' Companies are less complete, but falls in the admissions of freemen are clear in both.¹⁵

However, as the war continued, the demand for armaments for Parliament's forces began have an impact on London industry. In the Cutlers' and Armourers' Companies there was growing agitation against foreigners, and those free of other companies, making armaments from early 1644, although the Court of Assistants of the Armourers' was reluctant to prosecute while Parliament needed arms. These protests suggest that this sector of the London manufacturing sector was expanding, and that the expansion was providing opportunities for some of those hit by the general decline in trade. It is noticeable that, contrary to previous practice, imports played a very small part in arming the New Model Army, indicating that the London armaments industry had expanded sufficiently to meet most of Parliament's needs. The growth of the armaments industry did not compensate for the decline in other parts of the manufacturing sector. The fears expressed by the livery companies, that the established craftsmen were being undercut by the newcomers, suggests that the amount of business in this sector was limited. Nevertheless the Civil War does seem to have corrected the immaturity of the armaments industry which Mark Fissel recently observed in his study of the Bishops' wars, and it is probable that the continued military enterprise of the Commonwealth and Protectorate regimes ensured that the

¹⁵ G. Parsloe, (ed.), *Wardens' Accounts of the Worshipful Company of Founders*, (1964); GL MS. 2883/4, Blacksmiths' Company, Wardens' Accounts, 1625-46, ff. 206-266; GL MS. 2884, Blacksmiths' Company. Freedom admissions, 1599-1694, ff. 58-68; GL MS. 7158/1, Cutlers' Company, Freedom Admissions, 1613-1790; GL MS. 12079/2, Armourers' Company, Freedom Admissions and Apprentices Bindings, 1603-61.

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expansion of the industry proved sustainable.¹⁶

The armaments industry was not the only part of London's manufacturing industry to expand during the 1640s. Cyprian Blagden has argued that the printers prospered in the 1640s. The collapse of censorship in 1640 let forth a torrent of printed literature. The result was that the 1649 Act of Parliament regulating printing recognised nearly twice as many presses as the 1637 Star Chamber decree. Nevertheless this case seems to have been exceptional, there is little evidence that as a whole London manufacturing did well out of the war.¹⁷

In the case of the ship building industry, wartime demand never compensated for the repercussions of the decline in trade. The reduction in the capital value of shipping during the first Civil War suggests that there was little demand for new ships in the 1640s, which would also have depressed ship building and its associated industries in the eastern suburbs. Evidence concerning the economy of the eastern suburbs is very limited, but the complaints of rising poverty received by the Middlesex Justices of the Peace indicates that this part of London did not escape the economic crisis.¹⁸

Equally, in the construction industry, the building of the forts and lines of communications around London failed to compensate for the general halt to London's expansion in the war years. The number of apprentices bound by members of the Masons' Company declined from twelve in 1641-2, to two in 1643-4 and only one in 1644-5. In the five years from Michaelmas 1637 to Michaelmas 1642, the Tylers' and Bricklayers' Company received on average more than £16 per year in quarterage from its members. In 1642-3, however, receipts fell to under £7, and in 1643-4 to £6 1s 10d, a fall of over sixty per cent. On average about eighteen apprentices had been enrolled, before the war, and fifteen made free, but in 1642-3 only six new apprentices were enrolled and four new freemen admitted. In the Carpenters' Company the number of apprentices enrolled fell from over eighty in 1640-1 and 1641-2, to nineteen in 1643-4. Receipts for quarterage fell from £27 7s 6d in 1640-1 to £11 7s 2d in 1643-4.¹⁹

Did the war disrupt economic regulation in London's manufacturing sector? The

¹⁶ GL MS. 1751/1, Cutlers' Company, Court Minutes, 1602-70, f. 346v, 347v; GL MS. 12072, Armourers' Company, Rough Court Minutes, part 2, f. 1v, 2, 2v; GL MS. 12071/3, Armourers' Company, Court Minutes, 1621-1675, ff. 144v; M. C. Fissel, The Bishops' Wars, Charles I's Campaigns against Scotland, 1638-1640, (Cambridge, 1994), 106.

¹⁷ C. Blagden, 'The Stationers Company in the Civil War Period', The Library, 5th Series, 13, (1958), 16.

¹⁸ CMSB, 1644-1652, 43, 76.

¹⁹ D. Knoop & G. P. Jones The London Mason in the Seventeenth Century, (Manchester, 1935), 92; GL MS. 3054/2, Tylers' and Bricklayers' Company, Wardens' Accounts, 1631-57; GL MS. 4325/8, Carpenters' Company, Wardens' Accounts, 1623-1647, unfol.

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search book of the Waxhandlers' Company records no searches for faulty goods between 3 May 1642 and 13 May 1647, although previously the company's officers had searched twice a year. In his study of the London Weavers' Company Alfred Plummer argued that the 1640s saw a decline in regulation and increasing numbers of non-free craftsmen in the City, and that during the Civil War the Weavers' traditional agitation against aliens was put aside. Unfortunately the company minutes before 1648 are missing, the evidence for the breakdown in regulation derives from accusations made by critics of the company's rulers, and should therefore be treated with caution.²⁰

In other Companies, searching continued in the war years; in December 1643 the master of the Pewterers' Company reported to his Court of Assistants that the traditional search had been conducted, and the officers had found things in 'reasonable good order'. There is clear evidence that the Clothworkers' company were continuing to search, and the records of the Bakers' and Saddlers' Companies show a continued stream of fines for faulty workmanship and other economic offences. The overall evidence suggests that, with a few exceptions, away from those trades directly involved in making armaments, the structures of economic regulation did not break down.²¹

In the middle years of the decade there are signs of recovery across a wide cross-section of London's industrial sector. London industry at last began to benefit from contracts for Parliament's armed forces, the first year of the existence of the New Model Army saw very substantial expenditure on equipment and munitions in London, and at last financial re-organisation ensured that bills for supplies were paid promptly. However the recovery went much wider than those trades connected with supplying the army, and gathered pace after the war, when the volume of military contracting declined. This suggests that the upturn in manufacturing was largely the result of the recovery of London's trade.²²

Ralph Davis argued that the ship building industry boomed after the end of the first Civil War. In the Clothworkers' and Founders', two very different Companies, the numbers of apprentices enrolled grew to exceed pre-war totals. In the Founders' Company the numbers of apprentices enrolled rose from eight in 1644-5, to twenty nine in 1645-6, higher than in most of the 1630s. In the following year the number of apprentices enrolled rose to thirty nine, more than any year since before 1630. In the Clothworkers' Company

²⁰ A. Plummer, The London Weavers Company 1600-1970, (1972), 50-1, 152; GL MS. 9493, Waxhandlers' Company, Search Book, ff. 153v-153.

²¹ GL MS. 7090/4, Pewterers' Company, Court Minutes, 1611-1643, f. 355; GL, Merchant Tailors' Court Minutes, 1636-1654, vol. 9, f. 207v; GL MS. 5385, Saddlers' Company, Court Minutes, 1606-1665, ff. 227v, 229v, 231, etc.; GL MS. 5174/4, Bakers' Company, Wardens' Accounts, ff. 163, 176v, 177v.

²² I. Gentles, The New Model Army in England Ireland and Scotland, 1644-1653, (Oxford, 1992), 40-2.

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enrolments rose from 198 in 1644, to 353 in 1645, and 470 in 1646.²³

To a certain extent the growth in apprenticeship enrolments may have been to make up for the loss of apprentices to the army, and the failure to recruit in the Civil War, but in the Clothworkers' Company some masters were recruiting more apprentices than the company regulations allowed. On 12 May 1647 twenty one masters were brought before the Court of Assistants of the company for keeping too many apprentices. Despite appearances this does not indicate an economic boom, in most of the cases the master was accused of keeping three apprentices but no journeymen. The inference must be that, though, the masters were able to find work, their profit margins were narrow, and they therefore preferred to employ apprentices rather than journeymen. However the Clothworkers' continued economic problems may have been specific to their industry. There were also allegations that the senior members of the Merchant Adventurers, who dominated the customs from 1645 to 1649, were allowing members of their Company to ignore the Elizabethan statute which stated that at least one cloth in ten should be exported dressed. This reduced the employment available to the clothworkers and in 1646, under pressure from their yeomanry, the company agreed to initiate legal proceedings against the Merchant Adventurers to enforce this statute.²⁴

The records of other companies give clearer indications of the economic recovery of this time. In the Weavers' Company, collections of quarterage grew from £74 in 1644-5, to £115 in 1645-6, and to £124 in 1646-7, compared with £109 in 1641-2, suggesting that the silk weaving industry was again prospering, and that the members were able to pay the arrears of quarterage that had accrued in the Civil War period. In the Cordwainers' Company receipts for quarterage rose from £35 4d in 1643-4, to over £50 in 1645-6. The construction industry also showed signs of recovery. In 1644-5 receipts of quarterage in the Tylers' and Bricklayers' Company were over £12, in the following year they were over £29, while the enrolment of apprentices and admission of freemen also increased.²⁵

In the last years of the 1640s the recovery turned sour for London's manufacturing, as it did for the rest of the London economy, although the evidence suggests that things did not get as bad as in the worst part of the first Civil War. Nehemiah Wallington recalled that 'then my trading in my shop failed me very much', and that 'whereas I did take the first

²³ R. Davis, *The Rise of the English Shipping Industry*, (1962), 11; CH, Apprentices Binding Books, 1606-40; CH, Apprentices Binding Books, 1641-1662; Parsloe, *Wardens' Accounts*.

²⁴ CH, Orders of Court, 1639-49, ff. 141-141v, 143v, 163, 163v-4v; BL E568(20), J. Lilburne, *An Impeachment of High Treason*, (1649), 38.

²⁵ GL MS. 4646, Weavers' Company, Old Ledger Book, 1489-1741, ff. 84, 84v, 85; GL MS. 7351/2, Cordwainers' Company, Wardens' Accounts, 1636-78, unfol. accounts 1642-3, 1645-6; GL MS. 3054/2, Tylers' and Bricklayers' Company, Wardens' Accounts, 1631-57.

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half year in 1647 three hundred and twenty pounds, fourteen shillings, the second half year, [to?] 1648, I did take but three hundred and twenty pounds, but the third half I did take but two hundred and five pounds and that was very small gain'.²⁶

In the Weavers' Company receipts for quarterage fell to £73 in 1647-8. The high prices brought about by the bad harvests of the late 1640s reduced demand for the silkweavers' goods. In order to drum up extra trade they took to going round the inns of the capital trying to sell their wares to visiting countrymen, but in so doing they fell foul of the municipality's crack down on hawking. The silkweavers won the support of the Levellers and, in some cases, won legal redress against the municipality. The City authorities were forced to pay £162 to William Smith, a weaver whose goods had been seized for hawking in an inn.²⁷

In the Clothworkers' Company the enrolment of apprentices fell to 310 in 1647 and 210 in 1648, though they then rose to 228 in 1649. In the Brewers' Company the enrolment of apprentices fell from twenty eight in 1646-7 to ten in 1648-9, reflecting the impact of restrictions imposed to alleviate the dearth. In other companies the evidence suggests that the depth of the recession was 1649. In the Cordwainers' Company receipts for quarterage rose to nearly £55 in 1647-8, but then fell to £36 4s 4d in the following year. In the Tylers' and Bricklayers' Company receipts from quarterage fell to £13 14s 9d in the year to Michaelmas 1648, and then to £7 5s 10d in the year to Michaelmas 1649, while the enrolment of apprentices fell from twenty three to six. In the Pewterers' Company the enrolment of apprentices fell from sixty six in 1646-7 to forty in 1647-8, thirty seven in 1648-9 and nineteen in 1649-50. This may suggest that while the Second Civil War had the greatest adverse affect on the cloth trade, for the other sections of London's manufacturing industry it was the dearth, which reached its peak in 1649, which had the greatest impact on their fortunes.²⁸

The economic distress suffered by the weavers in the late 1640s seems to have been the primary cause of the bitter disputes between the governors and the commonality that wracked the Weavers' Company. The dispute focused on the issue of foreign craftsmen, the critics of the company rulers argued that, during the war, large numbers of aliens had

²⁶ Quoted in P. Seaver, Wallington's World, A Puritan Artisan in the Seventeenth Century London, (Stanford, California, 1985), 121.

²⁷ GL MS. 4646, Weavers' Company, Old Ledger Book, 1489-1741, f. 85v; Lilburne, Impeachment of High Treason, 38; BL 669 f. 10 (116), The Mourful Cryes of Many Thousand Poore Tradesmen, (1648); CLRO Cash Books, vol. 1/6, ff. 50v, 51, 156, 157-v; vol. 1/7, f. 147.

²⁸ CH, Apprentices Binding Books, 1641-1662; GL MS. 5442/6, Brewers' Company, Wardens' Accounts, 1617-1653, unfol.; GL MS. 7351/2, Cordwainers' Company, Wardens' Accounts, 1636-78, unfol. accounts 1647-8, 1648-9; GL MS. 3054/2, Tylers' and Bricklayers' Company, Wardens' Accounts, 1631-57; GL MS. 7086/3, Pewterers' Company, Wardens' Accounts, 1572-1663.

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been allowed into the company to the detriment, of the native workers who were unable to find work in their trade. In particular the aliens were accused of monopolising broad weaving. In practice the allegations of lax regulation may have been a red herring, the English weavers were trying to move into the production of broadweaving because of their difficulties in selling their 'narrow' wares, such as ribbons. To do so they needed to exclude the alien craftsmen who had previously dominated this part of the industry.²⁹

The weavers were not the only group complaining about foreign craftsmen in the City in the late 1640s. In April 1648 there were complaints about the employment of foreign sawyers from the Carpenters' Company. In November 1649 jewellers in the Goldsmiths' Company petitioned the Court of Aldermen against foreigners practising their craft. In the Merchant Tailors' Company, after agitation from the working tailors, a sub-committee was established which conducted a vigorous campaign against foreign workers until it was abolished by the Court of Assistants in 1654. As early as September 1647 there were complaints in the Huguenot community that members of the community were being prosecuted for not having served a full seven years apprenticeship. In practice the attack on aliens and strangers was probably more a reaction to the economic difficulties experienced by London craftsmen, than to any real increase in non freemen in the economy.³⁰

In conclusion the Civil War, and in particular the early years of the war, was a bad time for craftsmen across a very wide variety of sections of London's manufacturing industry. Only the armaments and the printing industries appear to have prospered in the war years. Nevertheless problems were concentrated in certain parts of the industrial sector; the worst affected parts were those dependent on the national market either for their market, or for raw materials and those catering to the luxury demand.

It was the disruption of London's trade networks, rather than the high taxes or labour shortages arising from the recruitment of the armies, which was the primary reason for the problems of the metropolitan industrial sector. If the impact of taxation were the primary reason for the economic problems of London's manufacturing, then one might expect the brewing industry to have suffered the most, given the high excise rates imposed on beer and ale, but brewing seems to have been one of the least affected sections of

²⁹ Plummer, London Weavers' Company, 51, 152, 181-2; E. Kerridge, Textile Manufacturers in Early Modern England, (Manchester, 1985), 24; GL A 9.1, No. 39 The Case of the Commonality of the Corporation of Weavers of London Stated, (1648), 3-5.

³⁰ CLRO Rep. 59, ff. 198v-414v; CLRO Rep. 60, f. 15v; M. James, Social Problems and Policy in the Puritan Revolution, (1930), 205-6; C. A. Chamier, (ed.), Les Actes des Colloques des Eglises Francaises et des Synodes des Eglises Etrangeres refugiees en Angleterre, 1581-1654, (Publications of the Huguenot Society), ii, 1890, 106.

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industry. Labour shortages only seem to have affected those sections of manufacturing which were relatively sheltered from the disruption of trade, and were therefore not so adversely affected by the war. The impact of the disruption of trade during the war went far beyond the confines of the London mercantile community, through its repercussions on the manufacturing sector, the largest employer in the metropolis, it reached a very large section of London society.

There is evidence of a strong recovery in the middle years of the decade but this turned into a renewed recession which was more broadly based than during the Civil War, affecting all sectors of industry. In the long term it is difficult to see that the war did much damage to London manufacturing; it caused little or no destruction of capital equipment in London so the manufacturing sector could recover quickly, as it did in the mid 1640s. No other part of England was going to challenge London's economic pre-eminence, so the foundation of metropolitan manufacturing remained secure.

10 Economic Trends in London During the English Revolution

The previous three chapters have shown that the war had a major impact on certain parts of London's trade and manufacturing, but the impact was not uniform, certain parts suffered worse than others, and different sectors were affected at different times. What therefore was the impact of the War on the London economy taken as a whole? The purpose of this chapter is to pull together the various aspects so far discussed, to assess the impact of the war on the London economy both in the 1640s, and in the longer term. Unfortunately it is not possible to come to precise conclusions because evidence necessary to build up a complete picture of the metropolitan economy in the mid seventeenth century is missing. For example we do not know precisely what proportion of the economy was taken up by the manufacturing sector. However it is possible to put together a more impressionistic picture of the trends in the London economy using qualitative sources and also general measures of economic health, such as rents, apprenticeship enrolments and fees from fairs and markets, which will give an approximate idea of the answers to these questions.

(i) Economic Trends 1642-1650

By the end of 1642 the war was clearly having an adverse effect on the economy of London, this was even conceded by the parliamentary newsbooks. In the second week of November, writing about the recruitment of soldiers for Parliament's armies, one commented that 'in regard that Trading and imployment is ceasing in London, it cannot be quick and free in other parts of this Kingdom, and therefore they may the better spare their Apprentices in the country for this service'.¹

Fears concerning the cessation of trade featured prominently in the peace campaign in London in the winter of 1642. The petition of 22 December argued that 'Commerce and Trade (the only support of this City) [is] exceedingly impaired, whereof none can be equally sensible with us, those whom we deal in most parts of this Kingdom and of the Kingdom of Ireland, are much disabled and impoverished, by the violence and Rapine of soldiers; some of them totally dispoiled, others in a fearful Expectation of the like Measure, the Multitude of poor people about this City (who by reason of the cessation of Trade, want Employment and consequently Bread) infinitely abound'.² The petition of apprentices stated

¹ BL E242(10), England's Memorable Accidents, No. 73, 7-14 Nov. 1642, 75.

² LJ V, 511-2.

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that they were 'foreseeing the Face of our own Ruin in our masters present condition'. If the declining economic conditions did not create the peace party, it certainly created plenty of material for its propaganda.³

In 1643 parliamentary taxation began to bite in London, but it is noticeable that contemporaries continued to attribute their economic difficulties primarily to the dislocation of trade. A pro-Parliamentary tract published in March 1643, argued that 'trading is much decayed by the trouble of the Kingdom', was leading to increased poverty in the metropolis, which was exacerbated by an influx of poor refugees from the fighting. The author believed that the health of the economy of London was inextricably interconnected with that of the rest of the country: 'there is no part of the Kingdome suffers but London suffers, London is plundered every day, in all the Kingdome over'.⁴ In the same month the vestry of the extra mural parish of St Botolph Bishopsgate blamed problems in collecting local rates on 'the great povertie of many of the present inhabitants of this parish because of the deadnes in, and lacke of tradeing and also for that divers of the said parishoners have listed themselves for soldiers'.⁵

On 5 July 1643, at a General Court of the East India Company, Samuel Gearing presented a petition on behalf of himself and his father, John. They were indebted to the company for about £800, but John Gearing had suffered great losses by the plundering of Reading, Newbury and Cirencester where a great part of his estate and trade was located. He was unable to pay his other creditors more than 15s in the pound. Gearing had recently paid off £618 of his debt to the company, and he hoped for some abatement of the remainder.⁶

The depression was at its deepest in the latter half of 1643 as the general effects of the war on business was exacerbated by the King's prohibition on trade with London. Confidence was very low and there was a flight of both capital and people. On 19 August the Committee for the Navy was informed that large sums of money were being shipped overseas. The Committee ordered that the ships riding in the Thames should be searched.⁷ The Commons became so alarmed about the numbers seeking to leave England that it revoked all orders allowing passage abroad on 10 August, a few day later the prominent London puritan minister Edmund Calamy published a tract urging people not to leave the country, despite all the dangers. An exception was made for the stranger communities, in

³ Ibid. 524.

⁴ BL E91(24), A Highway to Peace Briefly Declaring the grounds of our Misery and the Meanes of our Remedy, (1643), unpag.

⁵ GL MS. 4526/1, Vestry Minutes of St Botolph Bishopsgate, 1616-1690, f. 60v.

⁶ CCMEIC, 1640-3, 308, 315, 331, 370.

⁷ Bodl. Rawlinson MS. A221, f. 219.

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September the Commons established a committee to receive certificates from the Dutch and French churches of those poor strangers who were not able to support themselves without begging by 'reason of the decay of trade' so that the Speaker might grant them warrant to leave the country.⁸

The adverse economic climate penetrated into the wealthy central city parishes. In St Bartholomew by the Exchange, when the vestry ordered that a special rate should be levied to raise money for the relief of maimed soldiers in November 1643, it was found that only about half the money assessed could be levied because 'ther was soe many houses in ye p[ar]ish shut up and soe many shops that p[ai]d nothing'.⁹ In the same month Aldermen Gibbs told the Commons 'trade is decayed, and our shops shut up in a great measure; our poor do much increase'.¹⁰ In the following February the impact of the economic crisis was noted in the vestry minutes of Stephen's Colemanstreet, where it was found that the poor were 'in extreme want and misery' but receipts from the poor rate were declining because 'many houses being empty and many parishioners disabled to pay as heretofore'.¹¹

It was in the autumn of 1643 that Gerrard Winstanley was finally forced to stop trading.¹² On 28 December 1643 two partners in the mercery trade drew up a joint account which included over £5,900 of debts which 'albeit they accompted the same to be good yet they conceived that the same might not be pd in convenient time by reason of the distractions of the times'.¹³ In March 1644 the Haberdashers' Company agreed to give £20 immediately, and £30 at a later date, to a former member of their Court of Assistants 'for his present relief in theis hard times'.¹⁴ In the following September Humphrey Slaney, whom Robert Brenner describes as 'one of the most adventurous London merchants of his day', was seeking to compound with his creditors.¹⁵

Apprenticeship enrolment in the City fell substantially. In the year to Michaelmas 1641 £384 7s 4d was received for the enrolment of apprentices, in 1642 £285 17s 4d, a fall of about a quarter. The period from Michaelmas 1642 to Michaelmas 1644 is complicated by the appointment of a new Chamberlain which meant that the 1642-3 accounts stopped in

⁸ CJ III, 201, 238; BL E65(12), E. Calamy A Case of Conscience Concerning Flying in Times of Trouble, (1643).

⁹ E. Freshfield, (ed.), The Vestry Minute Books of St. Bartholomew Exchange in the City of London, 1567-1676, (2 parts, 1898), i, 5.

¹⁰ J. Thirsk & J. P. Cooper, (eds.), Seventeenth Century Economic Documents, (Oxford, 1972), 634-6.

¹¹ GL MS. 4458/1, St Stephen Colemanstreet, Vestry Minutes, 1622-1728, part 1, f. 128.

¹² J. Alsop, 'Ethics in the Market Place: Gerrard Winstanley's London Bankruptcy, 1643', JBS, 28, (1989), 104, 113.

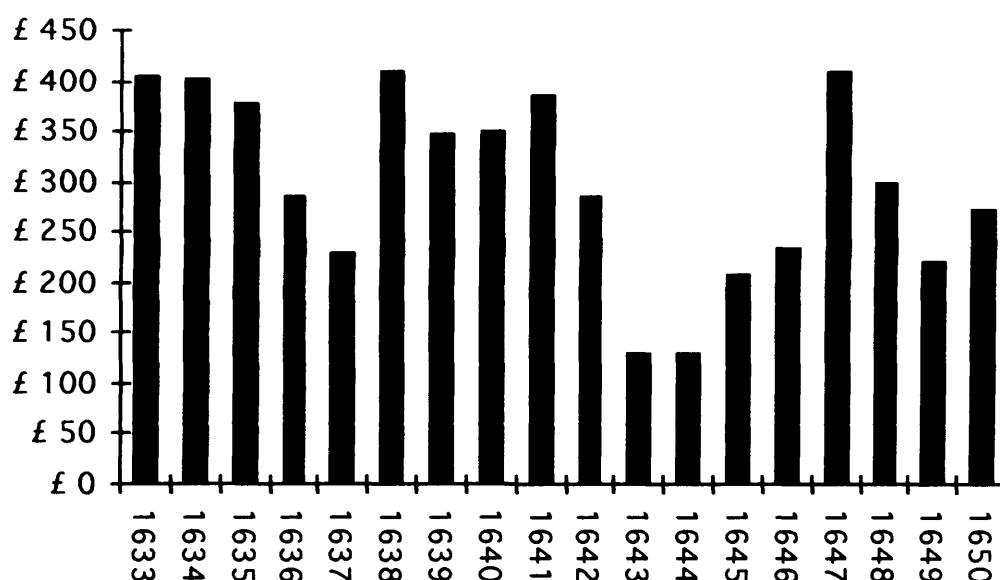
¹³ CLRO Rep. 57/ 2, ff. 106-7v.

¹⁴ GL MS. 15842/1, Haberdashers' Company, Court Minutes, 1583-1652, f. 327.

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midsummer, after only three quarters of a year and the following account covers a year and a quarter from Midsummer 1643 to Michaelmas 1644.¹⁶ It is nevertheless evident that receipts from enrolments fell sharply in this period. For the three quarters to midsummer 1643 the Chamber only received £116 11s, and for the year and a quarter from midsummer 1643 to Michaelmas 1644 only £141 11s 4d. This would suggest that the annual average receipts for this period were about £129, and that during the Civil War the enrolment of apprentices in the City of London fell by nearly two-thirds. The quarterly average receipts were substantially lower in the 1643-4 account than in the 1642-3 account, just over £28 compared with nearly £39, which suggests that it was in the 1643-4 period that enrolments reached their nadir.¹⁷

Figure 8. Receipts from the enrolment of Apprentices, 1633-50¹⁸



The fall in apprenticeship enrolments took place when many existing apprentices were joining the army. It was reported in the London press that 3,000 London apprentices enrolled in Essex's army on 28 July 1642 alone, so the total number of apprentices in the

¹⁵ Ibid.; R. Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution, Commercial Change, Political Conflict and London's Overseas Traders, 1550-1653*, (Cambridge, 1993), 122.

¹⁶ CLRO Cash Books, vol. 1/4, ff. 27v, 121v, 197v.

¹⁷ CLRO Cash Books, vol. 1/5, f. 19v.

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London economy must have fallen very substantially. Was the decline in the recruitment of apprentices because of decreasing demand for labour in the London economy? It could be argued that the failure to recruit new apprentices was the result of the difficulties of communications during the Civil War. Smith found that the geographical area from which London apprentices were recruited became much more restricted during the 1640s. Those apprentices who were enrolled tended to be drawn from the metropolis, or from the counties in its immediate vicinity. An argument against this is that the belligerents were concerned with stopping trade rather than the movement of people. The fall in recruitment may also reflect the reluctance of families to send their sons to London during the early part of the war, when many probably thought that the King's forces could have been victorious, but as has been noted in the previous chapter, in those trades where there was continued demand for labour, apprenticeship enrolments did not decline. This suggests that apprentices were available where there was demand for them, and, conversely, that the general decline in enrolments was the result of falling demand for labour in London.¹⁹

The war led to the decline in property values. As has been already been noted there were a number of complaints that shops and houses were standing empty in the City in 1643. In July 1644 Mercurius Aulicus reported that a list had been presented to the Commons of 12,000 empty houses and shops in and around London.²⁰ One deponent in Chancery stated that in the metropolis many landlords 'in respect of the great decay of trade and taxations and other burdens which their tenants are liable to in these sad times do much abate of there accustomed former rents'.²¹ The decline in rents affected the wealthy central City parishes. The tenant of a cellar in Budge Row requested an abatement of his rent of £10 a year, which was agreed 'in regard of the badnesse of the times and decay of trading'.²²

The fall in rents may particularly have affected the western parts of the City. Robert Meade, who was one of the collectors for the weekly assessment in St Dunstan in the West in 1644, stated that 'the landlords in and about London especially in Fleet street . . . do and have abated the third part or almost half the rent of their houses in respect of the general

¹⁸ CLRO Cash Books, vols. 1/1-1/7. Year to Michaelmas. For 1643 and 1644 see text.

¹⁹ L. C. Nagel, 'The Militia of London, 1641-1649', (Unpublished PhD. thesis, University of London, 1982), 64; S. R. Smith, 'The Social and Geographical Origins of the London Apprentices, 1630-1660', Guildhall Miscellany, 4, (1973), 203.

²⁰ BL E4(12), Mercurius Aulicus, 29th week, to 20 July 1644, 1085; it is notable that although this reported is commented upon, but not denied, by pro-Parliamentary newsbooks, see BL E4(13), Mercurius Britanicus, No. 46, 29 July-5 Aug. 1644, 364.

²¹ PRO C 24/700/71.

²² PRO C 24/698/26.

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decay of trade and other great burdens that tenants in this sad times are liable to'.²³ The rent of the Mitre tavern in Fleet street was reduced from £120 per annum before the war, to first £60 and later £50 per annum.²⁴

The very largest houses seem to have fallen furthest in value. In September 1645, Alderman Atkins, wrote to the Committee for Advance of Money concerning the renting of the house formerly occupied by Sir Henry Garway: 'if you will please lett, as houses are now to be had, I wilbe your tennant, the Lady Swinertons house is now let for £50 p anno which would not have bene formerly lett for £150 p anno also many great houses are empty at present'.²⁵

The livery companies were partly sheltered from the decline of rents because they often let their property below market rents to tenants, who then sublet them, but they were not totally immune. In January 1643 the Merchant Tailors' had granted a lease on a house in Little Britain to a stationer called Samuel Cartwright, for a £110 fine in several instalments, but in March of the following year he petitioned the company's Court of Assistants claiming 'that by reason of pr[ese]nte distractions, his losses and decay of trade', he could not pay the fine as it he had originally agreed, and the company was obliged to agree to a rescheduling of the payments.²⁶

In June 1643 the Haberdashers' Company was forced to accept the surrender of the lease of one of its houses in Ludgate Hill because the tenant could not afford it 'in regard of the hardness of the times and decay of trade'.²⁷ In September of the following year it was reported that the house was still empty and in great decay.²⁸ In January 1645 William Winders, who rented tenements in Horseshoe Alley in Bankside Southwark from the Cordwainers' Company, petitioned the company complaining that 'by reason of the troubles in this kingdom and the pooreness of the tenants in Horshoe alley he hath byn at great losse of rent of this company's tenements there, in his holding and the likeness of them both to continue'.²⁹

The second half of 1643 and early 1644 seem to have been the worst period for the London economy. Thereafter there is evidence that the economy began to improve. In the year to Michaelmas 1645 the amount received by the Chamber for enrolments amounted to £207 3s 3d. In the following year it rose to £233 6s 4d, and, although this was still less

²³ PRO C. 24/697/28.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ PRO SP 19.82, f. 31.

²⁶ GL, Merchant Tailors' Court Minutes, vol. 9, 1636-1654, f. 192.

²⁷ GL MS. 15842/1, Haberdashers' Company, Court Minutes, 1583-1652, f. 316.

²⁸ Ibid. f. 327.

²⁹ GL MS. 7353/1, Cordwainers' Company, Court Minutes, 1622-1653, f. 278.

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than per-war levels, it does suggest that a recovery was under way.³⁰ The burden of direct taxation fell substantially after 1644, and the economy benefited from the improvements in Parliament's finances in 1645, but the evidence suggests that Londoners remained reluctant to invest in Parliamentary loans, and the stimulatory effect of supply the New Model Army was short lived. It is more probable that the victories of the New Model Army brought an improvement in confidence as Londoners began to see an end to the war at last.

The principal reason for the recovery was the improvement in internal trade as the royalist blockade declined and Parliament's armies were victorious. The improvements in receipts for customs suggest that the recovery of domestic trade fed through into the international sector. Nevertheless the extent of the recovery should not be exaggerated, in August 1645 it was reported that one of the Assistants of the Clothworkers' Company 'hath had many great losses in the west by reason of these unnatural warrs, whereby all or most part of his estate is in danger to be lost'.³¹ Moreover there was growing concern about increasing poverty throughout the metropolis in 1645 and 1646.³²

The evidence suggests that the recovery began to pick up speed in the immediate post war period. This led to a growth in the enrolment of apprentices in the City. In the year to Michaelmas 1647 the Chamber of the City of London received £410 8d for the enrolment of apprentices, the highest figure since 1638.³³ Immediately after the war, rents began to recover. In 1647 John Houghton of St Andrew Holborn testified in Chancery that 'having been employed in the disposing and lettinge of diverse houses in and about this Cittie [he] doeth find by experience that though the Rents did fall and abate some years last past yet nowe they doe rise againe in value'.³⁴ The rent receipts of the Cordwainers' Company from their Horshoe Alley tenements confirm this. In 1641-2 they received £77, by 1643-4 only £60 10s, but by 1646-7 this had increased again to £76. The arrears of rents of Christ's Hospital rose from £305 15s in 1642, to £412 18s 10d in 1643, but by 1645 they had fallen to £380 9s 7d.³⁵

The recovery in the economy brought with it growing economic strife as various interest groups struggled to ensure that they received what they regarded as their rightful

³⁰ CLRO Cash Books, vol. 1/5, ff. 29v, 133v.

³¹ CH, Orders of Court, 1639-1649, f. 120v.

³² BL E273(8), L. Lee, A Remonstrance Humbly Presented to the High and Honourable Court of Parliament Touching the Insupportable Miseries of the Poore of this Land, Especially at this Time and in this Great City of London, within the Lines of Communication and Bills of Mortality, (1645), 2; CMSB, 1644-1652, 43, 56-7.

³³ CLRO Cash Books, vol. 1/6, f. 27v.

³⁴ PRO C 24/702/94.

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share of the fruits of improvement. In 1645 the long standing agitation against the monopoly of the Merchant Adventurers was revived. The Merchant Adventurers also came under attack from the Levant Company for importing goods from the Levant through the Netherlands. Shipowners called for restrictions on the use of foreign shipping, and retailers and craftsmen attacked foreigners and hawkers trading in the City. As the London economy was reconstructed concern grew that outsiders would be able to establish themselves, and traditional privileges become neglected. During the Civil War many people had fled to London but there were few economic opportunities for them. With the revival in economic activity opportunities opened up again, and the freemen of London wanted to ensure that it was they who benefited not the newcomers. At the same time traditional critics of the privileges of groups such as the Merchant Adventurers felt the need to renew their criticism as the cloth trade picked up.³⁶

In the second half of 1647 the recovery came to an end. In July a petition from the apprentices to the Common Council said trade was 'now mightily impared'.³⁷ In October Pedwarden Rumsey, a grocer imprisoned for debt, petitioned the East India Company for remission of interest due on his debts to the company for goods he had purchased, because, he claimed, he had made great losses on their sales and 'divers other casualties by bad debts in these distracted times'.³⁸ In February 1648 John Cooke argued that 'there was never more need to make some provision for the poore then this yeare; for there is lesse work for them then ever'.³⁹ In March 1648 the Waxchandlers' Company minuted that 'trading in theis times is verie dead and lowe by reason of the warres that hath bin and great troubles that yet remaine and are like to continue in this kingdom'.⁴⁰

The economic crisis was widely blamed on the army. In January 1648 William Clarke told Lieutenant Colonel Reede that 'all the myseryes of the Cittie, decay of trade, skarcyty, and dearnes of provysion, not bringinge in of Bullion, and all other causes of povertie are imputed to the Army'.⁴¹ In reality the causes of the crisis were much more diverse. As has been already noted the decline in overseas trade is largely attributable to a mixture of the attacks of the privateers and the conclusion of peace between Spain and the

³⁵ GL MS. 7351/2, Cordwainers' Company, Wardens' Accounts, 1636-1678, unfol.; GL MS. 12819/6, Christ's Hospital, Treasurer's Accounts, 1632-1644, unfol.; GL MS. 12819/7, Christ's Hospital, Treasurer's Accounts, 1645-1652, unfol.

³⁶ BL E260(21), A Discourse Consisting of Motives for the Enlargement and Freedome of Trade, (1645); SP 105/143, f. 102; LJ VII, 185; CLRO Jour. 40, ff. 146, 149v, 176, 189v-90.

³⁷ CLRO Jour. 40, f. 239v.

³⁸ CCMEIC, 1644-9, 233.

³⁹ BL E425(1), J. Cooke, Unum Necessarium, (1648), 5.

⁴⁰ GL MS. 9485/1, Waxchandlers' Company, Court Minutes, 1584-1689, f. 252v.

⁴¹ BL Stowe MS. 189, f. 39.

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Netherlands. Equally the increasing dearth, although variously attributed in London to the after effects of the Civil War, the proximity of the army to London and the excise, is far more likely to have been the result of the weather than the political situation. Hence although the political problems of the late 1640s probably did contribute to the economic problems of London, it is likely that these years would have been difficult ones even had a political settlement been reached at the end of the first Civil War.⁴²

The London economy was adversely affected by the run of bad harvests which began in 1646. The price of meat and fish, as well as corn, rose at this time. In February 1647 the Fishmongers' Company called for measures to stop the export of fish, saying that fishermen had more than doubled their prices. In March 1649 the Common Council decided to request the Rump to prohibit the sale of meat on certain days, to reduce inflation. The price of raw materials such as wool and leather, also increased. In 1646 Christ's Hospital paid their shoemaker £1 16s over and above the price for shoes because of the rising cost of leather. In the following year the Hospital paid him £1. In February 1647 the Common Council called for measures to prevent the export of leather, wool and fullers earth.⁴³

The rising prices also fuelled wage inflation. In September 1649 the Court of Aldermen was petitioned by the master and journeymen carpenters employed by the Bridgehouse for higher wages, in response the Corporation agreed to add an extra 2d a day. It is very unlikely that increasing wages in London kept pace with rising food prices, but many London employers may well have found their profit margins squeezed.⁴⁴ John Cooke argued that, because of the rising prices, people were keeping fewer servants than before 'and everyone projects for himselfe, to spend as little as maybe'.⁴⁵ The dearth therefore reduced employment and demand.

There was a major crisis in the foreign exchanges and London's bullion supplies. During the war years the value of the pound and the output of the mint had remained high; the latter mostly as a result of the continued Spanish silver trade, but also because of the coining of substantial amounts of plate. However from 1647 the value of the pound and the output of the mint declined very substantially. The value of the pound in Amsterdam fell by five per cent in 1647 and by a further ten per cent by 1649. The value of the pound also fell

⁴² CLRO Rep. 58/2, f. 3; CLRO Jour. 40, ff. 221, 263v; BL E499(10), The necessity of the speedy calling a Common Hall, (1648), 3.

⁴³ GL MS. 5570/4, Fishmongers' Company, Court Minutes, 1646-1664, f. 8; CLRO Jour. 40, ff. 206, 315v; GL MS. 12819/7, Christ's Hospital, Treasurers' Accounts, 1645-1652, 1646 accounts, f. 44, 1647 accounts, f. 19.

⁴⁴ CLRO Rep. 58/ 2, ff. 3-v; CLRO Rep. 59, f. 482.

⁴⁵ Cooke, Unum Necessarium, 5.

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in Hamburg.⁴⁶

The mint was transformed from a source of revenue for the state, to a drain on resources. The average monthly output of the mint was £87,478 from April 1641 to November 1642, from November 1642 to May 1645 the monthly average was £78,562, from May 1645 to April 1646 it was £81,926, and from April 1646 to the end of March 1647 it was £66,219. From April 1647 to May 1649 average monthly production fell to only £6,011, and from May 1649 to December 1651 the average fell still further to £2,098. The fall in the output of the mint was the result of the decision of the Spanish to transfer their bullion shipments to Dutch carriers because the fall in the value of sterling meant that it was no longer profitable to ship silver to England and remit the money to the southern Netherlands by bills, and it was not possible to ship silver directly to the Flanders because of the Dutch naval blockade. As a result, this once profitable trade died.⁴⁷

The fall in the value of sterling was widely attributed to the occupation of the City by the Army. A petition drawn up by the Common Council in November 1647 argued that the continued proximity of the Army to the City had caused foreign merchants to withdraw their goods and capital from London which had led to the fall in the exchange rate. In January 1648 a Leveller tract stated that since the Army had occupied the City in the previous summer the value of sterling had fallen rapidly, and bullion was kept back from the Tower causing a shortage of money. A petition drawn up by the Common Council in May 1648 argued that merchants were no longer bringing bullion to the Tower because of the loss of the City's control over the Tower and this, they claimed, had led to recession and increasing unemployment.⁴⁸

On 10 December 1647 James Howell, writing from London, summed up the economic situation in the metropolis:

'a famine doth insensibly creep upon us, and the Mint is starved for want of bullion, Trade, which was ever the sinew of this Island, doth visibly decay, and the Insurance of ships is risen from two to ten in the Hundred, Our Gold is ingrossed in private hands, or gone beyond sea to travel without License, and much I believe of it is returned to the Earth (whence it first came) to buried where our late Nephews

⁴⁶ C. E. Challis 'Lord Hastings to the Great Silver Recoinage, 1464-1699', in C. E. Challis, (ed.), A New History of the Royal Mint, (Cambridge, 1992), 321; J. J. McCusker & S. Hart, 'The Rate of Exchange on Amsterdam in London: 1590-1660', Journal of European Economic History, (1979), 703 table 3; J. J. McCusker, Money and Exchange in Europe and America, 1600-1775, A Handbook, (1978), 70.

⁴⁷ Challis, 'Lord Hastings to the Great Silver Recoinage', 327, 313 table 35; J. S. Kepler, The Exchange of Christendom, The International Entrepot at Dover, 1622-1641, (Leicester, 1976), 90; BL Add. MS. 4191, f. 24.

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may chance to find it a thousand Years hence, if the world lasts so long: so that the exchanging of white Earth into red (I mean silver into Gold) is now above six in the Hundred and all these; with many more are the dismal Effects and concomitants of a Civil War.⁴⁹

Fighting was renewed in 1648, and once again the London economy fell back into slump as foreign trade was crippled by the mutiny of the fleet.⁵⁰ Receipts for the enrolment of apprentices fell to £300 1s 10d in the year to Michaelmas 1648, down from £410 8d in the previous year. In the year to Michaelmas 1649 receipts fell still further, to £221. Receipts for enrolments did not rise above £300 until 1651-2. Rents also began to decline, by 1648-9 the receipts of the Cordwainers' from their Horshoe Alley tenements had fallen to £66 9s 9d, and the arrears of rent owed to Christ's Hospital rose to £783 3s 4d by 1649.⁵¹

In 1650, faced with the threat from Charles II in Scotland, the Commonwealth was very concerned with the dangers of popular discontent arising from economic depression and the resulting increase in poverty. The Rump established the Council of Trade in August 1650 to examine ways of improving trade. Many commentators, such as Thomas Violet, argued that the Civil Wars were the root cause of the Commonwealths' economic difficulties. That this view found support within the new regime is suggested by provisions in the Act passed by the Rump in 1651 to reduce the rate of interest, authorising the judges in Chancery to moderate the interest on debts incurred in the 'late troubles', defined as the period between 1 September 1642 and 1 February 1649.⁵²

The London economy suffered two major depressions in the 1640s. The first, which reached its depths in the second half of 1643 and early 1644, can be attributed almost entirely to the impact of the First Civil War. However the second, at the end of the decade had more diverse causes. The run of bad harvests and the Treaty of Munster were as important, perhaps more important, than the continued political turbulence.

The two depressions had significantly different characteristics. The first had the greatest impact on the better off. It has been noted that craftsmen producing luxury goods did particularly badly in the first Civil War and the rents of the larger houses fell the most.

⁴⁸ CLRO Jour. 40, ff. 263v, 273-v; BL 669 f. 11 (116), The Mournfull Cryes of Many Thousand Poore Tradesmen, (1648).

⁴⁹ J. Howell, Epistolae Ho-Eliauae, (1737), 431.

⁵⁰ CLRO Jour. 40, f. 287.

⁵¹ CLRO Cash Books, vol. 1/6, ff. 128v, 240; vol. 1/7, ff. 37v, 126; vol. 1/8, f. 33v; GL MS. 7351/2, Cordwainers' Company, Wardens' Accounts, 1636-1678, unfol; GL MS. 12819/7, Christ's Hospital Treasurer's Accounts, 1645-52, unfol.

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At the same time there is evidence of upward pressures of wages in some sections of industry, this was probably not typical of the rest of the economy, but the good harvests kept real wages relatively buoyant. This crisis was primarily of crisis of trade and it therefore had the most immediate impact on the mercantile community. The better off were also those who were most affected by the massive increase in direct taxation in 1643. The Twentieth Part was almost exclusively assessed on the wealthy. Although the assessment involved a substantial extension of national taxation, many of the less well off would have been able to deduct all, or part, of what they paid from their rents. Nevertheless the economic crisis of the first Civil War was not confined to the wealthy. The impoverished are the least able sustain economic reverses. There is considerable evidence of increasing poverty in Civil War London, and the poor were particularly hit by high fuel prices and the excise on beer. Moreover the very wealthiest had more options when it came to trying to avoid the worst impact of the war, they could move their capital abroad or invest in Parliamentary finance.

In contrast the second depression of the late 1640s hit the poor harder than any other section of the London community, primarily because they were most vulnerable to dearth. Those involved in foreign trade were also suffering because of the attacks on English shipping, and the renewed competition from the Dutch. Other sections of the London economy do not seem to have done so badly. Internal trade was not unduly disrupted by the first Civil War, and it is striking that the St Bartholomew's Day Fair seems to have been still very large in August 1648. There was a decline in receipts from Blackwell Hall, but this was nowhere near so dramatic as the decline in the first Civil War. The evidence therefore suggests that the wholesalers and retailers, who made up the vast bulk of the London mercantile community, did not do so badly in the depression of the late 1640s. We might conclude that, although the economic depression of the first Civil War demonstrates that foreign trade was dependant on internal trade and a severe crisis in the latter created a severe crisis in the former, the depression of the latter 1640s shows that the reverse was not true, and a crisis in foreign trade had only a limited affect on the domestic trading sector.

(ii) The Long Term Impact

What was the long term impact of the two economic crises which have been identified in 1640s? Clearly the war did not prevent the long term expansion in the London economy which characterised the later part of the seventeenth century. The recovery observed in the

⁵² Firth & Rait, ii, 402, 548-9; CSPD 1650, 178-179.

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middle years of the 1640s demonstrates the remarkable ability of the metropolitan economy to bounce back after periods of adversity, and there can be little doubt that the middle years of the 1650s saw a similar, if not stronger, resurgence.⁵³

To what extent did the Civil War lead to more long term changes in the structure of the London economy? In a pamphlet entitled The Mystery of the new Fashioned Goldsmiths, published in 1676, the anonymous author argued that, as a result of the enlistment of so many apprentices in the army, many London merchants, who previously had entrusted their cash to one of their apprentices, started instead to deposit their cash with goldsmiths. At a later date the goldsmiths began to pay interest on their deposits and lend out the money they received to merchants and the Cromwellian regime. This, it was alleged, was the origin of the goldsmith bankers who feature so prominently in accounts of the origins of English banking. Did the Civil War have a major impact on the rise of English banking?⁵⁴ The Mystery of the new Fashioned Goldsmiths needs to be taken with a pinch of salt. It has been argued that this pamphlet was probably a government inspired attempt to justify the stop on the Exchequer, which had ruined many of the goldsmith bankers. In fact the origins of English banking were probably much less dramatic than this suggests, and the Civil War may not have much to do with it.⁵⁵

Before the Civil War many goldsmiths were involved in a wide variety of financial services, mostly in the field of foreign exchange, but some also lent money on pawned plate and jewellery, discounted bills of exchange and traded in bullion. They also received deposits, although they do not seem to have traded with them. It has been suggested that the goldsmith banker was a reality by at least the reign of James I, if not before.⁵⁶

The goldsmiths were not the only providers of financial services in this period. Richards has argued that the financial scrivener was the 'earliest English pioneer of the bankers' trade'. From at least the Jacobean period financial scriveners received deposits and lent the money out at interest. One account book from the 1630s records the deposit of over £30,000 in the space of eighteen months in one London scriveners' shop. Many London tradesmen acted as agents and factors for provincial merchants and landowners who had dealings with the metropolis, they received and paid out money for their clients and lent out

⁵³ D. Hirst, 'Locating the 1650s in England's Seventeenth Century', History, 81, (1996), 377-381; R. Grassby, The Business Community of Seventeenth-Century England, (Cambridge, 1995), 395-6.

⁵⁴ This pamphlet is reprinted in J. B. Martin The Grasshopper in Lombard Street, (1892), 285-292.

⁵⁵ H. Roseveare, The Financial Revolution, 1660-1760, (1991), 83.

⁵⁶ A. V. Judges, 'The Origins of English Banking', History, 16, (1931), 142-3; D. K. Clark, 'A Restoration Goldsmith-Banking House: The Vine on Lombard Street', in Essays in Modern English History in Honour of Wilbur Cortez Abbott, (Cambridge, Mass., 1941), 3, 7; E. Kerridge Trade and Banking in Early Modern England, (Manchester, 1988), 67.

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surpluses to London merchants, they even allowed their clients overdrafts.⁵⁷

By the late 1650s a few of the goldsmiths had established 'running cashes', they received deposits and lent the money they received to merchants and to the Protectorate regime, but at what stage this practice began is difficult to establish. There does not seem to be any contemporary evidence to tie the beginning of goldsmith banking to the Civil War. The most recent study of goldsmith bankers has dated their origins to the 1650s rather than the Civil War period; it is clear that the real origins of English banking lie in the long term evolution of the English economy.⁵⁸

Did the war lead to the erosion of traditional economic structures and the rise of more entrepreneurial, free market business practices? Some merchants may have been able to survive by adopting speculative business practices. According to William Walwyn, Henry Brandeth prospered during the war by searching the inns of the City early every morning to find out what goods had recently arrived. He bought whatever was available, even though he might never have traded in the goods before, and often without any idea of how he would dispose of his purchases.⁵⁹ In the second half of the decade the municipality began a crack down on hawking in the streets and selling in inns, and the regulations against foreigners trading in the City were strengthened, suggesting that traditionally accepted standards of economic behaviour had been eroded during the war. But these measures may alternatively have been a response to recession as the freemen shopkeepers of the City tried to use their political muscle to drive out competition.⁶⁰

The war may have obliged many Londoners to trade outside their traditional area of business; for example, in November 1643 Lawrence Bromfield, one of the largest suppliers of swords for Parliament's armies, bought over 136 tons of redwood, which had been sequestered by the Committee for Advance of Money from Sir Nicholas Crispe. He was subsequently allowed the purchase price in lieu of money he was owed for arms. Given the

⁵⁷ R. D. Richards, The Early History of Banking in England, (1929), 15-16; F. T. Melton, Sir Robert Clayton and the Origins of English Deposit Banking, 1658-1685, (Cambridge, 1986), 20-30, 44; Kerridge, Trade and Banking, 46-7.

⁵⁸ Richards, Early History of Banking, 37; S. Quinn, 'Balances and Goldsmith Bankers: the co-ordination and control of inter-banker debt clearing in Seventeenth-Century London', in D. Mitchell, (ed.), Goldsmiths Silversmiths and Bankers: Innovation and the Transfer of Skill, 1550-1750, (1995), 61; Kerridge, Trade and Banking, 76-7.

⁵⁹ J. R. McMichael & B. Taft, (eds.), The Writings of William Walwyn, (Athens Ga. and London, 1989), 427.

⁶⁰ CLRO Jour. 40, ff. 149v, 240; CLRO Rep. 57/2, f. 59; CLRO Rep. 58/1, ff. 141, 191; CLRO Cash Books, vol. 1/6, ff. 50v, 51; BL 669 f. 11 (116), The Mournfull Cryes of Many Thousand Poore Tradesmen, (1648).

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difficulties so many contractors had in obtaining payment in the early part of the war, Bromfield may have believed that purchasing the redwood was his only way of obtaining payment for his goods. This form of barter is a sign of financial desperation rather than economic modernisation. It must be remembered that according to the traditional customs of London, a freeman could pursue any aspect of trade he chose, and there is considerable evidence of far greater economic flexibility than the structure of livery companies would lead one to suppose.⁶¹

There is plenty of evidence that London craftsmen and tradesmen continued to perceive the livery companies as important to their economic interests. In many companies the ruling bodies came under considerable pressure to implement economic regulations effectively.⁶² The 'democratic' struggles which afflicted so many companies strongly suggest that these institutions were considered sufficiently relevant to the immediate interests of their members that it was worth fighting for control over them. There were even moves to integrate new trades into the traditional structure of regulation, a petition to the Court of Aldermen in November 1644 from the tobacco industry called for the incorporation of a company for their trade with full powers of search.⁶³

Robert Brenner has recently argued that the English Revolution saw the transformation of the structure of English overseas trade, with the decline of the old merchant companies and the rise of non company 'new merchants'. In fact there is little evidence that either the Long Parliament or the Commonwealth were opposed to the merchant companies. The Merchant Adventurers' and Levant Companies had their privileges confirmed by Ordinance, and a similar Ordinance for the East India Company passed the Commons. It can be argued that this was simply a sign of Parliament's desperation for loans and does not mean that they were favoured by England's new rulers, but it is noticeable that, unlike many of Parliament's other creditors, the loans from the merchant companies were generally repaid.⁶⁴

The support received by the companies during the Civil War went beyond the confirmation of their charters. In June 1644 the Commons voted down an attempt to grant liberty of trade in New Draperies within the Merchant Adventurers' privileges. The Levant Company was consistently supported by the Navy and Customs Committee in its efforts to sustain its economic privileges, the company was allowed to place an officer in the

⁶¹ PRO SP 46/103/1, f. 34; I. Gentles, The New Model Army in England Ireland and Scotland, 1645-1653, (Oxford, 1992), 42; CCAM, i, 35.

⁶² See for example GL MS. 16967/5, Ironmongers' Company, Court Minutes, 1646-1660, ff. 17, 30, 69.

⁶³ M. James, Social Problems and Policy During the Puritan Revolution, 1640-1660, (1930), 193-223; CLRO Rep. 57/2, ff. 7-v.

⁶⁴ Brenner, Merchants and Revolution, 577-632.

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Customs' House to detect interlopers.⁶⁵

The Commonwealth also clearly supported company regulated trade. The Rump went on record as supporting a single joint stock company for the east Indies trade, and issued a new charter for the Guinea Company.⁶⁶ The merchant companies were often very successful in lobbying the Commonwealth regime. The decision to send a fleet to the Mediterranean to protect English shipping in 1650 arose from lobbying by the Levant Company.⁶⁷ The Merchant Adventurers failed in their attempts to get the Rump to confirm their charter, but the Commonwealth ordered its representatives to support the company abroad, for example in 1650 the Council of State ordered their agent in Hamburg to pursue any grievance brought to him by the Merchant Adventurers concerning infringements of their privileges. The company's monopoly was confirmed in 1656 by the Protectorate, but this seems to have owed more to the need to re-establish the company's staple in the Netherlands after the conclusion of the first Dutch War, than to any change in commercial ideology.⁶⁸

The most important item of economic legislation passed by the Rump, the 1651 Navigation Act, did not mark the end of regulating trade through the companies. The Act was concerned with shipping which had never come under the merchant companies' monopolies. Levant Company merchants could and did hire ships from owners who were not members of the company for use within the company's area of privilege. Where the companies were involved in shipping regulation was in the enforcement of general regulation in their particular areas of trade, by restricting their members to using English shipping, and this function continued under the new Act.⁶⁹

In conclusion it is very difficult to see this period as marking a substantial change in economic philosophy; the Commonwealth regime, like the early Stuarts, used a pragmatic mix of both monopolistic privileges and general regulations in economic policy making, but frequently over rode economic interests for political or financial ends. At the same time, at the London level, there is little evidence of any growing attachment to economic deregulation. Indeed the merchant and livery companies function as intermediaries between state and Londoners, lobbying Parliament over issues such as the excise and protection for convoys, was greatly enhanced in the 1640s; making them even more relevant to the

⁶⁵ CJ III, 486, 518; PRO SP 18/24/25; PRO SP 105/143, ff. 100-v, 102v-103, 104, 105.

⁶⁶ CJ VI, 353; CSP Colonial, 1574-1660, 331, 339, 355.

⁶⁷ PRO SP 105/151, ff. 40-41.

⁶⁸ CSPD 1650, 68-9; CSPD 1652-3, 136; CSPD 1655-6, 242, 318, 334-5, 340.

⁶⁹ R. W. K. Hinton, The Eastland Trade and the Common Weal in the Seventeenth Century, (Cambridge, 1959), 89; J. F. Larkin & P. L. Hughes, (eds.), Stuart Royal Proclamations, Vol. I, Royal Proclamations

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economic interests of the inhabitants of the metropolis.

of James I, 1603-1625, (Oxford, 1973), 338-40, 543-5; L. A. Harper, The English Navigation Laws, (New York, 1939), 44, 50-1.

Conclusion

It has been the argument of this thesis that the impact of the Civil War on the economy of London was generally adverse, with only a few exceptions, most notably the expansion of the armaments industry. On the whole the 1640's were bleak days for the economy of London. This was despite the fact that London was never the scene of fighting. The impact of the war was always indirect, but it was nevertheless profound because of the extent to which the London economy was dependent on its interconnections with the rest of the country.

In a seminal article first published in the 1960s Professor E. A. Wrigley argued that London played a key part in the modernisation of English society and economy. However, as Wrigley recognised, the relationship between London and the rest of England was not all one way but was reciprocal. London existed because of its relationship with the rest of England, because it was the centre for the national economic, administrative, political and social networks. London, like all towns, was the creation of its own 'hinterland'. It can be argued that London was not so much the modernising force within the nation, as the arena in which the processes of modernisation were played out.¹

It was the dependence of the London economy on the provinces which is the key to understanding the impact of the Civil Wars. During the first Civil War large parts of the hinterland suffered an acute economic crisis. High taxation, free quarter and plundering led to a sharp reduction in incomes, and a decline in economic activity. A large part of the hinterland was controlled by forces who came to believe that ruining the metropolitan economy was the key to winning their political objectives, to do so they did all they could to cut off trade, with a large degree of success in domestic trade, between the summer of 1643 and the summer of 1644.

The disruption of London's hinterland was partial and relatively brief. Parts of the country vital to London's economy, especially Kent and East Anglia, remained under the control of Parliament and largely escaped most of the fighting, although this did not mean they were economically unaffected. This prevented the war from causing the total collapse of the London economy. The collapse of the royalist blockade and the subsequent victories

¹ E. A. Wrigley, 'A Simple Model of London's importance in changing English society and economy, 1650-1750', in his People Cities and Wealth: The Transformation of Traditional Society, (Oxford, 1987), 133-56, first published in P&P, 37, (1967).

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of Parliament's armies re-united London's hinterland, ensuring the resurgence of the London economy.

In the latter part of the decade, Civil War was only one of the problems afflicting the economy, but London's function as the link between the national economic networks and the wider world was disrupted by attacks of Irish, French and royalist warships on metropolitan maritime commerce. Here again it was London's function within the national economic network, as the principal international port, which was under threat, but again the threat was partial and short-lived. In 1648 the royalists proved incapable of maintaining an effective maritime blockade of London, and the growth of English naval power under the Rump eventually secured London's overseas trade.

It is striking how limited the impact of wartime taxation, finance and contracting seems to have been in the London economy overall, although they undoubtedly made a major difference to certain specific individuals. We must be careful not to interpret agitation against taxation arising from economic difficulties as evidence that the taxation itself was causing those difficulties. Although the burden of direct taxation probably exacerbated the economic difficulties of 1643 and 1649, in general it appears closer to the truth to say that the state of the economy varied the effectiveness of taxation, rather than the other way round. Finance and contracting seem to have neither greatly prospered nor greatly hindered the metropolitan economy. Although some individuals did benefit from these activities, on the whole it seems likely that their impact was lost in the wider trends arising in the metropolitan economy.

Although this study has generally restricted itself to the City, that similar problems afflicted the West End. Here the interrelationship between the provinces and the metropolitan economy, was if anything, even stronger. The local economy was based on the presence of the central law courts, the royal court and administration and the residence, for at least part of the year, of a growing number of the landed elite. Resources were transferred to London in the form of rents, lawyers' fees and the various royal revenues. All of these pillars were disrupted during the Civil War. The royal court left for Oxford, the landowners either left, or suffered a substantial drop in the rental income, and business in the central courts fell by between a half and three quarters.² The economic disruption of the Civil War led to a major increase in poverty in London, to which the poor relief structures were unable to respond adequately.³

² D. Hirst, Authority and Conflict, England 1603-1658, (1986), 258-9; L. Stone, Family and Fortune, Studies in Aristocratic Finance in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, (Oxford, 1973), 146-52.

³ See BL E273(8), L. Lee, A Remonstrance Humbly Presented to the High and Honourable Court of Parliament Touching the Insupportable Miseries of the Poore of this Land, Especially at this Time and in

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As well as asking why the impact of the war was as bad as it was, it is also appropriate to ask why it was not worse. The London economy did not collapse during the 1640s, even at the very worst periods it probably did not even come close. Equally clearly the war did not prevent the massive rise of metropolitan prosperity of the later part of the century. The reason for this resilience was the wide diversity of the London economy which was surveyed in chapter one. The economy was not dependant on a single sector, so a crisis in one area was not a disaster for the whole. As we have seen, the war affected a number of different aspects of the metropolitan economic structure but the problems did not all occur at once: for example the greatest disruption of internal trade was confined to 1643-4, but overseas trade was most threatened at the end of the decade. The result was that the impact of the Civil War was not cumulative, rather it was dissipated, because it was spread out over time. Also the war had relatively little direct impact on some sectors, such as those involved in manufacturing for the immediate metropolitan market, while others, such as the international merchants, were able to re-route their economic activities to mitigate the worse affects.

London's fundamental strengths, its position at the centre of England's economic and social networks, and its reserves of capital and skills, endured the impact of the wars: the wars did not displace London from her position within the national economic networks. This, combined with the long term growth in national prosperity, ensured that the expansion of London resumed soon after the ending of hostilities. The wars caused severe problems for the London economy for particular periods of time, but early modern towns and cities frequently faced short-lived but acute problems from natural disasters such as fires and plague epidemics. Where their economic foundations were fundamentally sound, they were usually able to bounce back very rapidly, and this seems also to have been the case with London and the Civil Wars.

The lack of any long term changes as a result of the Civil War may suggest that it this was a relatively insignificant episode in London's economic history, but it can be suggested that the traumatic experience of the war years had a wider ideological impact on London. The immediate political implications can only be tentatively sketched out at this stage. It could be suggested that the adverse economic affects of the Civil War was a major contributory factor in the increasing conservatism of London's politics noted by Keith Lindley, but had economic concerns been uppermost in most Londoners' minds in 1642, it is difficult to believe, given the prevalence of contemporary accounts of the devastation brought about by war in Germany, that they would have supported the war. It is possible

this Great City of London, within the Lines of Communication and Bills of Mortality, (London, 1645), 2-

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that in 1642 most Londoners believed that the war would be over quickly, and would, therefore, not have a very deleterious economic impact, and when they were proved wrong the political mood turned more conservative, resulting in the City peace movement and, later, political Presbyterianism. However it is clear that the rise of the City Presbyterian movement coincided with the recovery of the economy. It cannot be seen as a political response to economic crisis.⁴

Nevertheless, fears of the economic consequences of renewed war remained, and may have contributed to the decision of the London authorities to turn away from confrontation with the Army in 1647, and to keep out of the Second Civil War in 1648. Many Londoners, particularly those involved in internal trade and manufacturing, had a strong interest in avoiding renewed fighting, because in the later 1640s the economic situation was still considerably better than in 1643. The economic consequences of the Civil War may have made London more conservative, but it also made it less likely that the City would oppose the Army, and in this sense the economic impact of the Civil War may have assisted the establishment of the Commonwealth.⁵

3, for a summary of the impact of the Civil War on poverty in London.

⁴ K. Lindley, 'London's Citizenry in the English Revolution', in R. C. Richardson, (ed.), Town and Countryside in the English Revolution, (Manchester, 1992), 37.

⁵ R. Ashton, Counter Revolution, The Second Civil War and its Origins, 1646-1648, (New Haven, 1994), 191-3, 292-4.

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