

**Portrait of
BLACKFRIARS
- a Liberty in Royal Tenure - and the Ward of
CASTLE BAYNARD**

Blackfriars and Baynards, once the royal homes of Kings - have a long and honourable history. The term 'a Liberty in Royal Tenure'; marks a turning point in that history.

The ravages of modern life have obliterated much that would remind us of the values of the past and their lessons for the present and future. For many the name 'Blackfriars' calls to mind only the road and rail bridges, the stations, or the fact that Printing House Square no longer stands. Life always demands changes: the Eras, the Institutions, Royal and otherwise, come and go: t'was ever thus.

The story must start with the London river as the highway. The River Tamesis, so named by the Romans, was a wide shallow river that "was fordable at one point only and even then with difficulty", the ford being the place where the Romans built London Bridge in AD 43. Blackfriars, on the north bank of the river, stood at the junction where the Thames received the outflow of the River Fleet.

This river is now no longer visible but was once an important commercial highway. It rose in what we now know as Hampstead; passed under Kentish Town, Camden Town, King's Cross, Gray's Inn Road, and Farringdon Road and discharged into the Thames; a tributary rising in Russell Square joined the Fleet near Clerkenwell.

After the Fire of 1666, the Fleet - by now a muddy tidal creek - was canalised. This was about forty feet wide and could float craft drawing up to three feet of water, between Holborn and Blackfriars. There were three bridges: the Holbourne, the Fleet and Bridewell.

The foulness of the water in the canal, due to the dumping of refuse, increased, and by the end of the C17th, it was no longer carrying cargo. In 1734-5 the stretch between Fleet Street and Holborn was covered over and thirty years later, from Fleet Street to the Thames.

But to return to the Romans; the Roman settlement of the First Century grew around the north end of London Bridge stretching from the east end of Cornhill (just north of the bridge) along the Walbrook valley to the hill where St. Paul's Cathedral now stands. Later it was described as a "great trading centre full of merchants".

In AD 60 a revolt led by Queen Boudicca fought to relieve the native Britons of oppression and taxes levied by the Romans. She laid waste the centres of Camoludunum (Colchester, Caesar's Headquarters), Verulamium (St.Albans) and Londinium, and sustained casualties of around 70,000 citizens, many of whom, as evidence shows, were beheaded.

The Romans re-organised their administrative policies and rebuilt a stronger London largely made of stone and having forts. They built a wall round the north side of the town, from a tower (now part of the Tower of London) defending the east, to Blackfriars, where another castle defended the western approach; the wall having six gates and a fort at Cripplegate. In the C4th a riverside wall was built - "London had walls and towers in the like manner on the south" which the Thames had since "washed down, undermined and subverted" wrote the historian FitzStephen later, in the C12th.

This London was to become a City of commercial and financial interests rather than a fortified town. It was a general meeting place in which foreigners and merchants could trade. It also became a centre for diverse religions. The relics and stone carvings dating

back to the C4th provide evidence that there were many temples and monuments, gods and goddesses.

During excavations in 1962 some fragments of a wooden ship were found on the river bed. This was situated at Blackfriars and lay about twenty yards south of the embankment; the approximate line of the Roman waterfront is thought to have been Thames Street. The excavations were very difficult, being carried out in muddy tidal water.

The ship proved to be a Romano-British unarmed sailing barge of the C2nd. She was carrying a cargo of rag stone from Maidstone in Kent, and is thought to have come up the Thames from the River Medway and to have sunk accidentally in fourteen feet of water. The stone was the type found used in the building of houses. The salvaged timbers of the ship may be seen in the London Museum. (see 'A Roman Ship from Blackfriars, London' by P.R.V. Marsden)

The present day practice of placing a coin for 'luck' under the mast's foot in a wooden ship is a tradition spanning the ages from Roman times. A bronze coin minted in Rome AD 88-9 was found at the bottom of the mast-step lying in a recess. On the coin was a picture of the goddess of luck 'Fortuna'.

At Trig Lane on the eastern boundary of the Ward, excavations during 1974-5 revealed wooden revetments which shored-up the old river banks. Generations of medieval carpenters built other revetments, each one a little nearer the river than the old decaying one. The intervening gap was filled with refuse, which was a problem at that time -as now - until 1440, when a stone wall was built. In amongst this rubbish a pair of spectacles was found.

The frames were made from a bone plate constructed of two identical halves; these consisted of a short handle attached to a circular frame that would have held a lens about 1-2 inches in diameter. The two halves were held together by a rivet at the ends of the handles and were used in the same way as pince-nez for reading.

The satirical poem in 'London Lickpenny' mentions, "spectacles for to reede", and they were sold by Flemish pedlars at the door of Westminster Hall. (The London Archaeologist, Vol.4 1980, Michael Rhodes.)

In AD 410 the Romans had to contend with problems of their own at home and their forces were gradually withdrawn from these islands. This left the country open to the Germanic, Pictish and Irish raiders who attacked mercilessly. The Vikings captured the City in 870 and remained until 876, when Alfred, King of the West Saxons, took it back. History remains very silent about these Dark Ages.

Excavations have revealed remains of wooden buildings and churches dating to Saxon times - London expanded as a port and wharves were built along the banks of the river, made of stout posts and planks. The word 'Alderman' dates back to the Saxon period between C9th-C11th and refers to a royal official who was responsible for the King's interests in a specific locality. (See note on the City of London by Alderman Spratt)

The invasion in 1066 by the Normans was the last of the four large scale invasions of England. William the Conqueror having marched on London, wisely waited outside the City gates to learn if the Londoners would accept him as King - though he first set fire to Southwark to add weight to his argument.

The Londoners, however, only accepted him on the condition that he draw up a Charter of Freedom which meant that no man could be condemned unheard, and thus laid the foundations of the system of trial by judge and jury.

London life continued much as before under the Normans and was little deflected from its course of trade and bustling activity. St. Paul's, founded in AD 604 by the Germanic (Anglo-Saxon) Aethelbert, King of Kent, had suffered from fire in 1077 and 1087, and was rebuilt using stone from the Roman fortress that guarded London's western approach. It housed as relics the arm of St. Mellitus and the hand of St. John the Evangelist, and many pilgrims wended their way through the lanes of Blackfriars to St. Paul's.

They had to pass through much squalor and stench; refuse in the streets and houses were a perpetual problem as was the removal of filth. Most of the waste products eventually found their way into the Fleet and Thames.

The Normans refortified the walls and built forts at strategic points of the City. They rebuilt the White Tower guarding the approaches from the east, and Baynard's Castle in the west. This latter castle was a magnificent fortress and palace built by Baron Ralph Baynard (who came over with The Conqueror) just south of Ludgate. Alongside it was the Montfichet Tower, erected to overawe the "vast and fierce population". Outside the City wall a ditch was dug, which was interrupted by causeways to the gates.

Later the ditches were filled in and built over, and became known as the 'liberties'. They were so named because they were outside the City walls and therefore outside the jurisdiction of the City Fathers (i.e. the Lord Mayor and Aldermen).

In 1221, during the reign of Henry III (1216 -1272), the black-habited Dominican mendicant friars, who were vowed to poverty, came from across the Channel. They settled first in Holborn, and then moved to the east of the river Fleet in 1278, when land was granted to them.

The Monastery was founded by Hubert de Burgh, Earl of Kent. It consisted of a church, precinct and walls with four gates. It extended from the Fleet to St. Andrew's Hill and from the Thames to Ludgate Hill. The monks were given permission to demolish the rest of Castle Baynard and the remains of Montfichet's Tower - which had been pulled apart by King John in a fit of revenge.

Both were within their territory and the stone was re-used in building the Priory. The old Roman wall which ran in a straight line from Ludgate to the river was also demolished and a new wall was built round the outside of the western Priory boundary where it extended to the Fleet.

The Second Baynard's Castle

By the early C14th a new Castle Baynard was built on the waterfront jutting out into the river Thames. A century later it was burnt down. In 1428 Baynard's was once again rebuilt and became the home of the House of York. In 1446 it was owned by Henry VI. Edward IV (1461-1483) was living there when he was made King. Here Richard, Duke of Gloucester, assumed the title of Richard III after murdering the princes in the Tower in 1483. Here also Lady Jane Grey accepted the crown, which she held for nine days before being beheaded.

The residents included three of Henry VIII's wives: Katherine of Aragon, Anne Boleyn and Anne of Cleves. Here also Queen Mary in 1553 was declared heir to the throne. Queen Elizabeth I (1558-1603) liked to visit Baynards and so did Charles II. Pepys (who knew the City very well since he lived in Seething Lane, north of the Tower, when he was working for the Admiralty) mentions in his Diary dated 19th June 1660, that having attended Lord Sandwich, "my Lord went at night with the King to Baynard's Castle to supper and I home". The Castle was gutted in the Great Fire and was not rebuilt.

Excavations in 1972 revealed that most of the surviving remains of Baynard's Castle date from the alterations carried out in the reign of Henry VII (1485-1509). There were several waterfronts found beneath the Castle as well as a dock to the west of the castle, which was later filled in to become a private garden. Major alterations were effected in the course of time and in the 16th, wings of the castle were rebuilt around a courtyard. A series of towers were erected along the river frontage, and there was a private water gate and landing stage.

Old Saint Paul's

Old St. Paul's having been burnt down again in 1087, the Normans replaced the Saxon wooden building with a massive stone structure. This was never finished for lack of funds. The Cathedral was the largest in the country being 585 feet long. The wooden spire soared to 450 feet, 85 feet higher than the present cross, until it was struck by lightning and burnt down in 1561.

Through the years, however, St. Paul's was desecrated by its combined use, in our terms, as a leisure centre and a Royal Exchange. It was a place where business transactions were carried out, and where people met and paraded in order to be seen. The precinct contained a brewery, which in 1286, brewed 67,814 gallons of beer.

A little later a prohibition had to be brought in against wrestling in the Sanctuary; and, in the mid 1500s, against using the building as a shortcut footway for horses; against pistol shooting practice; playing of ball games and shooting at birds. During the Civil Wars in the 1640s, St. Paul's was further abused when the soldiers played ninepins down the Nave. The building was destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666 along with most of the rest of the City - some said it was "the heavy hand of God upon us for our sins" (London Gazette).

To the east of St. Andrew's Hill and behind the church was the King's Wardrobe. This was the royal storehouse in which were kept all the King's robes used on state occasions. It was housed in the spacious town house that had, before his death, belonged to Sir John Beauchamp. Here also the cloth, furs and stores that were required by the royal establishments and government offices, were negotiated and bought from the merchants. The Wardrobe was originally housed in the Tower, but it was removed to Blackfriars in 1361. (It also was burnt in the Great Fire and was then re-established at Savoy)

The resident of London was ever reminded of his religious background, the shortness of life - whether by plague, fire, disease or other cause - and the need for constant intercession. Life could indeed be 'short and transitory'. St. Paul's dominated the scene.

There were 99 Parish Churches within the square mile of the City walls, or, if the liberties were included, well over a hundred. The 23 major religious houses were mostly situated just outside the City walls, such as the Priors of St. Bartholomew, St. John of Jerusalem and the Carthusian Charterhouse. Each church had its bells; the Church was indeed central to men's lives.

This was the London that Chaucer knew. He was born about 1343, son of a City wine merchant, and started life amongst the wharves and warehouses of Thames Street. His Mother's first husband had been Keeper of the King's Wardrobe and it is thought that his early schooling was at St. Paul's Almonry. He spent some time at Court, and in about 1380 became a senior customs official in the London Customs House.

He was a poet and is best known for his 'Canterbury Tales' which was written in his spare time.

Between 1515 and 1523 Henry VIII built his royal palace at Bridewell, to the west of the River Fleet and in an area often called 'the suburb of London'. This distinctive quarter stretched along the river to Westminster and included the Inns of Court and Chancery. Henry's apartments in the old palace of Westminster and those in the Tower had been destroyed by fire, so he completed Bridewell Palace - just in time to house the visiting entourage of Charles V of Spain, who was also Emperor of Germany. That monarch however preferred to stay in the Guest House of the friars (now the site of Apothecaries' Hall).

Henry held a Parliament at Blackfriars called the Black Parliament. He also increasingly used the Palace and the Monastery for his Royal Revels. The two establishments were connected by a covered gallery running across the river Fleet. (Later the gallery was converted into Bridewell Bridge). The monks, because they were autonomous, were now powerful enough to consider themselves as a 'liberty' and outside the jurisdiction of the City Fathers, despite being situated within the City boundaries.

The royal favour lay indeed upon Blackfriars and, as a result, the monks forgot much of their mendicant way of living.

The Great Hall (also known as the Refectory or Upper Frater) of the Priory had seen many splendid productions during the Royal Revels. Now a more realistic drama was to be enacted there. In 1530 Wolsey was condemned to death by Parliament for failing to obtain permission from the Pope for Henry to annul his marriage with Katherine of Aragon. One month later in the same Hall the Papal Commission deliberated on the divorce that Henry required in order for him to marry Anne Boleyn.

During that time Henry and Katherine stayed at Bridewell. At the end of the proceedings Henry, having gained his divorce left Katherine and Blackfriars for good. The star which had ascended so quickly and brilliantly had suddenly been extinguished. So ended the Royal association - and Parliament was removed to Westminster.

Henry's son Edward VI gave Bridewell to the City in 1553 to serve as a hospital and workhouse, housing 2,000 inmates. Following the Great Fire of 1666 Bridewell was rebuilt as a 'House of Correction' - it was a violent place using violent methods; public floggings were held twice weekly. It was also used later as a school and workshops for apprentices before it was finally demolished in 1863.

When Henry dissolved the Monasteries in 1539, he caused one of the most far reaching social upheavals this country has seen. For London it was this action that started the system of speculative building. The nobility took over the palaces of the Bishops and Priors whose properties were scattered over the City, and along the Strand where their gardens stretched to the river front. In pursuit of the Royal Court of the Monarch the fashionable areas continued to move westwards.

The remaining large properties became split up into units with smaller dwellings and providing Town Houses for the lesser gentry. It became fashionable to move into London for the 'season' and to retire to the country for the rest of the year.

Since the ecclesiastical establishments were also seats of learning, of medicine and much of the law, the community lost important services with their disappearance. As a result many social changes followed throughout the country while other organisations took over these crucial services.

An example may be instanced. In 1518 the Royal College of Physicians, which stood in Knightbridge Street had, through the influence of Thomas Linacre (physician to Henry VIII) and Cardinal Wolsey, obtained letters patent that prohibited any people other than this body of physicians, from treating patients within a 7-mile radius without special

licence. A similar type of ruling applied to the Guilds. The common man, not being able to afford treatment by a Physician (only the nobility could do that) found help and advice from the 'quacks' or from the Apothecary. Apothecaries started as chemists dispensing medicines. It was not until 1703 that they were lawfully allowed to treat patients. The Physicians moved to Amen Corner, in Farringdon Within in 1614.

Following the Dissolution, Henry proceeded to rob the coffers of the monasteries while ejecting the Friars, giving them only a small crown pension to keep them from starving. Blackfriars was decreed 'a liberty in royal tenure' this being directed by the Master of Revels. Thus the buildings were saved from destruction.

The Upper Frater, or Great Hall, along with some of the properties of the Priory, were given as a personal gift for services rendered, to Sir Thomas Carwarden (Master of Revels to Henry VIII and later to Elizabeth I). He turned Blackfriars into a fashionable area, renting accommodation to the aristocracy. With puritanical zeal he stabled his horses in St. Ann's Church, used the burial grounds as tennis courts and a carpenter's yard, and then started building more houses in the area.

When Catholic Mary was crowned Queen, Carwarden had to grant land, albeit reluctantly, for a new St. Ann's Church. This church was destroyed in the Fire of 1666 and was not rebuilt (the Parish being joined with that of St. Andrew-by the-Wardrobe). The land of St. Ann's Church, however, was given to the parishioners.

Elizabeth I (1558-1603) much enjoyed drama and encouraged it at Court. In 1576 Richard Farrant, Master of the Children of the Chapel at Windsor, a "well-known and justly esteemed composer of Church music" and musician, leased a house in the area which is now Playhouse Yard and Apothecaries Hall in part of Blackfriars Priory. He lived on the ground floor with his family and converted the second floor into a private playhouse where he rehearsed the children (choirboys) for performance at Court.

He also gave public performances to members of the aristocracy, despite the stringent laws of the City Fathers against the establishment of playhouses within the City. Presumably this was because Blackfriars was virtually a liberty.

Farrant died in 1580 but the little theatre continued to play for another four years. A similar arrangement was made by Sebastian Westcott, Master of the Boys of St. Paul's but this was closed in 1590.

The Blackfriars Theatre was established in 1596 in what had been the Upper Frater, by the actor James Burbage. Under Burbage's son, Richard, also an actor and a friend of Shakespeare, it became the first indoor public theatre in Blackfriars. It held 700 people with a minimum charge for admission of 6 pence for a seat. The lighting was provided by candles. It was here that William Shakespeare invested in and produced many of his plays, with his company 'The King's Men'. He later owned a house on the west side of St. Andrew's Hill.

Burbage used adult actors instead of boys and adopted musical intermissions written into his plays. It was said that a company of French players introduced women on the stage at Blackfriars but they were hissed off, though they afterwards appeared at the Red Bull. Another notable playwright, Johnson, wrote "from my house in Blackfriars this 11th day of February 1607". The Falcon Tavern near the theatre must have seen much discussion and diversion from that galaxy of talent; it enjoyed as much popularity as a coaching house. (It was demolished in 1808)

After James Burbage's death, his two sons Cuthbert and Richard shut the theatre. Burbage had already at the end of 1598 moved his Shoreditch theatre and re-erected it on the South Bank near the Bear Baiting Ring. This was known as the Globe Theatre and

Shakespeare, as part-owner, there started producing his plays and flourished with the company away from the jurisdiction of the City Fathers in a climate of greater freedom. It continued to play until the outbreak of the Civil War in 1642 when the Puritans shut all the theatres.

The Blackfriars area gave refuge to many who sought religious freedom despite the problems of the times.

Feather makers; silk dyers; glass workers (in Glasshouse Yard whose furnaces were likened to the "fires in hell"); engravers and especially printers; lived and worked here. There were also docks to the eastern end of the Ward and below St. Andrew's Church. Here were established the "great brew house and Puddle Wharf, a water gate onto the Thames where horses used to water and therefore being defiled with their trampling, and made a puddle". Around 1742 it appears that St. Andrew's Hill was known as Puddle Dock Hill.

The Dock was an inlet set at right angles to the river bank and becoming a continuation of Puddle Dock Hill.

During the reign of James I (1603-1625) life in the City became more restricted. There were religious clashes between Papists, Puritans, and the established Church, besides strife between the Royalists and Parliament. Soot caused by the increase in coal consumption caused a gloomy haze and there was an outbreak of plague in 1603. The Puritan City Fathers tightened the laws in an effort to maintain order, for anti-royalist feelings had begun to smoulder.

The Lord Mayor went so far as to bar the King from entering the City during the hours of Divine Service. James maintained that two kings could not rule the same state: the Lord Mayor said he acknowledged a King greater than either of them. The danger signs were there for all to see.

To his credit, James is remembered for the printing of the King James Bible. With the authority of Parliament, the Church of England and the Monarch, it is still in use today. The 1611 King James Bible was printed at Aldersgate, but subsequent editions were printed at Blackfriars by the King's Printers. The patent was given to Christopher Barker, who had been Queen's Printer to Elizabeth I, and his son Robert, with Bonham and John Norton, and John Bill.

The Printing House was approximately where the Continental Bank now stands. Charles I came to the throne in 1625. It was a turbulent period. Parliament did not accede to Charles'

Charles I came to the throne in 1625. It was a turbulent period. Parliament did not accede to Charles' view of the 'divine right of kings' and relationships worsened until the Civil War erupted. Baynard's Castle became a Roundhead garrison, and Bridewell housed the deserters and captives. Oliver Cromwell, a zealous puritan, headed the anti-royalist troops. The outcome of the Trial of the King - a foregone conclusion - was that Charles, who defended himself heroically and faultlessly, had his head removed on the scaffold outside his own Palace of Whitehall.

The Puritan influence changed many things. They stifled all entertainment, theatre and music; all of which became unlawful. Playhouses were shut and the organs were taken out of the churches or destroyed. In 1652 Christmas Day was abolished. On Cromwell's death his son succeeded him but chaos resulted.

In 1660 Charles II was called back to England from his 'travels' in France and Holland, where he and his followers had existed in penury. The bells rang. The streets flowed with

wine and great joy and expectation abounded throughout the land. Over the years many musicians and instrument makers from across the Channel had arrived in London, no doubt attracted by the high demand for their services. The Arts and Sciences flourished as never before. Charles encouraged music, dancing and theatre; and, in common with many noblemen, had his own laboratory in which to make scientific experiments. The Royal Society was founded and 'The Age of Reason' had begun.

However, dark days were to come. There was severe overcrowding in London, caused by the building restrictions various monarchs had tried, in their efforts to control the development of the City. The outbreak of Plague in 1665 killed off 20,000 inhabitants of the City, St. Ann's Parish being worst affected.

This calamity was followed by another the following year, when the Fire of London was swept by the wind from Pudding Lane across the City to Fetter Lane. It devastated the whole of Blackfriars and with it Baynard's Castle, which was gutted. The Fire started with a spark from a bakery. The second day all of Thames Street to Puddle Dock was alight; the quaysides and cellars being full of inflammable materials. By the third day, St. Paul's, Guildhall and the Royal Exchange were all blazing. The fire raged for five days. Five sixths of the City were totally destroyed, leaving little more than the shells of walls and doorways, and a few stone towers of the 89 Parish Churches and 13,000 dwellings that were destroyed.

Sir Christopher Wren, that imaginative astronomer and architect, re-built for the City, St. Paul's Cathedral, 51 Parish Churches, 36 Livery Halls, the Monument and Temple Bar. He also built Hampton Court Palace, Chelsea and Greenwich Hospitals. By the end of the C17th, he had re-built St. Andrew-by-the-Wardrobe, whose parish now included that of St. Ann. Also to be found within the Ward of Castle Baynard boundaries are the Wren churches of St. Martin on Ludgate Hill (with its Schmidt organ) and St. Benet (now the Welsh Church) at Paul's Wharf. This was the wharf where the stone for the re-building of St. Paul's Cathedral, which was completed in 1710, was landed.

The Doctors Commons

St. Benet was the Parish Church of the Doctors Commons who were centred near St. Paul's Cathedral in 1568. This was because the greatest concentration of lawyers was in the City - around St. Paul's in the administrative service of the Bishop of London with the Dean and Chapter, and around St. Mary-le-Bow for the Court of Arches of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Common Law was not studied at either of the ancient English Universities of Oxford and Cambridge until 1758.

Earlier academic lawyers, mostly churchmen, devoted themselves to Civil Law. Problems relating to churchmen and their affairs, property etc. were dealt with exclusively by the church, but the problems of laymen relating to marriage, legitimacy and wills came within their field.

These lawyers, having mutual interests, banded themselves together into a society of benefit called The Doctors Commons, in much the same way that the Inns of Court functioned. The City Guilds were also formed on religious centres involving a craft, where the members joined together in the comradeship of a common table, and also tried to help less fortunate members and dependents in hard times.

The C16th historian John Stow mentions a college of priests called Jesus Commons on the west side of Dowgate, "a house well furnished with Brasse, Pewter, Naperie, Plate etc. besides a faire Librarie well stored with books

This College for clerics of law, had been dissolved, and the house turned into tenements by the time Stow wrote, but it had provided the inspiration for the title of Doctors Commons.

Sir George Buc in 'The Third Universitie of England' -he was referring to London - regarded the Doctors Commons as one of the Colleges in London. Their first Subscription Book was dated 1511. They had been in Mountjoy House in Knightrider Street, but lodged in Paternoster Row in 1567, when civilians took over Mountjoy House. At first the membership of the Doctors Commons was restricted to local qualified advocates and proctors, but, as time went on, it became a convenient 'club'.

There was an extension of membership to include non-members who worked near Paternoster Row and who could therefore frequent the common table. Later the membership widened to embrace leading church members, who must have found it a congenial club when visiting London (having been deprived of their palaces). The last member was admitted in 1855; and the Cambridge Grace Book is kept with the records in Lambeth Palace.

The special responsibilities of the Doctors Commons in Civil Law allowed them to provide for 'hasty marriages'. Between 1708 and 1731 the records show 13,423 marriages contracted at St. Benet!

The area of Blackfriars was never to recover the aristocratic associations of its history. The Monastery was disbanded, Bridewell re-used for penal purposes, the King's Wardrobe left in ashes, and the Playhouse destroyed. The Printing House alone miraculously survived.

In 1684 The Apothecaries built a new Livery Hall in Blackfriars Lane, just north of the Printing House and situated on the site of the Monk's Guest House. This followed the drawing up of plans for Vintners Hall on Upper Thames Street. In 1671 the College of Arms moved into the former home of the Earls of Derby in what is now Queen Victoria Street. From the fire-blackened shells that remained after the Fire, life began anew. But in place of the former mansions and gardens, almshouses and small cramped residential quarters now appeared. Surprisingly, these were completed within five to ten years of the Fire. By 1710 St. Paul's Cathedral had received its last stone, and the City began to re-establish itself as the centre of world trade and finance.

Under the Georges, many well laid-out squares and crescents appeared in other parts of London. In Blackfriars efforts were also made to improve the area and free it from squalor, pick-pockets, highwaymen and the gangs of urchins who roamed the streets. Re-development was again undertaken and plans were made to cover over the Fleet ditch, complete with its stench, by building 'Bridge Street' over the old canal. The third bridge across the Thames, at Blackfriars, was finished in 1769.

The City wished it to be called after William Pitt, but the public insisted on the name being 'Blackfriars Bridge' The focal point of Blackfriars became Printing House Square when, in 1784, in the reign of George III, John Walter installed his revolutionary press in the former King's Printing House, and established The Times Publishing Company, which was to stay for 189 years with the Walter family in Blackfriars. At first it was known as The Daily Universal, in 1788 it was renamed The London Times, and then became known as The Times.

The railway bridge was completed in 1864, and the station was opened ten years later. The public again insisted that it should be called Blackfriars, and not St. Paul's Station.

In 1875 St. Paul's Choir School moved to Carter Lane into a building which still stands, and which is now occupied by the Youth Hostel Association as a day centre. The Choir School later moved to a new building alongside St. Paul's Cathedral.

Following the Second World War, when so much of the City was again destroyed, the Mermaid Theatre, founded by Bernard Miles - now Lord Miles of Blackfriars - in 1959, rose from the ruins of Puddle Dock.

Much of the history of the City is now represented only in the names of streets and buildings, and in the shapes of the alleys. These are the more easily recognised by an awareness of that which has passed.

A new Blackfriars has once again emerged in a changed landscape and with a new generation of Institutions, carrying on the traditions and expertise of the City. This is the Blackfriars that once was Royal, and is now in the City Tenure.

The historical facts disclosed in this narrative have been checked as far as is possible from the London Museum, archaeological and other authoritative sources, the list of which is too long to include in this small booklet. In particular I would like to thank The Guildhall Library in the City of London, for permission to reproduce the Holler drawings and the Elizabethan map, and also to thank the librarians for all their patient help.

This study was compiled by J. M. Plumstead