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Unmaking Apprenticeship in Early Modern London: Goldsmiths' Apprentices and the Lord Mayor's Court, 1597–1720

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Apprenticeship in London was the concern of both livery company and city institutions. In this article, we connect evidence about the petitions submitted by apprentices to the Lord Mayor's Court for early discharge from their indentures with the entries recording their apprenticeship and freedom surviving in the records of Goldsmiths' Company. Each contains a distinct set of complementary information about apprenticeship in London. By positioning appeals to the Lord Mayor's Court against the company's records of youths' trajectories through apprenticeship, we can expand our understanding of the contractual framework of training and associated enforcement mechanisms in early modern London. As we show, the Court was used to negotiate with masters, as well as to terminate contracts. Quitting an apprenticeship through the court did mildly 'scar' the chances of youths (not masters), but the Court process appears to have largely protected reputations. Finally, we provide the first estimate of gaps in livery company registration of apprentices, particularly female apprentices.

KEYWORDS apprenticeship; labour; training; guilds; dispute resolution; courts; Goldsmiths; youth

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Apprenticeship was an important means of occupational training in early modern Europe. In England, in particular, apprenticeships in the leading city, London, attracted many youths from elsewhere in the nation, contributing to the rapid growth of the metropolitan population in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and to the city's economic success.¹ Having so many youths crowded into the city was not without its problems, and the tensions and conflicts between master and apprentice that arose within London's workshops, households, streets and taverns have long been recognised.²

Our understanding of how apprenticeships in the metropolis survived under these tensions has recently been substantially revised. Where historians have long focused on the part of the city's livery companies in monitoring and enforcing apprenticeship contracts, we are now aware of the major role in resolving disputes between masters and apprentices played by the Lord Mayor's Court, a judicial element of the governing body of the chartered city, nominally overseen by its leading official, the Lord Mayor.³ The Court offered a way for apprentices who were unhappy with their situation to escape their contracts and to transfer to new masters or leave service entirely. A large share of youths indentured in the city, perhaps one in ten, took advantage of this opportunity. What is not yet clear, however, is how the work of the Lord Mayor's Court related to the supervisory activities of the livery companies with which it coexisted, or the longer careers of the apprentices and masters who appeared before it.

In this article, we examine the way apprentices in the Goldsmiths' Company utilised the Court and its relationship to their ongoing involvement in the company and city. The information in the Lord Mayor's Court and records of the Goldsmiths' Company have been linked and compared to see what insight they give into the dynamics of the apprentice–master relationship, exploiting the more than three hundred discharge petitions entered by apprentices from the Goldsmiths. We analyse these against the two connected canvases of the wider population of surviving Court petitioners and the group of apprentices bound within the company.

Thinking about the Court, apprentices, and livery company in this way helps us understand the operation of apprenticeship as an institution within London. It also sheds light on a more general characteristic of early modern urban society and governance: the role of urban courts as mediating bodies overseeing intergenerational agreements between youths and skilled workers. Much of the historiography has focused on guilds and livery companies as central institutions in regulating and enforcing apprenticeship in early modern Europe, and their positive or negative contribution to the viability of training contracts became one of the central issues in recent debates.⁴ However, historians of apprenticeship have recently revealed that urban courts across Europe played a much more active role in hearing and responding to disputes between masters and apprentices than was previously suspected.

Urban courts had this role in apprenticeship systems across the continent. In Madrid, it was the city council and *Sala de Alcaldes de Casa y Corte* ('Hall of Mayors of House and Court'—a title that echoes London's Court) that acted as a tribunal to deal with disputes over apprenticeship and contracts.⁵ In Venice, the city's *Guistizia Vecchia* (lit. 'Old Justice') registered apprenticeships and sat as a court to hear disputes relating to members of nearly all guilds.⁶ In Turin,

apprenticeship contracts were regulated by the *Consalto di Commercio*, a city court for trade and business disputes established in 1676 that also oversaw the city's guilds.⁷ In Augsburg, similarly, the city's trade court heard disputes about apprenticeship.⁸ In nineteenth-century France, after the abolition of guilds, urban labour courts heard large volumes of apprenticeship cases.⁹ How these tribunals intersected with local guild and livery company activities, where those existed alongside them, and how their activities affect our wider understanding of hierarchy and subordination of the young within households, is therefore an important issue in this period.

Here, we focus on a single livery company, the Goldsmiths, one of the twelve 'Great' Companies of London. The Goldsmiths were listed fifth in order of precedence out of more than one hundred operating in the city, and its membership encompassed artisan metalworkers producing a range of gold and silver wares, an emerging body of goldsmith-bankers, and practitioners of a range of other occupations. This choice of livery company is in part pragmatic, reflecting one of the authors' long exploration of its membership, and the minute process of matching and comparison required for this study. However, it is also a good starting point for what we believe to be the first attempt to at this kind of linkage between Court and company records: the Goldsmiths' archive survives in good condition from the late sixteenth century; it was a substantial company, but not one of the largest, and so problems in record linkage due to multiple individuals with the same name were limited; and the company was one we know to have been attentive to the identity of its members and their work because of its involvement in quality control for gold and silver wares through the process of hallmarking.

We begin by introducing the Lord Mayor's Court and its relationship to apprenticeship customs in London. In the next section, we show how the court was used by apprentices bound by masters in the Goldsmiths' Company, considering the causes they cited and the backgrounds they came from, revealing that the Court was most frequently used by those apprentices who were best informed and most strongly linked to the city. We then explore three issues that the comparison between the Court and company records shed light upon. First, we ask what the comparison tells us about the strength of livery company registration and its blindspots, particularly around female apprentices and masters. Second, we examine petition outcomes to gain insight into the way the Court process formed part of negotiations that might preserve apprenticeships, even after a discharge was granted. Finally, we examine the reputational damage incurred by apprentices who used the Court for their discharge, by looking at the relationship between petitioning and entry to the freedom of the company, and the effects on their masters from losing an apprentice in this way.

Apprenticeship and the Lord Mayor's Court

Famously, apprenticeship in early modern England was governed by the 1563 Statute of Artificers.¹⁰ This, however, generally followed—and explicitly did not alter—the long-standing customs of training that had been established in London for centuries. The standard terms of apprenticeship contracts drawn up in the incorporated city are well known. An apprentice had to serve for at least seven years

under a master who was both a freeman of a livery company and citizen of London, and be a minimum of 14 years old at the time of binding. When they completed the term of their service, they were entitled to become a freeman in their master's livery company, with the right to use that craft or trade, and at the same time a citizen of the City of London, which carried further economic and political privileges.¹¹

Two entities were concerned with the binding and supervision of apprentices in London: the city corporation and the livery company of which the master was a freeman. Both expected a master to make any new apprentice known to them. For the livery company, a new apprentice was usually examined and approved by the company's governing body—its master, wardens, and sometimes the assistants—and the contract was then recorded by its clerk in the records, which survive in large numbers for many companies from the late sixteenth century. The master usually paid a small fee on enrolment with the company. In the Goldsmiths' Company, apprentices were generally presented at routine weekly meetings presided over by the Wardens, senior members of the company who were elected annually to their office. The presentation was recorded in the Court minutes at first, and from 1578 biographical and binding information was entered into a separate register. For the city, all freemen agreed as part of their oath as citizens to enrol their apprenticeship contracts with the city chamberlain within one year of the start of service. Again, the master would pay a small fee. Unfortunately, the Chamberlain's registers have since been lost, so we lack central city-wide records of apprenticeship. Failure to enrol an apprentice with the city chamberlain, or delaying enrolment past a year after binding, resulted in the master incurring additional fees when they came to free their apprentice.

Although the terms of their contracts contained no reference to how or why it might be terminated prematurely, many of the apprentices of London's livery companies in the seventeenth and eighteenth century did not complete their term of service. Only around 40% became freemen or freewomen of the company and citizens of London.¹² Some of the rest completed their contracts and became journeymen, moved elsewhere, or left the trade. A few died. But others ran away early or were ejected by their master. Establishing exactly what happened to apprentices is impossible in most cases: even for livery companies with extant records, information on outcomes other than joining as a freeman are rare.

That apprenticeships often failed is not surprising in itself: for apprentices far from home and family, living in their master's home, subject to their discipline, and dependent on them for training, work, food, and clothing, the situation was ripe for discontent. Equally, masters could easily come to perceive their apprentices as recalcitrant, inept, or petty thieves. Tensions might be resolved through the intervention of family members and friends. Alternatively, an apprentice and master could agree to end the contract consensually.¹³

However, the ending of an apprenticeship was not always amicable. Where disagreements could not be resolved informally, apprentices in London could petition the Lord Mayor's Court to have their contract voided. Petitions were widely used and offered an efficient and speedy way to end the arrangement. Apprentices could file a petition with one of the Court's four attorneys for the affordable fee of 4d and, although few cases went to trial, a fee of 30s would expedite a trial in

two weeks.¹⁴ If successful, the apprentice could then sue in the equity side of the Lord Mayor's Court's to recover all or part of any premium they had paid to their master. Many of the petitions are extant in the London Metropolitan Archives and are now indexed.¹⁵ For the period 1573–1723, more than fourteen thousand petitions survive, as do partial records of a further two thousand cases.

The Court allowed petitions to be entered for a distinct set of reasons linked to the master's non-performance in one or more aspects of the contract or their failure to follow city regulations. It was the latter type of reason that was most often cited. The great majority of petitions (75.3%) were brought on the grounds that the master had not enrolled the apprentice's indentures with the city chamberlain within one year.¹⁶ This bureaucratic issue almost always resulted in a discharge. Other causes—lack of instruction, excessive correction, want of food, age, expulsion, or abandonment by the master—were all cited, but much less often.

Why masters failed to enrol their apprentices, despite knowing that this gave the youth an easy and effectively unanswerable way to end the indenture is open to conjecture. Possibly, it reflected a persistent misunderstanding about the implications of enrolling for the master's obligations, or simply the preference of both parties to keep the door open to ending the arrangement if it did not go well.

Certainly, masters who failed to enrol their apprentices were not ignorant of the consequences, given the frequency of discharges made by the Lord Mayor's Court. Indeed, in five cases in the Goldsmiths' Company the master who was being sued had himself previously sued for his own discharge while he was an apprentice. For example, Valentine Duncombe was discharged from serving his own brother Charles for non-enrolment in September 1680. Only three years later, in November 1683, Duncombe was named as the defendant in a suit for discharge on the grounds of non-enrolment made by his apprentice, James Richards, whom he had bound in October 1681, just thirteen months after obtaining his own discharge for the same reason.

Whatever the master and apprentice's motivation, the relatively easy dissolution of apprenticeship contracts through the Lord Mayor's Court has important implications for the organisation of training in this period, giving the apprentice a source of substantial bargaining power that contradicts the impression of dependency and subordination conveyed by much of the language and cultural imagery around apprenticeship.¹⁷

Goldsmiths' Apprentices in the Lord Mayor's Court

The Goldsmiths' Company possesses abundant records of apprenticeship and freedom that make it a valuable case study to explore the relationship between the livery companies of London and the Lord Mayor's Court. Some 10,739 apprentices were registered by the company in the years 1578–1723, the period for which the Lord Mayor's Court's records survive. The number of apprentices taken by members of the Goldsmiths' Company each year was variable, subject largely to the impact of external events such as economic fluctuations, war, and disease.¹⁸

However, an overall increase from 80 apprentices each year to around 100 is apparent for the seventeenth century.

Most of the Company's apprentice records do not include the skill or trade that the apprentice expected to be taught until the later eighteenth century. However, the Lord Mayor's Court petitions do often mention the skill being acquired, and show that the majority of apprentices (at least among those who petitioned the Court) were engaged in occupations related to gold and silversmithing. Of the 304 apprentices whose discharge petitions indicate their trade, 259 (85%) were in goldsmithing and related trades while only 15% were in unrelated trades (Table 1). While we might worry that 'Goldsmith' simply referenced the company and not the trade, it seems instead to have been a portmanteau term that could refer to a variety of skills within the broad trade of goldsmithing, including engravers, jewelers, shopkeeping goldsmiths, makers, or goldsmith-bankers, as other sources confirm that these were the trades practiced by the master involved.¹⁹

Apprentices in the Goldsmiths' Company submitted 2.71% of the 16,846 petitions from apprentices in London Companies that survive in the Lord Mayor's Court records.²⁰ The corpus of 386 petitions from apprentices to masters in the company is made up of 354 petitions in the main series, plus 27 that are only known from references in the surviving attorneys' files, four that are only mentioned in the attorneys' record books, and one among the small number of partially illegible petitions (C20).²¹ Of these, 13 were second or third cases filed by the same apprentice, giving 373 unique appearances. Most suits (91%) were made against the master the apprentice had been bound to first, although some came after turn-overs to another master.²² Another 23 (6%) followed the master's death.²³ In five instances (1.3%), the master himself petitioned for discharge; suits from masters were rare, with the Chamberlain's Court being more normally used by masters who were troubled by their apprentices.²⁴ The patchy survival of Court records means that few petitions for discharge survive for apprentices bound from 1597 to 1645, as can be seen in Figure 1. Thereafter, petitions are abundant, until numbers decline to lower levels in 1720s as the archive begins to fragment.

It must be stressed that these 386 cases are in no way equivalent to the population of goldsmiths' apprentices who used the Lord Mayor's Court. Although a large volume of Court records survives, much has been lost. Indications of this are apparent in the Company's records. The freedom entries of five former apprentices mention that they had previously been discharged from a master by suit at the court, yet no petition survives.²⁵ In turn, the records of the equity side of the Lord Mayor's Court include an additional four cases involving goldsmiths for which no discharge bill survives, even though an apprentices' appeal for consideration by the equity side was dependent on their obtaining a successful judgment on their petition.²⁶

Goldsmiths' apprentices cited several causes in their petitions to the Lord Mayor's Court. Those found in suits include unreasonable chastisement by the master, not being enrolled with the City of London, instruction not provided, a lack of necessities such as clothing and food, being expelled from service by the master, the master no longer remaining business or keeping a shop in the City, or the apprentice being bound under the age of 14. The cause cited and outcome

TABLE 1.
TRADES TAUGHT TO APPRENTICES.

Trade to be learned	N	%	Trade to be learned	N	%
Related Trades			Unrelated Trades		
<u>Goldsmith</u>	163	53.62	Bookbinder	1	0.33
- <i>Plateworker, Large Worker Likely^a</i>	33	10.86	Brazier	1	0.33
- <i>Small Worker^a</i>	4	1.32	Butcher	2	0.66
- <i>Shopkeeper And Some Also Makers</i>	37	12.17	Cane Chair Maker	1	0.33
- <i>Likely Working Goldsmith (No Retail Trade)</i>	14	4.61	Carpenter	2	0.66
- <i>Jeweller Likely</i>	3	0.99	Carver	1	0.33
- <i>Goldsmith-Banker Some With Retail Trade</i>	8	2.63	Clockmaker	1	0.33
- <i>Engraver Likely</i>	1	0.33	Comb Maker	1	0.33
- <i>Specialist Spoon Maker Or Likely^a</i>	4	1.32	Confectioner	2	0.66
- <i>Flatware</i>	2	0.66	Cooper	1	0.33
- <i>Weapons And Maybe Spoons</i>	1	0.33	Factor	1	0.33
- <i>No Information^b</i>	56	18.42	Girdler	2	0.66
<u>Working Goldsmith</u>	13	4.28	Glove Seller/Glover?	2	0.66
- <i>Plate Worker, Large Worker</i>	4	1.32	Grocer (?)	5	1.64
- <i>Plateworker With Retail Trade</i>	2	0.66	Haberdasher	1	0.33
- <i>Spoon Maker</i>	1	0.33	Japanner	1	0.33
- <i>No Information^b</i>	6	1.97	Leatherseller	1	0.33
<u>Silversmith</u>	29	9.54	Making And Selling Coats & Petticoats ^c	1	0.33
- <i>Plateworker, Large Worker Likely^a</i>	12	3.95	Mercer	2	0.66
- <i>Small Worker^a</i>	2	0.66	Merchant	1	0.33
- <i>Shopkeeper And Some Also Makers</i>	3	0.99	Pavior	1	0.33
- <i>Working Silversmith, Subcontractor</i>	1	0.33	Picture Seller	1	0.33
- <i>No Information^b</i>	11	3.62	Scrivener	2	0.66
<u>Other</u>	54	17.76	Sempster/Sempstress ^c	2	0.66
<i>Engraver</i>	10	3.29	Shoemaker	3	0.99
<i>Gold, Silver, Wire Drawer</i>	25	8.22	Tailor	2	0.66
<i>Jeweller Including 1 Gold Ring Maker</i>	7	2.30	Timber Merchant	1	0.33
<i>Lapidary</i>	2	0.66	Tyrewoman Periwig Maker ^c	1	0.33
<i>Refiner</i>	5	1.64	Vintner	1	0.33
<i>Seal Cutter, Engrave</i>	2	0.66	Weaver	1	0.33
<i>Snuff Box Maker</i>	1	0.33			
<i>Watch Case Maker, Watchmaker</i>	2	0.66			
Goldsmith and related trades	259	85.20	Unrelated trades	45	14.80
Total				304	

^a Information about master or likely based on trade of his master and lineage;

^b No information found in resources in 1 above;

^c Training by wife of freeman.

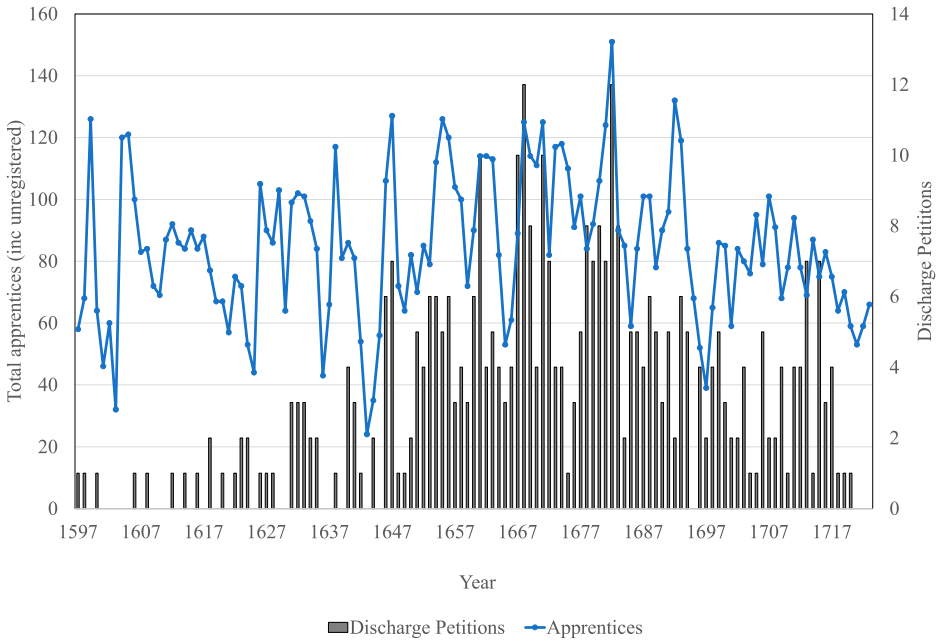


FIGURE 1. Annual enrolment of apprentices and discharge petitions.

are reported in Table 2. There were no cases from the Goldsmiths based on not being bound correctly or the master being a ‘foreigner’, which were the least frequent among all petitions, although the question of ‘foreigners’ or ‘strangers’ was one with which the livery company struggled in the seventeenth century.²⁷

TABLE 2.
OUTCOME OF PETITIONS FOR DISCHARGE BY GOLDSMITHS’ COMPANY APPRENTICES.

	Total	Outcome				
		Discharged	No decision	Jury rejects	Reconciled	No information
Cause Cited	<i>N</i>	%	%	%	%	%
Unreasonable chastisement	9	0.0	88.9	0.0	0.0	11
Non-enrolment	269	91.9	7.3	0.4	0.4	0
Poor Instruction	35	74.2	25.8	0.0	0.0	0
Lack of necessaries	13	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0
Expelled by Master	24	78.3	17.4	0.0	0.0	4
Master left trade	22	76.2	23.8	0.0	0.0	0
Bound under age	13	83.3	16.7	0.0	0.0	0
Unknown	8	0.0	12.5	0.0	0.0	88
TOTAL	393					

Note: Table reports counts of suits from indexed petitions, attorneys’ files, and the attorneys’ books. Outcome is only recorded for the 364 petitions in the main index.

As with apprentices registered by other companies, the great majority of apprentices' petitions (68.4%) cited non-enrolment. The share of cases was in line with the trend in the sample of surviving petitions (75.5%), as were petitions for the other causes.²⁸ The outcomes of Goldsmiths' apprentices were also largely reflective of those found among petitions from apprentices in general. In only one case did a jury find for the master. Most petitions, 301 (82.6%), resulted in discharge, which is fractionally less than that of the generality (83.7%). The rest were allowed to lapse. When the outcome is broken down by the cause of the petition there are some differences: fewer discharges were for unreasonable chastisement and more for not keeping a shop in the city than in the Court's records as a whole. That said, the numbers in these categories are very small and there is no obvious reasons why the discharge frequency for categories of petitions should be different in petitions from apprentices of the Goldsmiths' Company.

The apprentice's choice of what cause to cite in their petition appears to have been strategic. Non-enrolment was both indisputable and relatively neutral in its implications for both parties: it made no statement about the character of the master or the quality of training they provided.²⁹ An unusually clear indication of an apprentice choosing between options is apparent in the two petitions submitted by Erasmus Harling on the same day, 17 January 1664. Harling had been turned over to the prominent goldsmith banker Sir Thomas Vyner on 15 August 1663, two years after his original binding on 16 August 1661 to Jeremiah Snow. One of Harling's petitions (#5787) cited Vyner as the defendant for expelling him from service. The other cited his original master Snow for non-enrolment (#5786). The suit for expulsion against Vyner appears not to have gone beyond the original filing, suggesting that Harling was advised, perhaps with the collusion of Vyner or his representatives, that he might have a speedier and easier process if he instead pursued a discharge for non-enrolment against Snow that would invalidate the indenture entirely. This explains the second petition on the same day. The outcome was successful: Harling's discharge came from the suit for non-enrolment and Vyner's reputation was left untroubled.³⁰

The Goldsmiths' evidence presents a contrast to earlier work on the Lord Mayor's Court in the geography of petitioning. Youths from all over the country came to London to enter apprenticeship. This geographical spread is also found in the Goldsmiths' Company (Table 3). There were petitioners from all regions of England. For the period 1600–1708, the regional distribution of those Goldsmiths' apprentices who petitioned was significantly different to that of their peers in the company.³¹ The idea that apprentices with family in London or nearby might find more support for filing petitions to sever their indentures than apprentices from farther away finds support in the fact that apprentices with London origins accounted for over 39% of Goldsmiths' Company petitioners despite accounting for just under 25% of its apprentices. There were relatively fewer petitioners than we would expect coming from more distant families in south midlands and western counties. Family connections stand out here as influencing the decision to use the Lord Mayor's Court, and potentially the ability to use it as well.

Another closely connected factor that affected the likelihood that apprentices would file a petition for discharge was the occupation or status of their father. In

TABLE 3.
GEOGRAPHIC ORIGINS OF APPRENTICES, 1600–1708.

Region/ Country ¹	Lord Mayor's Court Petitions		Goldsmiths' Company Apprentices				
	All Guilds	Goldsmiths' Company	All	%	Petitioned for discharge	Share of region petitioning	Share of petitions from region
	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	%
London	3426	141	2323	24.9	129	5.55	36.44
Middlesex	2,010	27	710	7.6	25	3.52	7.06
Home Counties	1993	35	1000	10.1	34	3.40	10.33
North East	409	8	316	3.4	8	2.53	2.26
North West	579	17	519	5.6	14	2.70	3.95
North Midlands	986	26	785	8.4	28	3.57	7.91
South Midlands	1940	27	1,074	11.5	26	2.42	7.34
Eastern Counties	611	21	578	6.2	39	6.75	11.02
Western Counties	1133	36	1,286	13.8	10	0.78	2.82
Southern Counties	345	7	353	3.8	10	2.83	2.82
Ireland	33	1	33	0.4	1	3.03	0.28
Wales	229	4	197	2.1	2	1.02	0.56
Scotland	18	0	6	0.1	0	-	0.00
Isle of Man, Guernsey	11	1	6	0.1	1	16.67	0.28
Foreign	20	0	-	0	0	-	0.00
Unknown	528	3	148	1.6	2	1.35	0.56
Total	16,281	381	10,044	107.8	354	3.52	100

Notes: Column 2 (Goldsmiths' apprentices with petitions) includes some not registered with the Company, hence the total is lower than column 5. (1) Regions are defined as follows: The Home Counties: Essex, Kent, Hertfordshire, Middlesex, Surrey; North East Counties: Durham, Northumberland, Yorkshire; The North West Counties: Cheshire, Cumberland, Lancashire, Shropshire, Westmorland; The North Midlands: Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire; The South Midlands: Bedfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Herefordshire, Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire, Worcestershire; The Eastern Counties: Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Rutland, Suffolk; Western Counties: City of Bristol, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Somerset, Wiltshire; The Southern Counties: Hampshire, City of Southampton, Sussex.

Table 4, we group occupations into categories of similar activity or status. For apprentices from London citizen families, the father's livery company is taken as a proxy for their occupation, although they might in reality be engaged in a different trade. A quarter of the 379 petitions, 94, were filed by sons of gentleman followed by those whose fathers made or sold clothing and shoes with 58 petitions (15%), and those whose fathers made or sold food or drink or were engaged in hospitality with 45 apprentices (12%). Thirty-four sons of yeoman accounted for 9% of petitioners. No other category accounted for as much as 10% of the sample, with the sons of goldsmiths and clerics each accounting for about 4%.

TABLE 4.
OCCUPATION OR STATUS OF FATHERS OF PETITIONERS.

Occupation or status ¹	Goldsmiths' Company, 1600–1708					Total Lord Mayor's Court petitions ³	
	Petitions ²		All Goldsmiths' Apprentices			No	%
	No.	%	No.	% of total	% petitions		
Gentleman, Esquire & Baronet	87	25.3	2269	25.1	3.9	1824	15.0
Yeoman	32	9.3	1681	18.6	1.9	1908	15.7
Agriculture	11	3.2	457	5.1	2.4	971	8.0
Construction & furnishings	15	4.4	283	3.1	5.3	620	5.1
Food, drink, hospitality	41	11.9	710	7.9	5.8	1263	10.4
Goldsmith	16	4.7	124	1.4	12.1	57	0.5
Health, law, professional	5	1.5	141	1.6	3.5	225	1.9
Religion	15	4.4	526	5.8	2.9	394	3.2
Sea, river associated	7	2.0	117	1.3	6.0	221	1.8
Clothing, shoes	48	14.0	796	8.8	6.0	1680	13.8
Textile, leather manufacture	20	5.8	504	5.6	4.0	841	6.9
Retail, wholesale	18	5.2	422	4.7	4.3	360	3.0
Makers to trade, wholesale	8	2.3	127	1.4	6.3	240	2.0
Mercer	8	2.3	125	1.4	6.4	140	1.2
Print, book, scribes, music	3	0.9	52	0.6	5.8	39	0.3
Horses, coaches	3	0.9	69	0.8	4.3	159	1.3
Service	0	0.0	13	0.1	0.0	26	0.2
Labourer	3	0.9	69	0.8	4.3	213	1.8
Unknown	4	1.2	540	6.0	0.7	956	7.9
TOTAL	344	100	9025	100	3.8	12,137	100
Citizens of London	107	31.1	2666	29.5	4.0	2208	18.2

¹ Examples of occupations included: Agriculture: husbandman, grazier, shepherd; Construction and furnishings: joiner, brick layer, paver, upholsterer, turner; Food, drink, hospitality: baker, brewer, butcher, grocer, innkeeper; Goldsmith: members Goldsmiths' Co.; Health, law, professional: physician, apothecary, lawyer, teacher; Religion: clerics; Clothing, shoes: tailors, shoemakers, staymakers, milliner; Textile, leather manufacture: weavers, dyers, drapers, woolcombers, tanners; Retail: merchant, ironmonger, blacksmith, pewterer, clockmaker; Makers to trade, wholesale: cooper, founder, wheelwright, warehouseman; Mercer: cloth seller; Printer, bookseller, music: printers, stationers, booksellers, musician, scribe; Horses, coaches: saddle, bridle and stirrup makers, coachmakers, coachman, groom; Service: servants, carters, carriers; Labourer: many from rural areas likely agriculture.

² Total apprentices with petitions.

³ Scott, *Apprenticeship Disputes*.

When compared to the father's occupations for all Lord Mayor's Court petitioners, the Goldsmiths' apprentices came from a significantly higher social and economic background.³² A larger proportion were the sons of gentlemen, esquires, and baronets (25% versus 15%), and not surprisingly the proportion of sons of goldsmiths was higher; a notably lower share were sons of yeoman and others in

agriculture. Some, such as sons of clerics, appeared in similar proportions. The proportion who were citizens of London was also much greater—31.4% versus 18.2%.³³ This difference in distribution reflected the prestige of apprenticeship within the goldsmiths' trade.

More telling is the pattern we observe when we identify which types of family background were associated with apprentices being more or less likely to submit petitions. To obtain an insight into this, we compared the proportion of sons from each occupation or status group who submitted petitions with their share of the population of apprentices registered in the Goldsmiths' Company in this period.³⁴ There were significant differences.³⁵ Sons of yeoman were about half as likely to sue than we would expect from their overall representation among apprentices; others from agricultural backgrounds were also less frequent than we would expect. Sons of clerics were about a third less likely to sue than we would expect. Youths from families engaged in urban manufacturing and trade were over represented, by contrast. Those with fathers in clothing and shoe manufacture and sale, food, drink, and hospitality, retail and wholesale, were more inclined to lodge petitions compared to their overall representation.

The most striking divergence was among the sons of goldsmiths. We are, admittedly, dealing with small numbers here, but the sons of goldsmiths entered 4.5% of petitions (17) while only making up 1.4% of apprentices in the company in this period. Indeed, the numbers are so large that 12% of known apprentices from goldsmiths' families in this period are known to have petitioned the Lord Mayor's Court for discharge, compared to 4% of all apprentices in the company. All these apprentices' fathers were, moreover, citizens and freemen of the company. It would be reasonable to assume that they would have known both their sons and the freeman of their company who were their masters, and resorted to the Court as a way to lessen the potential for future disagreements over obligations from contracts. Contrary to what one might have expected, given the emphasis on livery companies as a source of conflict resolution, the shared affiliation of fathers and masters within the same company did not offer an alternative to formal dispute resolution, but intensified its relevance.

The obvious inference from this is that the Lord Mayor's Court was seen as an important source of legal certainty over contracts among youths from backgrounds that gave them *better* than average chances of careers within the corporate world of the city. Those with ties outside London, largely youths coming from gentry or farming families in the provinces, made less use of this legal procedure. They were more likely to leave, often to return home, and so less concerned with securing a formal closure to their contracts. Youths and families from the city, and especially those embedded in the livery company itself, were better informed about and made the most use of the city's institutional resources.

The Strength of Livery Company Registration

If we compare these two sources on apprenticeship, the problems, errors, and absences inherent in early modern records are revealed with unusual clarity.

Omissions are most striking, and reveal the presence of important gaps in the livery company records.³⁶ These gaps represent a breach of company and city rules, and in this section we ask what the comparison tells us about the strength of livery company registration and its blindspots.

Masters were responsible for ensuring that a newly bound apprentice was registered with the company of which the master was free, and then enrolled by the city chamberlain at Guildhall, the seat of London's urban government. The successful challenge of most of the petitions—that the apprentice had not been enrolled—shows that non-enrolment with the city chamberlain was commonplace. The scale of this aspect of rule evasion has been measured to some extent: from the mid-sixteenth to early eighteenth century, between 25 and 50% of apprentices who became freeman had not been enrolled and a fine, paid on freedom, or increased cost of enrolment beyond the first year was exacted as the price of this laxity.³⁷

What is novel here is the opportunity to observe the scale of non-enrolment on the part of the livery company. Each of the 371 apprentices identified in the petition index was checked against the records of the company to determine if they had been registered. Nineteen, or 5.1%, were not registered. For a further two petitions (Joseph Bell (A96) and Margaret Bernard (A109)) *neither* the apprentice nor their master had a record in the Goldsmiths' Company's registers, despite asserting this affiliation in their petition.³⁸ The apprentices whose indentures were not enrolled with the Goldsmiths' were scattered across the period, from 1638 to 1718, with no obvious concentrations in particular periods for which a break in record keeping or a time of revolution, war, or plague might explain their absence.

When we map these absent apprentices against the rest of the apprentices who were reported in the company's records one feature stands out: the gender of the apprentices. Just four of the 373 apprentices to goldsmiths entering discharge petitions in the Lord Mayor's Court were female.³⁹ But they supply two of the nineteen apprentices who were not enrolled with the company. In both cases, the timing of the apprenticeships suggests they may have been linked to the business activities of the freeman's wife, not his own. Mary Wild (13706) was bound to Richard Croome more than a decade before he enrolled his first male apprentice. More explicitly, Susan Palmer (9372), was bound by Humfrey Norton and his wife in 1653, 18 years after he had taken his last male apprentices. These are admittedly small numbers, but that just half of the female apprentices we observed petitioning were registered with the Company, and that both were plausibly linked to the freeman's wife's work, offers further evidence in support of arguments that the mechanisms of livery company registration were much more weakly enforced for women, whether acting as masters and apprentices.⁴⁰

Nothing else obviously distinguished those apprentices not enrolled with the livery company from their peers. In one of these cases, that of John Loveland, who petitioned in 1695 for discharge from John Walton, a silver spinner at the White Swan and Crown in Paternoster Row (A887), the justification for discharge was being indentured while under the minimum age for service. This offers a potential explanation for avoiding the livery company, who might have stopped the binding for that reason.⁴¹ However, Loveland was unique: the rest of the apprentices petitioned for the usual mix of non-enrolment with the chamberlain, lack of

necessaries and being expelled by their master: none of which help explain their absence from the company registers.

While avoiding enrolment by the city chamberlain may have been strategic, in allowing an uncontested exit through the Court, there was no obvious gain for the youth involved from failing to be presented to the company. Instead, this introduced the risk they might lose the right to become freemen and women once their service was completed—a status that was less common and perhaps also less valuable for women workers given that they were stripped of their freedom if they married. The only potential advantage for a master was to avoid limits on the number of youths who might be indentured at any one time, but twelve of the masters involved here did not register *any* apprentices with the company. None of the others had more than one overlapping apprentice when their unregistered apprentices were bound. Both facts suggest quotas were not a major factor in these cases.

Perhaps the most likely explanation for non-enrolment in the livery company is therefore a combination of contingency and differing degrees of commitment to the company as an institution. If this level of under-enrolment was representative of company registration of apprentices in general, then this needs to be accounted for in estimates of the numbers of youths trained by London's citizens, which are necessarily based on this source. The gendered dimension of livery company non-enrolment suggests under-counting may particularly affect our estimates of female apprentices. It also adds a further qualification to any assumptions about the role of livery companies in overseeing apprenticeship in this period.

Discharge Petitions and Negotiation

The judgements obtained from the Lord Mayor's Court released apprentices from their agreement with their current master and permitted them to turn themselves over to another freeman to complete their service. There was no requirement that discharged apprentices find another master, and certainly no oversight or enforcement of this, and hence the outcome might be either their exit from service altogether or turning over to a new master in a continuation of their original contract.

While exit was the most common result, the operation of the court was in many ways much less definitive than this summary of outcomes implies, as was common with early modern tribunals. In this section, we examine the surviving evidence around outcomes in order to gain some insight into the way the Court process might form part of a process of negotiation that might preserve apprenticeships, as well as terminate them.

We can see aspects of bargaining through lawsuits most clearly if we look at those apprentices who filed more than one petition (Table 5). Some of these apprentices were simply using the court for a second time to leave a different master. Sylvester Anderton (#240, #241), Samuel Lane (#7559, #7560), and Edward Dowlswell (#3862, #3863), for example, had been discharged from their first master and had their contracts turned over to new masters, whom they later sued in turn. Other instances of multiple petitions involved apprentices suing the same master twice,

TABLE 5.
APPRENTICES WITH MULTIPLE DISCHARGE PETITIONS.

Name	Index	Time to petition (yrs)	Cause ¹	Outcome ²	Comment
Anderton,	240	3.71	P	D	Suit against original master
Sylvester	241	4.62	I	D	Suit against master to whom turned over after 1st suit
Dowlswell,	3862	1.53	E	D	Suit against original master
Edward	3863	5.02	S	D	Suit against master to whom turned over after 1st suit
Galaker, John	4804	–	–	N	Petition date not known but presumably precedes the second
	A539	1.85	E	D	
Harling,	5798	3.42	P	-	Both suits filed same day; defendant a master to whom
Erasmus	5797	3.42	E	D	turned over before suit
Hogg, John	6387	5.2	S	D	Both suits dated same day, although only the successful
	B376	5.2	I	–	one may have been filed
Johnson,	7084	0.46	C	N	
Samuel	7083	0.60	UI3	D	Filed 2 months after the first
	A785	–	E	–	Since Discharge for E was virtually automatic, perhaps surprising this not first petition
Jones, John	7141	0.71	I	N	Master hired a lawyer to defend
	7142	2.1	I	D	Waiting over a year to refile
Lane, Samuel	7559	2.5	E	D	Suit against original master
	7560	5.2	C	N	Suit against master to whom turned over after 1st suit
Loader,	7901	4.1	I	N	Suit against a turn over master who hired lawyer
Abraham	7900	4.2	I	D	Suit against the turn over master who hired lawyer but still in Fleet prison
Marshall, James	8269	2.2	C	N	Master hired a lawyer to defend
	8270	3.6	I	N	Master hired a lawyer to defend
Pitts, Thomas	9882	1.0	S	N	Master hired lawyer to defend
	9883	1.1	I	D	2nd suit only 1 month after 1st
Weekley,	13,389	1.1	E	W	Suit against widow and executrix of master who hired lawyer
Nathaniel	13,390	1.3	P	D	Suit against widow and executrix of master

¹ Cause: C: unreasonable chastisement; E: Non-enrolment; I: Instruction not provided; N: necessities not provided; P: expelled from service; S: Does not keep shop in city or no longer in business; U: under 14 years old when bound.

² Outcomes: D, discharged; N, no decision specified; W, jury decides in favour defendant; –, no information.

and these give us an indication of how petitions to the Lord Mayor's Court might be embedded in a process of bargaining between master and apprentice.

Petitions that did not reach a conclusion can be found frequently in the Court's surviving files. They make up 14% of the total. Duplicate petitions offer a way to interpret these inconclusive cases. Rather than seeing petitions without judgements as the result of administrative or clerical errors, they suggest a more strategic interpretation. In these cases, after no decision was given on the first petition, the apprentice later returned to the Court to institute a second suit. Plausibly, the lack of judgement on the first was because the Court had been convinced not to take the suit to its inevitable conclusion. This occurred in the cases of Nathaniel Weekley (#13389, #13390), John Hogg (#6387, #B376), Samuel Johnson

(#7083, #7084, #A785), John Jones (#7141, #7142), and Thomas Pitts (#9882, #9883). Weekely's suits were against Alice Farmer, the widow and executrix of his master, Richard, and occurred with just under three months between them (#13389, #13390), implying a short-lived attempt to continue the business as it had stood before his death. It also took two suits for Abraham Loader to be discharged from Gowan Birkhead, who was in the Fleet Prison (#7895, #7896). In some cases, both petitions were filed the same day, as with Erasmus Harling (#5786, #5787), but in others, there was more than a year between them, consistent with an uncertain process of reconciliation.

Perhaps the extreme expression of how discharge petitions in the Court might be used to adjust, not terminate, relationships between masters and apprentices can be found in the cases of Nicholas Morrell (#8787) and Elizabeth Love (#7965). Both appear to have obtained a discharge from their indentures, but then bound themselves anew to the same master for a second time. The Court petition for Morrell describes him as bound to John Golding on the 4 December 1640 and the suit was submitted on 20 June 1642. Love's petition states she was bound to Gabriel Marriott and his wife Ellen on the 5 July 1652, and was presented to the Court on the 7 April 1655. Both petitions for discharge were for non-enrolment with the city's chamberlain and were successful. Neither Love nor Morrell's first binding had been presented to the Company. Instead, their records reveal a *second* contract created later. According to the Goldsmiths' Company's records, Morrell entered an apprenticeship with Gouilding on 21 October 1642, about 4 months after discharge. Similarly, Gabriel and Ellen Marriott enrolled Love with the company on 2 May 1655: the register states the indenture began that day, one month after her discharge. This does not appear to be a clerical error: Love's master and mistress also presented her to the Court of Assistants and this is recorded in their minutes.⁴² These apprentices seem to have reached a fresh accommodation with their master after a successful suit and restarted with a fresh contract.

Further evidence that a reconciliation between masters and apprentices might often be reached even in the teeth of an order for discharge comes from the Company's records of entries to freedom. Almost a third of apprentices with petitions who were later freed on the grounds of servitude did so under the testimony of their first master.⁴³ They had, it appears, actually stayed with their master after the suit, despite being awarded their discharge.⁴⁴ Indeed, thirty-six of the thirty-seven entries do not mention that the apprentice had ever sued in Lord Mayor's Court. The exception that proves the rule was James Dunn, #3820, who sued six and a half years into an eight-year term: the Goldsmiths' minute noted that he had successfully sued for being not enrolled and requested freedom by service. Dunn paid a fine for obtaining his freedom within his term because he had not returned to his master, suggesting the company was attentive to what happened in practice.

These examples suggest that at least some suits at the Lord Mayor's Court formed part of a process of negotiation and bargaining between master and apprentice, a process that that could lead to the legal process being halted or an order for discharge being ignored if there was a belief that the contract might be preserved. This kind of bargaining was probably a common part of dispute resolution, and could be successful in resetting the terms of a training relationship.

The Reputational Cost of Discharge

One concern highlighted in some of the literature on apprenticeship is the possible reputational price that apprentices might pay for abandoning their contractual obligations.⁴⁵ Breaking a sworn promise gave a poor signal about commitment, honesty, and reliability in a period that placed an enormous premium on credit and trust.⁴⁶ Quitting could come at a cost, and Humphries study of working-class boys' autobiographies suggests this damaged their prospects.⁴⁷ How apprentices' use of the formal Court process to manage their exit from their indentures affected its impact on their future opportunities has not been investigated. To explore this, we take entry to the livery company as a freeman as one indicator of 'success', broadly defined. If apprentices who used the Court could still viably pursue a future in the corporate city, then it seems reasonable to infer that the Lord Mayor's Court process provided some protection for their reputation.

This is only a partial measure. On the one hand, to become free after leaving their master, apprentices needed another master to accept them in order to complete their term of service. 'Turning over' apprentices from one master to another was commonplace and did not require the involvement of the Court if all parties agreed: the difference here was that those apprentices who petitioned the Court had cut their original master out from the decision, but they were still dependent on finding a replacement and this might be determined by factors other than their reputation. On the other hand, as we saw earlier, not all discharges granted by the Court led to exits. By definition, those apprentices who reconciled with their masters avoided any reputational damage from quitting, and their presence in the dataset means that we inevitably underestimate the effect of an exit.

To be clear, for the majority of apprentices, discharge by the Lord Mayor's Court does appear to have been the end of their story in the Goldsmiths' Company. However, freedom was never an inevitability in this period. Estimates for several livery companies from 1490–1599 suggest that only 41% of apprentices became freemen, while for 1600–1699, just 40% of the 8645 apprentices registered by the Goldsmiths' Company became free by service.⁴⁸ Among the 379 Goldsmiths' apprentices who petitioned for discharge to the Court, 134 or 35.3% eventually became free, with 131 in the Goldsmiths and 3 in other livery companies. Involvement with the Lord Mayor's Court was associated with a lower likelihood of becoming a freeman, but it was not catastrophic.

There was still a price, however, as we can see if we look at *how* these apprentices became freemen. Freedom could be achieved by service, redemption (a fee), or patrimony (inheritance). Among the 17 sons of citizen Goldsmiths who sued in Lord Mayor's Court, six (35.3%) became free by patrimony and just three (17.6%) by service; the rest did not become free. For one of those admitted by patrimony, Edmund Chadwell (#2391), the petition indicated that his father was deceased, but he did not become free by patrimony until about seven years after the petition—two years after what would have been the end of his indenture.

Another three apprentices who petitioned for discharge were freed by redemption. Redemption required access to substantial leverage and funds to pay the fee required and gain approval from the livery company. In two of the cases, the

candidate produced an order from the Court of Alderman to support admission. The substance of the order from the Aldermen obtained in 1681 by Valentine Duncombe (#A414) described how he had served most of his term—his discharge petition was made in September 1680 after six years of service—and that his master, who was his brother Charles, had willingly remitted the remainder.⁴⁹ In short, the Aldermen were sending a reassuring message that Duncombe had hewed closely to the norm of service. Three apprentices are known to have become free by patrimony in other companies.⁵⁰

Accounting for these other channels into the freedom, we are left with 122 apprentices who sought discharge but later became free by service in Goldsmiths' Company.⁵¹ Compared to the outcomes found among all apprentices in this period, those who petitioned for discharge in the Court were roughly 20% less likely (32.3% versus 40.1%) to become freemen by servitude.⁵² As noted, this underestimates the difference because some had stayed with their master. If we assume a third had done so, in line with the evidence from the freedom records, then the penalty for discharge would have been higher, perhaps 26% (29.6% versus 40.1%).⁵³

We can think about this pattern in a slightly different way if we compare it to Mitchell's estimate for the period 1600–1699 that for every 100 apprentices, one son of a Goldsmith became free by patrimony or redemption, and for every 200 apprentices, one son of a citizen from another company bound to a Goldsmith became free by patrimony in their father's livery company.⁵⁴ The proportion of sons of Goldsmiths who became free by patrimony after a Lord Mayor's Court suit was about twice the level expected from Mitchell's assessment. This further signals the negative association between discharge and apprentices entry to the freedom by servitude. Similarly, the proportion known to have become free by patrimony in another company, 0.8%, is above Mitchell's estimate. Moreover, it seems likely that we are underestimating the importance of this response for sons of London citizens, as only some company records were available for checking.

Once admitted, there is no obvious indication that turning to the Lord Mayor's Court carried a reputational penalty that affected former apprentices later in their corporate careers. Some went on to have leadership positions in the Goldsmiths' Company. Fourteen were elected to the Livery. Five were elected to the Court of Assistants and four became wardens with three, John Sutton (#12198), John Harris (#5843), and Richard Bailey (#555) progressing to become Prime Warden in 1707, 1739, and 1751, respectively.

What about the impact for the master? The evidence here is circumstantial, but facing a case in the Lord Mayor's Court does not seem to have been particularly damaging to a master's ability to recruit further apprentices if they wished to. Some indication of this can be found if we look at the twenty-five masters who were sued by more than one apprentice—two of these masters faced petitions from three apprentices. Gowen Birkhead accepted three apprentices, two of whom sued him: Harris (#5848) for non-enrolment and Abraham Loader (twice) for lack of instruction (#7895, #7896). Both were turned over to other masters and later became freemen of the company. There were several John Jones free of Goldsmiths' Company in the seventeenth century, but the dates suggest that the

John Jones freed in 1633 was probably the master of nine apprentices. Jones was sued by John Hobbs (#6344), bound in the same year his master became a freeman, Robert Man (#8159), bound in 1646, and William Horne (#6548), bound in 1647. All sued for non-enrolment and were discharged with two becoming freemen by service. Thomas Mandy was master to seven apprentices between 1634 and 1655. His first two, Edward Jarvis (#6968) and John Coleman (#2847), sued him for non-enrolment: both were also freed. That masters could bind substantial numbers of apprentices *after* being sued several times implies that the Court's process allowed the master's reputation to survive as well as that of their former apprentice.

Conclusion

Collectively, the records of the Lord Mayor's Court and the Goldsmiths' Company reveal dynamics of the apprentice and master relationship that are not apparent from either set of records alone. In addition to giving a detailed understanding of the characteristics of petitioning within one livery company, we draw three general points from cross-referencing the two series.

First, the scale of the gaps and omissions in the records of each give a new estimate of under-registration by livery company officials, showing that this was non-trivial, affecting perhaps one in twenty apprentices, and that it may have been more acute for female apprentices. This occurred during the whole seventeenth century and offers evidence of the limits of even a strong and prestigious livery company's authority in London in this period.

Second, the clear and strong decisions—admission, turnover, and discharge—that each institution reached formally were more provisional in practice. The Lord Mayor's Court was used within the process of negotiation between masters and apprentices, not just turned to when it failed. Discharges might be ignored or discarded. Relationships could be adjusted and revitalised even after a suit had been brought to its conclusion. In that, the utilisation of the Court echoed apprentices and masters use of non-enrolment in the first place, as a strategy to relax and rebalance the nature of their contractual relationship in a setting in which apprentices possessed a measure of agency over the terms under which they operated.

Third, when we examine the reputational damage from quitting, we find that discharge was associated with a lower likelihood of becoming a freeman, suggesting that it did still carry some cost. However, the odds were close enough to those of the generality to suggest that the Lord Mayor's Court offered a way to manage the reputational damage that abandoning a sworn contract could carry for apprentices and their masters.

As we have sought to show through this comparison, the Lord Mayor's Court was an urban institutional resource that was favoured particularly by apprentices with ties to the City and the livery company. That it was part of the City administration—as it had been for centuries—underlines again Archer's emphasis on the capacity of urban institutions to manage tensions and conflict.⁵⁵ Whether this held in other livery companies will require further research, but it seems likely

that this is a general feature of apprenticeship. It seems likely to have been valued for allowing the legal recognition of changes in status, as well as overcoming difficulties in relationships. This was not a cure for all problems associated with a troubled relationship, but many apprentices did still advance into the company, suggesting that this system helped reduce the costs of conflict for apprentices and masters.

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- 22 For 391 petitions (from 378 individuals), the defendant was identified, and in large majority (93.4%) it was the master who was sued, with 91.3% naming the binding master. Twelve petitions name a master to whom the apprentice had been turned over (8 before the petition; 2 named a master they had joined after a prior discharge petition). Three of the turnover masters were to a freeman of another company.
- 23 In 21 cases an executor or executrix was named and in 2 cases the master died intestate and the referral was to the legal courts. Most (17) of the estate administrators were widows of the deceased, two of whom had re-married and in one instance the son and daughter of the deceased were named jointly. Several widows continued the business of their husband and some even took apprentices in their own name by courtesy.
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- 25 These apprentices were William Cooke, John Spencer, Thomas Deuxberry, Mathuslah Smith, and Samuel Clay.
- 26 These apprentices were Thomas Wymonds, Ambrose Walton, John Pegg, and (again) Mathuslah Smith. We are grateful to Dr Michael Scott for providing this information. These additional apprentices are incorporated in some of the analysis below, increasing the sample to 379.
- 27 Scott, *Apprenticeship Disputes*; Mitchell, *Silversmiths*.
- 28 Scott, *Apprenticeship Disputes*.
- 29 Wallis, 'Labor', 803–806.
- 30 Vyner would, however, not take any further apprentices, though this is probably explained by his age not this dispute. He died in 1665 aged 77. G.E. Aylmer, 'Vyner [Viner], Sir Thomas, first baronet (1588–1665)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2008), doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/28319.
- 31 MCFET, $p < 0.001$.
- 32 MCFET, $p < 0.0001$. See: Scott, *Apprenticeship Disputes*.
- 33 χ^2 , $p < 0.001$.
- 34 The 9025 occupations of fathers of apprentices bound to masters of the Goldsmiths' Company 1600–1708 have been determined from the database underlying Records of London Livery Companies Online (ROLLCO) www.londonroll.org. Removal of those before and after these dates made little difference in the distribution occupations of fathers of petitioners.
- 35 MCFET, $p < 0.001$.
- 36 The frailties of clerical record entry are also abundantly illustrated here. A comparison of the binding and petition date reveals a number of internal inconsistencies. For Simon Ramage (#10289), the petition was dated two years later than in the Goldsmiths' register; for

- Leonard Barton (#813), the difference was 3 years and 5 months; for Simon Hutchinson (#6800), four years; for John Harris (#5843), almost five years; while for Charles Daniel (#3446), it was a more modest 3 months.
- 37 Wallis, 'Labor', 803–804.
- 38 These were not included further in the analysis, leaving 371 unique apprentices with petitions.
- 39 One entry for Pamphile Piers (#9836) was indicated as daughter but this is in error as he is a son of Clifford Piers (Pearce). The two who were registered were Martha Steadman (#11967) and Jane Toplady (#A1472).
- 40 Amy Louise Erickson, 'Eleanor Mosley and Other Milliners in the City of London Companies, 1700–1750', *History Workshop Journal*, 71.1 (2011), 152–154; Laura Gowing, 'Girls on Forms: Apprenticing Young Women in Seventeenth-Century London', *Journal of British Studies*, 55.3 (2016), 44–52. Two of the masters petitioned against were women (in #8647 and #11231), both widows, but recording of apprentices bound to masters and their wife are too patchy in the Goldsmiths' records to interpret safely.
- 41 A John Walton bound Leonard Barton in March 1691, but no other registered apprentices: Goldsmiths Company, 'Goldsmiths' Database for the 17th Century', held at the Goldsmiths' Company Archive, London.
- 42 Goldsmiths' Company Archive, 'Court of Assistants Court Book V' (21 Oct 1642), 'Court Book 1' (2 May 1655).
- 43 Freedom entries were found and checked in either the Court minutes or the Freedom Register (after 1694).
- 44 Three of these masters were deceased at the time of freedom. In two cases, the widow had continued the business: Susanna Bodendicke, a defendant as executrix in Lord Mayor's Court suit and Jane Lambe who had continued the business for about 3 years when Harvey Price (#10123) became free.
- 45 Jane Humphries, 'English Apprenticeship: A Neglected Factor in the First Industrial Revolution', in *The Economic Future in Historical Perspective*, ed. Paul A. David and Mark Thomas (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 82–89.
- 46 Craig Muldrew, *The Economy of Obligation: The Culture of Credit and Social Relations in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998), 7, 112.
- 47 Jane Humphries, *Childhood and Child Labour in the British Industrial Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 280–281.
- 48 Steve Rappaport, *Worlds Within Worlds: Structures of Life in Sixteenth-Century London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 311–312; authors' calculations from ROLLCO dataset. Both estimates will include an undefined number who had used the Lord Mayor's Court.
- 49 Richard Pemberton (#9968) also produced an order but it was not minuted in detail.
- 50 There may have been others free by patrimony in other companies, but not all livery companies have information available for analysis.
- 51 44 freedom entries in the company's records made no mention of Lord Mayor's Court, although the turnover was noted. 41 entries did note that the apprentice had been discharged by the Lord Mayor's Court and then turned over.
- 52 This is only a rough estimate as the 'all apprentice' figure includes some who sued in the Lord Mayor's Court.
- 53 We observe 37 apprentices freed by their first master. Assuming they were freed at the same rate as other apprentices (40.1%), then this suggests 92 apprentices did not exit after discharge. Excluding them from the sample gives us (379–92 =) 287 discharged apprentices of whom (122–37 =) 85 were freed by servitude.
- 54 Mitchell also estimated that about 1 apprentice in 100 became free but was not recorded by the clerk. One indication is when an individual takes apprentices. For the apprentices with Lord Mayor's Court petitions for whom no freedom record was found, the database (ROLLCO) was checked to see if any of them registered apprentices. None were identified.
- 55 See: Ian W. Archer, *The Pursuit of Stability: Social Relations in Elizabethan London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 7–9, 58–59.

Notes on Contributors

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Patrick Wallis is Professor of Economic History at the London School of Economics. He has worked extensively on apprenticeship and training in premodern Europe, with a particular attention to London. His other interests include the social and economic history of medicine from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries, as well as guilds, labour, and other topics in economic and social history. His books include *Apprenticeship in the Early Modern Europe* (2019), *Medicine and the Market in England and its Colonies, c.1450–c.1850* (2007), and *Quackery and Commerce in Seventeenth-Century London* (2005). He is a former editor of the *Economic History Review*.

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