

## STARTING A NEW LIFE AS ARTISANS AND TRADERS IN RICARDIAN AND HENRICIAN CANTERBURY (c.1400 AND c.1500)

SHEILA SWEETINBURGH

It has been said that for the survivors of the Black Death (and subsequent plague outbreaks) among the peasantry and their urban neighbours, the later middle ages generally constituted a time of considerable economic and social opportunity. Even though migration had been ‘a major feature of the period 1250-1350’, Christopher Dyer believes that the rate increased thereafter and ‘the turnover of surnames suggests that between half and three-quarters of village families moved every half-century, and by 1500 only a few families in most villages and small towns were descended from residents of the late fourteenth century’.<sup>1</sup> As well as highlighting the importance of migration as a social phenomenon in late medieval society, it has considerable implications regarding demography and the balance between rural and urban society. Yet, as Tom Beaumont James commented in 2006, migration, and more particularly to towns during the later middle ages, and the fifteenth century especially, has attracted very little scholarship, and this situation has not improved appreciably in the last decade.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, the allied topic of social mobility has, according to Dyer, similarly ‘attracted only intermittent interest in historical writing about either England or the rest of Britain’.<sup>3</sup> In large part the difficulty of the sources continues to be a major issue for both migration (and social mobility), and even though aliens during this period and into the sixteenth century have been studied, particularly through the AHRC-funded project on immigration based at the University of York and The National Archives at Kew, London, far less is known about the movement of people within England.<sup>4</sup>

Furthermore, the issue of migration in England is not a simple assessment of people’s movement in terms of distance, or whether they moved from town to town, or between countryside and town, because as James (and Peter Clark for the later sixteenth and seventeenth centuries) have shown, different socio-economic groups had diverse expectations and experiences, and made different decisions.<sup>5</sup> Among towns such migrant groups varied in size and as a proportion of the total population but, as Clark comments, collectively they can be represented as a pyramid with those from the higher sectors of society: merchants, minor gentry and their peers at the apex.<sup>6</sup> Assuming that the poor and poorer members of society, whether vagrants, day labourers, seasonal workers and the young seeking opportunities in service, can be envisaged as forming the base, those some way above them were perhaps independent artisans and traders. Above them again were

the freemen, either entering the town to take up this status through redemption or marriage, or as freemen from other towns enjoying reciprocal privileges. Some of the former, as civic office holders, were able to achieve an even higher position in the hierarchical pyramid.

These diverse socio-economic groups amongst the migrants have attracted varying degrees of interest from scholars, and for those at or near the base Jeremy Goldberg's work on the ecclesiastical court records for York and Yorkshire has highlighted the movement, especially by young women, from the countryside to the towns whose employment conditions he has classified as life-cycle servanthood.<sup>7</sup> He found that women from arable farming areas were more likely to make this transition than their counterparts where livestock predominated, a reflection, perhaps, of their reduced employment opportunities.<sup>8</sup> For these young people, finding such work in towns for several years in their late teens and early twenties may have provided sufficient resources for some of them to marry. Yet, what percentage of these new households remained dependent on paid employment as journeymen or as holders of similar positions is unclear, but the transition to independent artisan or trader status was only possible for some, although the proportion probably varied considerably between towns and over time. To make this transition householders needed to have accumulated sufficient finances to fund assets such as a workshop, stock and in some cases specialist equipment, as well as having social capital based on reputation and goodwill.

This form of migration was labelled *betterment* migration by Clark in 1972, in contrast to *survival* migration which he saw as involving the section of the pyramid encompassing the poor and poorer members of early modern society.<sup>9</sup> For Clark and Goldberg, their use of ecclesiastical court records, albeit in different ways, offered them opportunities to explore these groups using both quantitative and qualitative forms of analysis.<sup>10</sup> Clark, in particular, also used the Canterbury diocesan records to explore the identities of migrants from the upper sections of the pyramid – the freemen and those above.<sup>11</sup> As a group, freemen offer considerable advantages for the historian because civic record keeping often included place of birth or previous abode for those entering the freedom by redemption. For late medieval Kent, the study by Andrew Butcher of New Romney highlights the relatively small catchment area of this Cinque Port, about a third drawn from a radius of five miles.<sup>12</sup> Although conversely, about a quarter had travelled to Romney from outside Kent. Other features include the importance of movement from countryside to towns and the likelihood that a sizeable proportion maintained their rural links, in some cases returning to their natal parish in later life (and death).<sup>13</sup>

For these generally prosperous migrants and their peers in fifteenth-century towns, civic archives can be supplemented by testamentary sources, for example pious bequests, including payment for tithes forgotten, and references to property outside the town.<sup>14</sup> Nationally the survival of such records varies considerably for the late medieval period, and even though there are collections from the fourteenth century, in broad terms they become more abundant during the fifteenth century and thus only reach further down the social scale for this later period. Consequently, independent artisans and traders below the freemen are especially difficult to investigate regarding migration issues in many towns beyond a few glimpses in the local sources, and widely spaced national taxation records such

as the late fourteenth-century poll tax assessments and the early sixteenth-century lay subsidies.<sup>15</sup> James, amongst others, has used these latter records, and for his analysis of family replacement rates at Southampton he has benefited from the survival of an intermediary list produced in 1454.<sup>16</sup> Nonetheless, these national taxation lists are crucial indicators of population trends over time, whether showing continuity or change, a product of mortality, fertility and migration. In an age before parish registers, discussions about mortality and fertility primarily draw on the considerable number of known incidents of plague and other large-scale outbreaks of disease, and studies that suggest the prevalence of what is commonly known as a ‘late companionate marriage’ pattern, where women were in their early twenties rather than their early teens at first marriage, and where a significant proportion of women may not have married at all.<sup>17</sup> Thus for towns that witnessed a decline in population between the late fourteenth and the early sixteenth centuries the twin features of high mortality and low fertility may not have been offset by replacement through migration. Conversely, as at Canterbury, the increase in population level, albeit Alan Dyer characterises the city as ‘marginal’, that is showing both growth and shrinkage over the long fifteenth century, would suggest that migration was a significant factor in the city’s history during this period.<sup>18</sup> These findings provide some ideas regarding migration and longevity, but are still of necessity relatively crude in terms of short- and medium-term trends and provide only limited qualitative evidence.

Some of these shortcomings can be addressed for a few towns because of the particularity of their civic records. Among such towns are Exeter and Canterbury, the records of the former employed by Maryanne Kowaleski for her book on that cathedral city in the later fourteenth century.<sup>19</sup> In addition, she has published extensively on women as workers, as well as on particular industries, for example fishing and leather, which highlight the role of relations between countryside and town, and that the movement of goods was matched by the movement of people.<sup>20</sup> To a degree this can be replicated for Canterbury, as shown by the author’s study of women as independent businesswomen in fifteenth-century Canterbury published in *Archaeologia Cantiana* in 2017.<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, this study seeks to complement this approach by assessing migration and social mobility for both sexes, not least because the records for men are far more extensive. Consequently, by examining the annual civic licencing system for two twenty-year periods either side of 1400 and 1500 (part of the reigns of Richard II, Henry IV and Henry V; and Richard III and Henry VII) that offer a valuable contrast, it is possible to investigate the varying fortunes of those outside the freedom who were permitted to reside and work independently within Canterbury’s liberty.

These two periods were selected because it has been suggested that Canterbury’s economy had declined significantly by the later fifteenth century, especially with respect to textile production that previously had been exceedingly important, employing perhaps almost a third of the city’s population in the earlier period.<sup>22</sup> Provisioning and accommodation for pilgrims and travellers also provided employment opportunities during the earlier period, which coincided with an extensive building programme by Christ Church Priory inside and outside the cathedral precincts, the latter including several large inns.<sup>23</sup> In contrast the more challenging economic circumstances of the later period led, amongst other

matters, to the introduction of protectionist policies by certain guilds and the city authorities.<sup>24</sup> Other measures of this decline include falling rental incomes for Christ Church Priory, the largest landlord in the city, and the presence of empty properties, seen in the city rentals as well as those of the priory.<sup>25</sup> Consequently, the evidence concerning these independent traders for the later period might be expected to show a fall in their numbers, as well as a decline in the proportion who were able to establish themselves successfully in the city. Nevertheless, presumably the economy was not the sole factor and continuing outbreaks of plague throughout the long fifteenth century, as well as the sweating sickness from 1485 may have deterred potential migrants in some years.<sup>26</sup> Yet, conversely high mortality in the city, especially during the earlier period when the economy was stronger, may have offered opportunities to those willing to risk urban life.

Even though not all the resident independent traders listed would have been migrants, it seems likely a large majority would have been because, according to the city's fourteenth-century customal, apprentices who had served for seven years and could pay a fee of 4*s.* 8*d.* would be free.<sup>27</sup> Thus the annual lists of 'intrans' that the common clerk compiled for each of the city's six wards are likely to provide valuable evidence of the level of migration over time, the propensity of particular occupations, ideas about stability and longevity, the likelihood of socio-economic advancement and the place of women in the economy.<sup>28</sup> Notwithstanding that the customal does not specifically mention the intrants, the regulations do state that those others (not freemen) who wish to 'exercise a craft and open windows without leave' need to 'make an agreement and come to terms with the chamber of the said city'.<sup>29</sup> This reference to an 'agreement' presumably refers to the fee paid annually by the intrants who were permitted to reside and work as independent craftsmen and shopkeepers within Canterbury extensive liberty, which extended well beyond the city wall to the south and east. Whether this system had existed before 1392/3 is unknown but the list was compiled from the first year of the earliest extant chamberlains' account book.<sup>30</sup> Thereafter the lists were drawn up annually except for a very few years in the fifteenth century that would seem to coincide with times of political difficulty. Record keeping is poorer for the sixteenth century, which seems to reflect the more challenging economic circumstances of the post-Dissolution city. As noted above the intrants were listed by ward, although Ridigate ward is often omitted, the intrants apparently placed under the adjoining ward of Newingate. In addition to this spatial information, the records note the level of fine charged and whether it was for a full year, part of a year or multiple years. These varied from 2*d.* to 80*d.*, but most were under 20*d.* (see below). Names and occupation, although not universally recorded are fairly common, and for some women their marital status, including on occasion the forename of their husband. Within the historiography it is generally accepted that by the late fourteenth century locative surnames had become fixed, yet by tracing the named intrants year by year it seems that this was not universal and common clerks on occasion still named individuals using their place of origin.<sup>31</sup>

In addition, this study draws on other materials from the civic archive including freemen's lists, late fourteenth- and early fifteenth-century wills recorded in the burghmoot, and assize and petty court cases held before the city authorities. Later wills from the consistory and archdeaconry courts were also consulted to try to

identify intrants, especially those who had successfully enhanced their socio-economic position within Canterbury. Although the purpose of this study was to investigate migration and social mobility, rather than the more specific issue of immigration, the intrants lists do record the presence of aliens and the recent AHRC-funded project does provide the names and places of origin of 575 aliens in Canterbury for the period 1390 to 1510. Even though records for the majority fall outside the two periods discussed here, it is worth noting that sixty-seven of these people were servants and the highest number by occupation were thirteen *corvesors* [shoemakers]. From the nationality of origin, Flemings were the most numerous (59), followed by Scots (28) and 'Dutch' (23), albeit there were thirteen Hollanders, eight Gelderlanders and six Zeelanders.<sup>32</sup>

Before examining what the records reveal about the intrants' time in Canterbury, it is worth exploring what can be said regarding the city's catchment area. As noted above, Butcher concluded that Romney primarily drew in men from a radius of five miles and it seems likely that as a larger urban centre Canterbury would have had a more extensive hinterland that probably covered much of east Kent.<sup>33</sup> This is difficult to substantiate from the surviving civic records, yet place of origin was very occasionally used as an alias or might be recorded instead of occupational details.<sup>34</sup> Furthermore, with respect to aliens the surname itself can be revealing. Taken together the evidence indicates Canterbury drew migrants from east Kent towns such as Sandwich, Dover and Faversham, the local countryside (including Sarre, Chislet, Brook and Chartham), and also from Biddenden, Goudhurst, Sittingbourne and Rochester.<sup>35</sup> Looking beyond the county boundary, the numbers fell but Richard Lypel was a London spicer and Thomas Tailour was noted as having come from the ville of St Albans.<sup>36</sup> William Gregory had come from Salisbury and John Feller from Saltasshe in Devon, but there were others from the north of England such as Richard Martyn from Cumberland, John Helmesley from Newcastle upon Tyne, Agnes Tapstere of Pontefract, and John de Stowe from Scarborough, who had previously been at Bridlington, as well as John Alman from Yarmouth.<sup>37</sup> Few seem to have travelled from Scotland, notwithstanding that it is useful to note the higher number from the 'England's Immigrants' project, or Wales, but such people did appear very occasionally in the records, such as John Lucas, Welshman and Margaret Scottisshwoman.<sup>38</sup> Finally, turning to continental Europe, in addition to the aliens recorded in the national records from various places including Nijmegen (see above), Cornelio Kele had travelled to Canterbury from Antwerp in 1489 and nine years later John Willyams was listed as a Fleming.<sup>39</sup> However, according to the city's common clerks, most of the aliens were either 'Dutchmen' or 'Dutchwomen', including John Doucheman, Jacob Heye, Dowchman, Isabella Gowere, Douchewoman, and Jenetruda Duchewoman, but they also noted the presence in Canterbury *c.*1400 of Walter Dedrickisson, John van Cornbeck, and Isbrand Gerardsson and in *c.*1500 of Peter van Hamkyn and Cornelius Mighels.<sup>40</sup>

Turning to the intrants' lists in more detail, in a few cases it is difficult to identify individuals because of the clerks' recording practices and the problems of spelling but these instances are insufficient to alter the trends seen within the records. Moreover, rather than examine the total numbers of intrants year on year between 1392 and 1411, and 1485 and 1504, it is more useful to compare the numbers of

those whose names appear for the first time, which may correspond to new arrivals or those within a short time of their arrival in Canterbury. For the two periods as a whole, just over six hundred (606) individuals were recorded for the first time during the earlier period, whereas the number was just under four hundred and fifty (447) for the later period.

As an aside, the proportion of women classified as independent businesswomen by the clerks during these periods also varied, and, even though the numbers (and percentages of the total intrants) are small, women were more involved in the earlier period where they comprised just under ten per cent (9.4% or 57 women).<sup>41</sup> The equivalent figures for the later period are 31 women which is 6.9% of the total number.

Returning to the total numbers of 606 and 447, it may be more significant than a simple decline of 26% between the two periods because generally the licence fees required did not rise in line with skilled worker day rates between *c.*1400 and *c.*1500, which may indicate that the city authorities were more concerned to attract intrants during the later period. Indeed, one of the few occupations where fees roughly increased in terms of day rates was brewing, but even this did not apply to all the later (beer) brewers.

Furthermore, looking comparably at the two periods with respect to the annual figures and discounting the first year for each section because of its artificially high number, the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century saw more consistency and only in 1396 and 1397 did the number of new intrants dip below twenty to the very low numbers of eight and ten respectively, and for almost half (9 years) of the total period, the annual number of new intrants was thirty or over (see **Tables 1 and 2**). During the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, however, there was far greater disparity and in seven years fewer than twenty new intrants were recorded, the lowest numbers being in 1497, 1501 and 1504 when seven, five and four new intrants were listed respectively. Conversely, before that in 1491 and 1492 there was a surge in the numbers of new intrants to forty-seven and then forty, and the next highest figure of thirty-four was recorded in 1493, while the only other year having a comparable number was 1496 (30 new intrants). Seeking explanations for such differences is fraught with difficulty because of the diversity and complexity of the factors involved, but for the later period it is feasible the incidence of plague outbreaks may have been significant. In Canterbury high mortality from sickness took place in 1485, 1487, 1501, and probably in other years when there were national or regional outbreaks (1490, 1499, 1500, and 1503). Consequently, it is perhaps notable that after plague in 1487 and 1501 the numbers of new intrants surged markedly in the following year.<sup>42</sup>

Concerning stability and longevity, four out of every ten intrants were recorded for a single year during the first period, and the percentage was only very slightly higher for the later period (46%). A similar proportion (43%) during the earlier period was noted in the lists for between two to five years, even though this was not necessary consecutively. For example, John Stegle began his business as a weaver in Northgate ward in 1405. The following year he disappeared from the list but was recorded again for two years in 1407 and 1408. Unlike Thomas Huntebourne, a carpenter, who became a freeman in 1404, having worked as an intrant for one year in 1398, then three and finally a single year, there is nothing

TABLE 1: NEW INTRANTS BY YEAR OF ARRIVAL, 1392-1411, SHOWING YEARS OF RESIDENCE (SUBSEQUENTLY); NOS BECOMING FREEMEN

	No. years new intrants' names appear					Freemen
	Total	Only 1	2-5	6-10	10+	
1392	96	38	32	13	13	10
1393	32	9	17	4	2	0
1394	31	14	11	2	4	7
1395	22	8	9	3	2	3
1396	8	3	5	0	0	2
1397	10	2	4	2	2	2
1398	32	15	13	2	2	8
1399	28	11	12	4	1	4
1400	20	11	5	3	1	2
1401	26	8	16	1	1	1
1402	35	15	14	5	1	4
1403	21	12	7	0	2	2
1404	30	12	17	1	0	6
1405	25	9	12	3	1	1
1406	37	14	19	4	0	7
1407	27	17	10	0	0	0
1408	36	15	11	10	0	0
1409	26	15	5	6	0	3
1410	30	7	21	2	0	3
1411	34	15	19	0	0	3
Total	606	250	259	65	32	68

to show Stegle was able to accomplish this advancement.<sup>43</sup> Unfortunately, as with many of the intrants, the cause of his disappearance from the lists is unknown. Butcher believes one of the main factors was harvest sensitivity, although among the other possibilities are death, sickness or injury, survivors presumably turning to some form of employment, emigration or having to join the city's poor.<sup>44</sup>

Compared to the earlier period, the proportion of intrants who were recorded for between two and five years in the reigns of Richard III and Henry VII was lower (37%). This group, too, included a considerable number who were not recorded in consecutive years, and again some were able to become freemen thereafter, while others disappear from the civic sources. Among the former was John Rychere the tailor, who, having started as an intrant in 1496 was again present two years later in 1498, and became a freeman in 1500, paying 12*s*.<sup>45</sup> Apparently less successful was Robert Richardson who is first recorded as a miller in 1486. In the following three years he was the fee payer in 1487 and 1489, but it was his wife's name that was

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TABLE 2: NEW INTRANTS BY YEAR OF ARRIVAL, 1485-1504, SHOWING YEARS OF RESIDENCE (SUBSEQUENTLY); NOS BECOMING FREEMEN

	No. years new intrants' names appear					Freemen
	Total	Only 1	2-5	6-10	10+	
1485	54	18	28	5	4	10
1486	20	11	4	4	1	3
1487	11	6	3	2	0	4
1488	27	13	12	1	1	7
1489	24	11	9	3	1	5
1490	12	5	4	2	1	1
1491	47	26	10	7	4	8
1492	40	23	11	5	1	5
1493	34	11	13	8	2	3
1494	14	8	3	1	2	2
1495	16	7	8	1	0	1
1496	30	8	19	3	0	5
1497	7	2	4	1	0	1
1498	24	12	7	5	0	0
1499	17	11	5	1	0	1
1500	12	7	4	1	0	3
1501	5	2	1	2	0	1
1502	26	13	10	3	0	4
1503	23	9	12	2	0	1
1504	4	4	0	0	0	0
Total	447	207	167	57	17	65

entered by the clerk in 1488. Although no explanation is given in the chamberlains' book, it is feasible that he had suffered injury, sickness or other misfortune and in order to maintain their milling business his wife had taken responsibility for its continuance. Moreover, such personal issues may explain his subsequent disappearance from the records.<sup>46</sup>

Less than one in five independent workers during both periods had the ability or desire to remain in Canterbury for between six and ten years, or even longer (Tables 1 and 2). Yet, some artisans were apparently prepared to remain as intrants for long periods, such as Richard Osemond, who had started tailoring in 1405 and was still at work a decade later, having transferred his business after the first year from Worthgate to Newingate ward. Others, however, wished to become freemen, perhaps for security as well as economic and social advantages, and amongst these was another tailor. Having prospered, Robert Peny's annual fee rose from 6*d.* to



12*d.* and he had moved from Northgate to Burgate ward, in 1402 after nine years as an intrans he became a Canterbury freeman, paying 10*s.*<sup>47</sup> Nevertheless, there was considerable variation regarding the stability of the businesses managed by these intrans, the greatest difficulties seemingly experienced at the start or in their final years. Richard Clerke, a saddler in Northgate ward appears to have struggled initially to maintain his workshop. He is first listed in 1485 and over the next decade he was fined only three times as an intrans, but from 1496 he was sufficiently established in Northgate ward that he was still running his business there in 1511 and his annual licence fee had increased slightly from 4*d.* to 6*d.* Richard Lechour seems to have experienced more problems at the end of his time as an intrans because he maintained his tailor's business in Worthgate ward for a decade until 1402, but the following year it may have been his son or another relative who paid the same fee of 8*d.* as a tailor. This William Lechour then disappears from the records and Richard reappears for a single year in 1405 when he was fined slightly less (6*d.*).<sup>48</sup>

### *Trades and Crafts*

Assessing the occupational profile of the intrans and discounting those whose trade is unknown, it appears that for both periods half the intrans were involved in either the leather or clothing industries (see **Tables 3 and 4**). In part this reflects the considerable importance of these industries in the city's economy in the later medieval period, because Canterbury's location at the centre of an agrarian regime based on mixed farming where cattle predominated, although not to the exclusion of sheep, drew in livestock to its markets for local consumption and to feed these industries.<sup>49</sup> Whether there is any significance in the difference between the relative involvement of intrans (27/41%) in these two industries for the early and late fifteenth century is unclear, but it may be worth noting that the earlier larger number of leather workers had been reversed by the later period. In addition, among these workers, the high incidence of tailors and shoemakers or cobblers may reflect the position that it was presumably far easier to start an independent business if those involved had highly portable tools and did not require specialist premises.

Of the remaining occupations, about a quarter of the intrans for both periods were almost equally likely to be engaged in the textile or food industries. Even though the numbers are small, those working as independent weavers had fallen for the later period and presumably this had an even more detrimental effect on the numbers of women working as spinners who do not seem to have been recorded as intrans by the various common clerks.<sup>50</sup> Another change that seems to have occurred by the later period is a growing interest in linen rather than woollen cloth-making, and also the arrival of at least one person engaged in knitting.<sup>51</sup> Like tailoring, cap-making and shoe-making, knitting did not require a specialist workshop, but for the weavers the necessity of a loom may have required greater capital and limited their choice of premises. Nonetheless, there is little evidence of occupational enclaves in late medieval Canterbury compared to some towns, albeit the weavers were even more likely to work in Worthgate ward in the later fifteenth century than at the beginning of the century, which may relate to being upstream of

TABLE 3: NEW INTRANTS BY YEAR OF ARRIVAL, 1392-1411, SHOWING OCCUPATIONS

	leather	clothing	textiles	metal	retail	other	accommodation.	food	construction	not known	Total
1392	8	19	6	3	4	5	0	3	3	45	96
1393	5	1	3	0	1	1	0	3	1	17	32
1394	2	4	1	0	0	2	0	2	0	20	31
1395	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	3	0	14	22
1396	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	8
1397	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	10
1398	1	1	3	1	0	2	0	7	1	16	32
1399	3	5	2	2	2	2	0	3	3	6	28
1400	3	3	0	1	2	0	0	3	0	8	20
1401	1	5	3	2	1	0	1	2	0	11	26
1402	7	4	2	0	1	2	0	1	0	18	35
1403	4	1	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	12	21
1404	4	0	1	2	0	3	0	2	0	18	30
1405	1	3	2	1	0	0	0	1	0	17	25
1406	7	6	2	0	2	2	0	1	1	16	37
1407	7	1	2	2	0	0	0	1	0	14	27
1408	11	5	3	0	1	1	0	0	1	14	36
1409	5	1	1	1	2	0	0	3	1	12	26
1410	11	3	3	1	1	2	0	3	1	5	30
1411	6	5	3	1	3	3	2	3	1	7	34
Total	91	72	41	18	20	25	3	44	10	279	606
%	15	12	7	3	3	4	-	7	2	46	100

TABLE 4: NEW INTRANTS BY YEAR OF ARRIVAL, 1485-1504, SHOWING OCCUPATIONS

year	leather	clothing	textiles	metal	retail	other	accommodation	food	construction	not known	total
1485	14	14	5	7	3	7	0	2	2	0	54
1486	5	6	1	0	0	1	1	4	1	1	20
1487	3	4	0	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	11
1488	5	5	6	2	4	1	0	2	2	0	27
1489	4	3	3	0	4	1	2	4	2	1	24
1490	3	3	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	2	12
1491	10	8	3	4	5	3	3	4	2	5	47
1492	8	5	6	5	2	1	3	4	4	2	40
1493	6	11	3	4	1	0	1	5	2	1	34
1494	3	4	3	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	14
1495	5	3	1	1	2	2	0	2	0	0	16
1496	2	8	2	2	1	3	1	4	2	5	30
1497	1	3	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	7
1498	4	10	4	1	1	1	0	2	1	0	24
1499	1	6	1	3	1	1	2	2	0	0	17
1500	0	6	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	4	12
1501	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	3	5
1502	1	3	1	2	1	1	1	1	0	15	26
1503	3	3	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	14	23
1504	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	4
Total	78	107	42	36	25	27	15	42	20	55	447
%	17	24	9	8	6	6	3	9	4	12	100

the city centre, the presence of suitable workshops, as well as areas to set out their cloth for drying and other purposes.<sup>52</sup>

The passage of pilgrims and travellers, in addition to itinerant workers, to the city might have been expected to create opportunities for those supplying food and drink, especially during the earlier period when the trade was apparently more buoyant.<sup>53</sup> These included the staples of bread and ale through the activities of bakers and brewers, and around 1400, at least eight cooks and a piebaker, eight butchers and four spicers. However, c.1500 the profile had changed somewhat because in addition to the staples there were a similar number of butchers, but the cooks and spicers had very largely disappeared. Instead there was a fruiter, as well as several beer brewers, including John Poot who for two consecutive years paid 5s. annually before disappearing in 1498 from Newingate ward.<sup>54</sup>

Yet, in terms of the *provision of accommodation* during the earlier period, the level of involvement by intrants was limited, and even though around 1500 the numbers were still small and the majority paid under 20d. per year, at least a few of these men were prepared to pay higher fees to become innkeepers. For example, John Carpenter and John Falowfelde each paid 6s. 8d. in 1499, although neither was listed the following year. What lay behind these high fees is unclear but for the earlier period innkeeping may have been so attractive that the city's inns were almost all held or rented by freemen. In contrast, by 1500 returns had fallen sufficiently that opportunities had become available for others, and a few were prepared to take the risk in the expectation of financial rewards.<sup>55</sup> Nonetheless, it is probably worth noting that even Rafe Preston, the leaseholder of Christ Church Priory's great *Cheker of Hope*, was unable to maintain his business there.<sup>56</sup>

Together, the other occupational groups of *metalworking, construction, retail and miscellaneous crafts* involved small numbers of intrants during both periods, and in many cases they were only listed for a single year. However, for some of these goldsmiths, armourers, surgeons, apothecaries, scribes and book binders this may not always denote failure to prosper or even survive. Rather some may have fulfilled a particular contract, while for a few it seems to have been preparatory to becoming freemen of Canterbury. Among this latter group were John Tomas the whistle maker who joined the freemen after a year in 1392 and John Plomer, an armourer, who was an intrant for three years before paying 10s. to become a freeman in 1407.<sup>57</sup> For the later period, Thomas Bokengham was licenced to trade as an apothecary in 1489 and within two years he, too, had become a Canterbury freeman, paying 12s.<sup>58</sup>

### *Locating businesses*

The desire to reside close to those from the same region or ethnic group has and continues to be an important issue among migrants. Furthermore, this may extend to matters of shared occupation and is likely to have been a significant factor for those starting to live and work independently in late medieval Canterbury. As noted above, the intrant weavers during the later period generally congregated in Worthgate ward, but where precisely is unclear. The division of the liberty into six wards, compared to at least fifteen city parishes, means that designation by ward alone is relatively imprecise and does not identify whether the intrant lived

inside or outside the walls.<sup>59</sup> This is especially true for Ridिंगate, which was predominantly beyond the walls, albeit much of this suburban area was lime pits and other industrial workings, as well as fields and it was also a dumping ground for rubbish and other waste. Worthgate and Northgate wards, too, had extensive suburbs, while the smaller Burgate and Newingate wards were split roughly equally between land inside and outside the city wall, and it was only Westgate ward that contained little beyond the wall except for a small area of water meadow (this also extended inside the city wall).

Nevertheless, intrants during both periods were most likely to set up in business in Burgate ward, followed closely by Westgate ward c.1400, but this preference was slightly less marked around 1500. The presence of the butchery and associated Bullstake (the baiting of bulls before slaughter was seen as essential by the city authorities) in Burgate ward may partly explain this popularity because in addition to the butchers a sizeable proportion of the allied skimmers and pelters resided there for obvious convenience. The tailors, too, favoured Burgate, which may be connected to the proximity of the cloth market, albeit it was in neighbouring Newingate ward. For those engaged in the food industry and accommodation, these wards were similarly advantageous because Burgate was adjacent to the cathedral precinct and Westgate ward contained the principal route into the heart of the city from London. Such choices may reflect the socio-economic status of many of the intrants who, having accumulated sufficient capital to operate independently, were relatively well placed within Clark's hierarchical pyramid and thus could favour these two wards. In contrast, the generally far poorer wards of Ridिंगate and Northgate were the least favoured, even though the tiny numbers for Ridिंगate may be an underestimate (see above).<sup>60</sup> As a consequence, intrants were apparently deterred from instigating a business in Ridिंगate except for a few weavers and a smith, and for four years during both time periods no new intrants began trading in Northgate ward. When they did the annual numbers were small and they followed a range of trades from weaving and tailoring to metal working.

Regarding migration within the city, it is only feasible to ascertain movement between wards of those who were listed for more than a year; about one in five moved at least once to another ward, notwithstanding the numbers who relocated twice were tiny. Success or failure could have been the reason for such mobility, and even though any changes in licence fees may indicate the relative health of the intrant's business, how this relates to moving wards is far less clear. Yet the spicer Hugh Goldsmith's move from Worthgate ward to Burgate after a single year, his fee rising from 12*d.* to 16*d.*, and his subsequent payment of 10*s.* to become a freeman in 1395 may indicate considerable success.<sup>61</sup> For the later period, Thomas Fynche's career as a currier is probably less straightforward because he moved from Westgate to Worthgate ward after a single year, his fee falling from 20*d.* to 16*d.* Thereafter he disappears from the lists for two years before paying 16*d.* as a currier in Worthgate ward in 1495, but the following year he was able to pay to become a freeman. Nevertheless, whatever the reasons behind such relocations, it was presumably far easier for some craftsmen to move compared to their neighbours, thus offering greater flexibility in terms of residence.

For migrants, the value of joining relatives has long been recognised. This may have happened in late medieval Canterbury, yet the evidence is difficult to interpret

because some common surnames probably do not denote kinsmen. Nevertheless, for sizeable minorities there were shared surnames among male intrants for both periods (62 in the earlier period, 41 in the later), which may indicate both extended and nuclear family connections. Among these for the earlier period were William, John and Nicholas Fulbourne. William had begun trading as a tailor in Burgate ward in 1384, and, although not fined annually continuously, a William Fulbourne was still there in 1411, having paid 6*d.* per annum. One of the years when he was missing is 1407 and that year John Fulbourne paid the same fee and he, too, was in Burgate ward. Nicholas Fulbourne is only listed in 1405 and 1406, firstly in the neighbouring ward of Newingate and then Westgate, each time paying a similar amount. Unfortunately the occupations of John and Nicholas are not recorded, but it is conceivable that these men were closely related. Among the father and son combinations is Ingel Pigeon and his son, the elder Pigeon paying 6*d.* in both 1403 and 1404, while Ingel junior began his career as an intrant (occupation not specified) seven years later, also in Burgate ward and at the same licence fee. Turning to the later period, William and John Ingram were both bookbinders in Burgate ward. William was the first to become an intrant, paying for one year in 1485, John two years later at the same fee of 4*d.*, but in the following year he became a stationer and paid slightly more, but thereafter both men disappear from the civic records.

### *Households and Families*

Even though the number of studies regarding the role of women as workers in medieval society has grown in the last thirty years, as significant contributors to the economy they remain understudied compared to their male counterparts, not least because the sources are limited and often difficult.<sup>62</sup> As noted above, Goldberg has examined the incidence of life-cycle servanthood, especially with regard to migrants, using ecclesiastical court depositions. Looking at the Canterbury records, like their male colleagues, some among the independent businesswomen working in urban society were probably migrants, and those given the surname 'Duchewoman' or variant spellings were aliens. Furthermore, for the period around 1400 it seems toponymical surnames had not completely disappeared from the records, because Isolde Stafford appears to be the same woman as Isolde Tappestere.<sup>63</sup> Even though the numbers of businesswomen are small in fifteenth-century Canterbury, the civic authorities apparent willingness to designate women as independent workers, whether as fee payers or in the city's courts including wives (the civic authorities recognised the legal status *femme sole* from the 1460s) in addition to single women (spinsters and widows), suggests that they were viewed as important contributors to the local economy.<sup>64</sup> Nevertheless, the more challenging economic conditions experienced in Canterbury during the later period may be reflected in the smaller number of women around 1500 compared to *c.*1400, and it is noticeable that a large majority of the female intrants were only recorded once, perhaps again indicative of the experiences they faced establishing themselves.<sup>65</sup>

Yet, as noted above, the combination of husbands and wives was apparently crucial for some households. Even though it is not always clear what (if any) relationship exists between men and women with the same surname in these

records, that is are these primarily married couples or mothers and sons, the clerks increasingly designated women as the wife or widow of her named husband.<sup>66</sup> One couple who apparently prospered using this strategy in the earlier period were Thomas and Margaret Kyppyng. Following two years of fines as the wife of Thomas while they were in Northgate ward, he took responsibility for the family's business after they moved to Newingate in 1394. Assuming the fees paid relates in some way to the health of their business, the couple were thriving because the fine rose incrementally from 1s. under Margaret to 1s. 8d., remaining at this level until early 1411 when Thomas paid 10s. to become a freeman.<sup>67</sup> Thereafter they apparently remained in Newingate ward, Thomas's message recorded as being at Otehelle (Oaten Hill) in 1417 when he was also cited as a major beneficiary in Nichola Pickard's will.<sup>68</sup>

For the later period, the Sparowe kin group provide a complex example, comprising three married couples, the husbands perhaps brothers.<sup>69</sup> All were involved in the flax trade in some form and resided in Burgate ward. For over a decade from 1493 one member of this extended family was fined as an intrans, as though that person was seen as responsible by the city authorities for the Sparowe family business. The initial fee of 4d. was far lower than that paid thereafter, which was either 10d. or 12d., and may indicate that the family began trading within the civic year or that initially the business was small-scale. Of the three couples, Robert and his wife appear to have started the enterprise, but within a couple of years it was John, William and their wives who were responsible until 1505 when William was the last member recorded as an intrans, the family thereafter disappearing from the records.

To conclude, the intrans' lists and other civic records provide a useful window on late medieval migration and social mobility, albeit there are problems of designation because it is unclear what proportion of the intrans were migrants. Furthermore, such sources offer methodological challenges regarding such issues as familial and marital relationships. However, notwithstanding these concerns, this article has investigated that group of migrants within Clark's hierarchical pyramid who are frequently overlooked – small-scale craftsmen and traders, who might aspire to join the freemen of their town, but equally might fail as independent businessmen. This group, who in the later sixteenth century came to be known as the 'middling sort', often saw the period around 1400 as a time of opportunity, although for their successors a century later this may have been less so. Yet life was still precarious, whether due to external factors such as market forces or internal issues such as chronic infirmity or industrial accidents, and, for the intrans examined here, the role of other household or family members appears often to have been crucial, even in the short term. Consequently, through this assessment of Canterbury's intrans at either end of the fifteenth century, this study has added to the wider, but still limited scholarship on migration and social mobility, by demonstrating the importance of the regional movement of people, the interdependency of town and countryside, and the considerable variation in the lived experiences of those who sought 'pavements paved with gold' in late medieval towns.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> C. Dyer, *An age of transition? Economy and society in England in the later middle ages* (Oxford, 2005), p. 36.

<sup>2</sup> T.B. James, 'Migration and the Southampton melting pot in the fifteenth century', *Southern History*, 28 (2006), pp. 1-3. Even though some individual town studies mention outsiders, often they receive relatively little attention; N.R. Amor, *Late medieval Ipswich: trade and industry* (Woodbridge, 2011), pp. 73-8; J. Laughton, *Life in a late medieval city: Chester 1275-1520* (Oxford, 2008), pp. 88-91, 103-6.

<sup>3</sup> C. Dyer, 'Social mobility in medieval England', in S. Carocci and I. Lazzarini (eds), *Social mobility in medieval Italy (1100-1500)* (Rome, 2018), p. 23. Also see, C. Dyer, 'Local societies on the move in the middle ages: migration and social mobility in England 1100-1500', British Association for Local History annual lecture 2017.

<sup>4</sup> England's Immigrants 1330-1550 project: <https://www.englishimmigrants.com/> [accessed 25/03/2017].

<sup>5</sup> James, 'Migration', pp. 8, 12, 16; P. Clark, 'The migrant in Kentish towns 1580-1640', in P. Clark and P. Slack (eds), *Crisis and order in English towns, 1500-1700* (London, 1972), pp. 117-63.

<sup>6</sup> Clark, 'Migrant', pp. 134, 138, 145.

<sup>7</sup> P.J.P. Goldberg, *Women, work, and life-cycle in a medieval economy: women in York and Yorkshire c.1300-1520* (Oxford, 1992).

<sup>8</sup> P.J.P. Goldberg, 'Marriage, migration, servanthood and life-cycle in Yorkshire towns of the later middle ages', *Continuity and Change*, 1 (1986), pp. 141-69.

<sup>9</sup> Clark, 'Migrant', pp. 134, 138.

<sup>10</sup> See especially; Goldberg, *Women*, pp. 26-38, 280-304.; Clark, 'Migrant', pp. 118-34.

<sup>11</sup> Clark, 'Migrant', pp. 128-32, 136-8.

<sup>12</sup> A.F. Butcher, 'The origins of Romney freemen, 1433-1523', *Economic History Review*, 2nd series, 27 (1974), p. 20.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>14</sup> For example, James Broke of St Mary Northgate parish in Canterbury also left bequests for tithes forgotten to St Mary's, Reculver, wanted burial in the churchyard of St John's, Thanet, and at his death had land in the parishes of Reculver and Chislet; Kent History and Library Centre [hereafter KHLC]: PRC 17/2, fol. 133.

<sup>15</sup> Even though these records can provide ideas about migration, they have been used more often to assess changing population levels and the relative position of towns in the late middle ages; A. Dyer, *Decline and Growth in English Towns, 1400-1640* (Basingstoke, 1991); and for an analysis of a particular town, see Coventry: C. Phythian-Adams, *Desolation of a city: Coventry and the urban crisis of the late middle ages* (Cambridge, 1979), and a re-evaluation of the evidence; D. Leech, 'Stability and change at the end of the Middle Ages: Coventry, 1450-1525', *Midland History*, 34 (2009), pp. 1-21.

<sup>16</sup> James, 'Migration', pp. 4-5.

<sup>17</sup> Goldberg, *Women*, pp. 8-20; R. Gilchrist, *Medieval Life: archaeology and the life course* (Woodbridge, 2012), pp. 38, 53, 114.

<sup>18</sup> A. Dyer, *Decline and growth in English Towns 1400-1640* (Basingstoke, 1991), p. 73.

<sup>19</sup> M. Kowaleski, *Local markets and regional trade in medieval Exeter* (Cambridge, 1995).

<sup>20</sup> Among her many publications: M. Kowaleski, 'Women and work in a market town: Exeter in the late fourteenth century', in B. Hanawalt (ed.), *Women and work in pre-industrial Europe* (Bloomington, 1986), pp. 145-64; Kowaleski, 'Town and country in late medieval England: the hide and leather trade', in P. Corfield and D.J. Keene (eds), *Work in towns, 850-1850* (Leicester, 1990), pp. 57-73; Kowaleski, 'The demography of maritime communities in medieval England,' in M. Bailey and S. Rigby (eds), *England in the age of the Black Death: essays in honour of John Hatcher* (Turnhout, 2012), pp. 105-112.

<sup>21</sup> S. Sweetinburgh, 'Shepsters, hucksters and other businesswomen: female involvement in Canterbury's fifteenth-century economy', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, CXXXVIII (2017), pp. 179-99.



<sup>22</sup> A.F. Butcher, 'The social structure of Canterbury at the end of the fourteenth century' (unpubl.); Canterbury Cathedral Archives and Library [hereafter CCAL]: Pamphlet M/22/34.

<sup>23</sup> According to Butcher's calculation using the city 'Murage book' [CCAL: CC-B/A/D/1] the priory had eleven inns; *ibid.* It was not the only institution which owned inns because in 1410 the bailiffs and commonalty acquired *The Lyon* (previously known as 'The Lyon at Hoop') next to the Guildhall; CCAL: CC-Woodruff 37/4.

<sup>24</sup> CCAL: CC-Woodruffs/54/9; CCAL: CC-AC/1, fol. 33.

<sup>25</sup> A.F. Butcher, 'Rent and the urban economy: Oxford and Canterbury in the later middle ages, *Southern History*, 1 (1979), pp. 16-18, 37-43; S. Sweetinburgh, 'Looking to the past: the St Thomas pageant in early Tudor Canterbury', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, CXXXVII (2016), pp. 165-70.

<sup>26</sup> C. Rawcliffe, *Urban bodies: communal health in late medieval English towns and cities* (Woodbridge, 2013), pp. 363-72; S. Sweetinburgh, 'Pilgrimage in 'an age of plague': seeking Canterbury's 'hooly blisful martir' in 1420 and 1470', in L. Clark and C. Rawcliffe (eds), *The Fifteenth Century, XII* (Woodbridge, 2013), pp. 60-1.

<sup>27</sup> A.R. Myers (ed.), *English Historical Documents*, vol. IV (London, 1969), p. 570, citing Bodleian: MS Tanner 165; Butcher, 'Social structure of Canterbury', note 7.

<sup>28</sup> These are recorded in the city chamberlains' account books; CCAL: CC-FA/1 and FA/2 for the period under discussion here. They have been transcribed; J.M. Cowper (ed.), *Intrantes: a list of persons admitted to live and trade within the city of Canterbury, 1392-1592* (Canterbury, 1904).

<sup>29</sup> This would seem to be the closest to a definition of the term that the contemporary records provide; Myers, *Documents*, p. 569.

<sup>30</sup> For the purposes of this study, the date given is for the start of the civic accounting year.

<sup>31</sup> P. McClure, 'Patterns of migration in the late middle ages: the evidence of English surnames', *Economic History Review*, 2nd series, 32 (1979), pp. 167-82.

<sup>32</sup> For Canterbury; [https://www.englandsimmigrants.com/search/results?keyword=Canterbury&startDate=1380&endDate=1510&col1=name&col2=nationality&col3=date&col4=origin&col5=residence&page=6&residenceTown\\_untouched\\_facet=Canterbury](https://www.englandsimmigrants.com/search/results?keyword=Canterbury&startDate=1380&endDate=1510&col1=name&col2=nationality&col3=date&col4=origin&col5=residence&page=6&residenceTown_untouched_facet=Canterbury) [accessed 12/01/2017].

<sup>33</sup> Butcher, 'Romney freemen', p. 19; Clark, 'Migrant', p. 126.

<sup>34</sup> For example, John Malpas of Faversham (1496).

<sup>35</sup> CCAL: CC-J/B/181; CC-J/B/215; CC-J/B/217; CC-J/B/222; CC-J/B/281; CC-J/B/282; CC-J/B/287; CC-J/B/298.

<sup>36</sup> CCAL: CC-J/B/181; CC-J/B/215.

<sup>37</sup> CCAL: CC-J/B/181; CC-J/B/215; CC-J/B/222; CC-J/B/289.

<sup>38</sup> CCAL: CC-J/B/217; CC-J/B/289.

<sup>39</sup> Of the aliens in the 'England's Immigrants' project, the most detailed records are found for 1436, including Gerard Albright from Nymme, Gildeland [Nijmegen, Guelders]. CCAL: CC-J/B/289; CC-J/B/298.

<sup>40</sup> CCAL: CC-J/B/215; CC-J/B/222; CC-J/B/282; CC-J/Q/286.

<sup>41</sup> Sweetinburgh, 'Shepsters', p. 186.

<sup>42</sup> Rawcliffe, *Urban bodies*, pp. 370-1.

<sup>43</sup> J.M. Cowper (ed.), *The roll of the freemen of the city of Canterbury from AD 1392 to 1800* (Canterbury, 1903); Thomas Hunterbourne paid 10s. to become a freeman, which seems to have been about the usual level, such fees ranging between 2s. and 20s.; CCAL: CC-FA/1, fol. 67v.

<sup>44</sup> Butcher, 'Social structure of Canterbury'.

<sup>45</sup> CCAL: CC-FA/2, fol. 318v.

<sup>46</sup> Cowper, *Intrantes*.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*; Cowper, *Freemen*; CCAL: CC-FA/1, fol. 54v.

<sup>48</sup> Cowper, *Intrantes*.

<sup>49</sup> B.M.S. Campbell, 'Agriculture in Kent in the high middle ages', in S. Sweetinburgh (ed.), *Later medieval Kent, 1220-1540* (Woodbridge, 2010), pp. 29-35; Butcher, 'Social structure of Canterbury'.

<sup>50</sup> Sweetinburgh, 'Shepsters', p. 186.

<sup>51</sup> A debt case involved 'yearn' and six 'knyttyng nedils' valued at 4d.; CCAL: CC-J/B/289.

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<sup>52</sup> Butcher, 'Social structure of Canterbury'. John Blakbrok left to his wife all his lands and tenements in the parishes of St Mildred and St Mary de Castro that included two shops with a 'teynte' [area for drying and stretching cloth] and other appurtenances in St Mary de Castro parish [in Worthgate]; CCAL: CC-OA/1, fol. 2v.

<sup>53</sup> Sweetinburgh, 'Pilgrimage', pp. 59, 71.

<sup>54</sup> Cowper, *Intrantes*.

<sup>55</sup> Among those who had an inn within his property portfolio in the 1390s was John Roper of Westgate next Canterbury who owned *le Croune* in the central city parish of St Andrew, this inn having previously belonged to John Tyece another wealthy individual; CCAL: CC-OA/1, fol. 20.; CC-OA/2, fol. 4.

<sup>56</sup> As landlord, Christ Church Priory assessed his goods when he was unable to pay the priory; CCAL: DCc/RE 16.

<sup>57</sup> Cowper, *Intrantes*; CCAL: CC-FA/1, fol. 80v.

<sup>58</sup> Cowper, *Intrantes*; CCAL: CC-FA/2, fol. 232v.

<sup>59</sup> Butcher uses the city's 'murage' book to assess the characteristics of the different wards for the late fourteenth century; Butcher, 'Social structure of Canterbury'.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> Cowper, *Intrantes*; CCAL: CC-FA/1, fol. 23.

<sup>62</sup> Goldberg, *Women*, pp. 3-20; Sweetinburgh, 'Shepsters', pp. 185-8.

<sup>63</sup> Cowper, *Intrantes*; CCAL: CC-J/B/217.

<sup>64</sup> CCAL: CC-J/B/263.; Sweetinburgh, 'Shepsters', p. 188.

<sup>65</sup> Sweetinburgh, 'Shepsters', pp. 186-7.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> CCAL: CC-FA/1, fol. 94v.

<sup>68</sup> CCAL: CC-OA/1, fol. 31v.

<sup>69</sup> Cowper, *Intrantes*.