

# **The Medieval English Urban Cook**

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## Abstract

### **Abstract**

This thesis explores the place of late medieval English urban cooks in their towns and cities. It takes as its point of departure a 1519 quote from William Horman in his *Vulgaria*, 'That my coke can not do : the towne coke shal fulfyll,' which contains an implicit understanding of the role of cooks in an urban environment. This thesis examines the activities of cooks, both the town or common cook and the private or household cook. It explores their economic situation, and the way they were perceived both by the municipal authorities and by the other inhabitants of the municipality. It utilises civic records, wills and probate inventories, literary sources, and archaeological evidence with the goal of building context which can inform the future study of medieval urban cooks.

The first chapter examines common cooks from an administrative perspective, using various regulations as a window not only onto the activities of cooks, but also asking what those regulations imply about how cooks were viewed by the municipal authorities. The second chapter considers cooks from the perspective of other urban inhabitants. It asks what perceptions were held of cooks by town or city dwellers and how the cooks viewed themselves. It interrogates the sources to determine what activities cooks were engaged in and what may be determined about their economic situation. The last chapter asks what differentiated a common cook from a household cook, and whether any differences were qualitative or quantitative. The conclusion brings the various strands together to provide a fuller context for urban cooks than any single perspective could offer.

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I must thank my parents, Jerry and Linda Berry, who encouraged me from an early age to learn to cook. None of us could have imagined that a road which started with cookies and crêpes in Colorado would lead to frumenty and mortrews in the UK.

I have nothing but gratitude and admiration for those fellow enthusiasts who introduced me to medieval cookery and encouraged me in its practice. Chief among these are Marie Heuser-Fickas, Jennie Bennett, and Billye Roberts. They not only provided me with my first taste of medieval cuisine, but also with opportunities to cook medieval meals for dozens, and upon occasion hundreds, of my friends.

Most importantly, my gratitude is due to my wife, Lorree True, without whom I would quite literally not be here. It was her unwavering support that allowed us to uproot ourselves from our old life in New York to build a new life in old York.

Finally, to all those people over the years who have eaten my food, medieval and otherwise, and listened to me ramble on at length about six-hundred year old recipes - thank you for indulging me.

## Declaration

### **Author's Declaration**

This thesis is the result of work undertaken by the author at the University of York in the pursuit of this degree. Where references have been made to the work of other scholars, it has been cited and acknowledged appropriately in the text and in the bibliography. No part of this work has been published or presented prior to this time, nor is it under consideration for publication or presentation at this time.

## Introduction

In 1519, William Horman wrote in his *Vulgaria*, a Latin grammar with a selection of English sentences followed by Latin translations, 'That my coke can not do : the towne coke shal fulfill.'<sup>1</sup> This simple statement has embedded within it a myriad of meaning. It speaks of a class of professional cooks, and of distinctions between a common cook and a private cook operating within a home or household. Implicit within it is an understanding of cooks and cookery in an urban environment. Medieval urban cooks and medieval urban cookery have been generally neglected as a field for research. This is not to say that there is no scholarship about medieval cookery. On the contrary, significant work has been done in the broader area of medieval provisioning and diet, primarily using account rolls and archaeological evidence.<sup>2</sup> The scholarship provides significant insight into the raw materials that make up the medieval diet, particularly the diet and eating habits of great households and large institutions, since it is from such groups that the most extensive and complete accounts survive. The evidence about meat and fish consumption derived from bones and shells requires relatively undisturbed repositories of such items, such as middens or other waste sites, and suitable sites are commonly only found in situ in large rural establishments. The account rolls may provide documentation for cooks employed by such establishments, but these rolls also tend to be limited to large households and institutions, and are primarily rural in nature.

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<sup>1</sup> William Horman, *Vulgaria* [Vnlitaria viri doctissimi Gui. Hormanni Caesarisburgenis] EEBO Pagination, (London: Wynkyn de Worde, 1530), 169.

<sup>2</sup> Christopher Dyer, *Everyday Life in Medieval England* (London: Hambledon, 1994); Christopher Dyer, "Do Household Accounts Provide an Accurate Picture of Late Medieval Diet and Food Culture?" in *La Vie Matérielle Au Moyen Age: L'Apport Des Sources Littéraires, Normatives Et De La Pratique.*, eds. Emmanuelle Rassart-Eeckhout and others (Louvain-la-Neuve: Publications de l'Institut d'Etudes Médiévales, 1997), 109-125; C. M. Woolgar, *The Great Household in Late Medieval England* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999); C. M. Woolgar, ed., *Household Accounts from Medieval England, Part 1*, Vol. 17 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992) ; Barbara F. Harvey, *Living and Dying in England, 1100-1540 : The Monastic Experience*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

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The study of medieval cuisine itself has been greatly aided by the publication of transcriptions and scholarly editions of medieval cookery books, or as they might more accurately be termed, recipe collections, a significant number of which were written entirely or primarily in English.<sup>3</sup> These sources are invaluable in that not only do they show to what uses the ingredients which had been purchased were put, but they can also be mined for information about what activities were nominally under the direction of the cooks in the kitchens. These collections are almost invariably associated with great households, and, while some of these households may have been located at times in towns or cities, such households are exceptional in size, complexity, and wealth, and can not be thought of as typically urban in any real sense.

Cookery has been the subject of some scholarly research, using the above sources, as well as a wider array of materials, including visual images from manuscripts, such as the oft-referenced *Lutrell Psalter*, literary sources, and various ordinances, laws, and statutes which refer to cooks.<sup>4</sup> These studies are concerned predominantly with how the foods were prepared, that is to say cookery, and only secondarily with the individuals involved in the actual preparation, the cooks themselves. When they do address cooks, they tend to focus on cooks embedded in large households, which is only logical as the majority of the sources are attributable to

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<sup>3</sup> Constance B. Hieatt, *An Ordinance of Pottage: An Edition of the Fifteenth Century Culinary Recipes in Yale University's MS Beinecke 163* (London: Prospect, 1988) ; Constance B. Hieatt and Sharon Butler, *Curye on Inglysch : English Culinary Manuscripts of the Fourteenth Century (Including the Forme of Cury)* (London: EETS, 1985) ; Constance B. Hieatt, *Cocatrice and Lampray Hay* (Devon: Prospect Books, 2012) ; Richard Morris, *Liber Cure Cocorum* (Berlin: A. Asher and Co., 1862) ; Thomas Austin, ed., *Two Fifteenth-Century Cookery-Books*, (London: EETS, 1888). There are several French language editions as well, some with English translations and some without, notably: Terence Scully, *The Vivandier : A Critical Edition with English Translation* (Totnes: Prospect Books, 1997); Taillevent and Terence Scully, *The Viandier of Taillevent : An Edition of all Extant Manuscripts* [Viandier de Taillevent.] (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1988) ; Chiquart and Terence Scully, *Chiquart's 'On Cookery': A Fifteenth-Century Savoyard Culinary Treatise*, Vol. 22 (New York: Peter Lang, 1986) ; Georgine Elizabeth Brereton and Janet Mackay Ferrier, *Le Menagier De Paris* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981, 1846), in an English edition as Gina L. Greco and Christine M. Rose, *The Good Wife's Guide (Le Ménagier De Paris): A Medieval Household Book* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009).

<sup>4</sup> Terence Scully, *The Art of Cookery in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1995). Bridget Ann Hensch, *The Medieval Cook* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2009).



such households. The cooks are present in spirit, for without them the cookery could not take place, but they are mostly absent from the discourse in a meaningful sense; they are presented only as means to an end, the end being the food on the table. When urban cookery is considered, the invisibility of the cook becomes even more apparent. The studies are relatively silent on urban cooks, since most of the sources are themselves relatively silent on such cooks. A notable exception is the work of Martha Carlin, who has published two important articles about the role of urban cooks in feeding a municipality.<sup>5</sup>

Several scholars have investigated the broader topic of food and food culture in the Middle Ages, which necessarily involves some discussion of cooks and issues surrounding them.<sup>6</sup> *The Culture of Food in England*, by C. M. Woolgar, is a far-reaching study with much to say about the role of food and cooks in Medieval England, but it was published after the research for this thesis was essentially complete, and I am therefore unable to engage with it as fully as it deserves.<sup>7</sup>

The question of what defines a cook is a broad one, and one that can not easily be answered. A cook may perform other tasks, and not everyone who cooks is so designated. For this thesis, I will concern myself primarily with what I shall call professional cooks. This distinction, while not completely satisfactory, is sufficient to begin an investigation. Simply put, a professional cook in this context is a person who is designated or referenced by their profession in a given source. In the documentary sources, this is sometimes explicitly noted, such as an entry in the Freeman's Register of

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<sup>5</sup> Martha Carlin, "Fast Food and Urban Living Standards in Medieval England," in *Food and Eating in Medieval Europe*, eds. Martha Carlin and Joel Thomas Rosenthal (London: Hambledon Press, 1998), 27-51; Martha Carlin, "Putting Dinner on the Table in Medieval London," in *London and the Kingdom : Essays in Honour of Caroline M. Barron : Proceedings of the 2004 Harlaxton Symposium*, eds. Matthew Davies and Andrew Prescott (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2008), 58-77.

<sup>6</sup> See for example: Bridget Ann Henisch, *Fast and Feast : Food in Medieval Society* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1976); and for a popular readership, P. W. Hammond, *Food and Feast in Medieval England* (Stroud: Sutton, 1993).

<sup>7</sup> C. M. Woolgar, *The Culture of Food in England 1200-1500* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2016).

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York which notes, 'John Marshall, cook.'<sup>8</sup> Sometimes, an occupational byname may identify a cook, such as references in the Nottingham Borough Court Rolls to Isabella Coke though such identifications are less reliable in the absence of some supporting indication; in the case of Isabella she is variously referred to as 'le Coke' and 'the cook.'<sup>9</sup> Cooks may collectively be referred to in a source, such as the York *Constituciones cocorum*, or references to cooks in Parliamentary statutes such as the *Judicium Pillorie*.<sup>10</sup> Within this class of professional cooks, I consider from the outset two subsets, with the understanding that they may not be disjoint sets: common cooks and household cooks. This distinction is immediately problematical when dealing with household cooks, that is to say with cooks who are servants in a household hierarchy. The person who does the cooking in a smaller urban household may not be designated as a cook. By the previous rubric, if they are not designated as cooks, they are not 'professional' for the purposes of this thesis. Common cooks, Horman's 'towne coke' or the *cocis communibus* referred to in the York Memorandum Book, are perhaps most easily defined by what they are not – they are not household cooks.<sup>11</sup> The scope of activity of the common cooks is one of the questions which will be addressed in this thesis, but the salient point is that they are not directly attached to a single household. A further aim of this thesis is to clarify what distinctions, if any, the medieval mind made between types of cooks.

Such distinctions are not static. Cooks might serve as common cooks at some point in their career, and as private cooks at another; they might also practice other trades sequentially or concurrently. That cooks could, and sometimes did, cross the boundary from private to common is attested to by several entries in the London Letter-books. In the first, Hervey, "late cook to Sir William de Carleton," is admitted to the

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<sup>8</sup> Francis Collins, ed., *Register of the Freemen of the City of York: Vol. 1: 1272-1558*, (Durham: Surtees Society, 1897).

<sup>9</sup> University of Nottingham Urban Culture Network, published electronically at <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/ucn/onlinesources/index.aspx>. *Nottingham Borough Court Rolls 1303-1457* 1351-52\_\_ca1263\_\_, 72, #429 ("Isabella Coke"); 79, #472 ("Isabella le Coke"); 1355-56\_\_ca1267\_\_, 11-12, #66 ("Isabella the cook").

<sup>10</sup> Maud Sellers, ed., *York Memorandum Book Part II. (1388-1493) Lettered A/Y in the Guildhall Muniment Room*, Surtees Society, 125 (1915); *Statutes of the Realm, Vol. 1*, Temp. Incert., 201-202.

<sup>11</sup> Sellers, ed., *York Memorandum Book Part II*.

franchise of London in 1311 upon paying 22s. 6d.<sup>12</sup> This payment is quite high in comparison to the sums paid by other cooks enrolled at roughly the same time. Thirteen of the twenty-five cooks admitted during this time paid half a mark (6s. 8d.), with another five paying 10s., and the rest paying various sums up to 20s. Hervey paid the most of any cook, more than three times the most common charge, although a few persons of other trades gave even more. This is not altogether surprising. Typically the payment required of someone who did not complete his apprenticeship locally was higher than that of someone who did. The second example is that of Master John de Laxfeld, cook to the sheriffs. He was admitted, also in 1311, without charge, pardoned by reason of his service to the sheriffs.<sup>13</sup> A slightly earlier example, from 1309-10, is that of Simon Burgeys, admitted on payment of 1 mark, at request of the Friars Minor whom he had served.<sup>14</sup> That cooks might practice multiple trades concurrently is demonstrated in the list drawn up of all victuallers in York for a legal action against them in 1304. John de Neuton appears as both a cook and taverner; Roger le Keu as cook and regrator; John de Duream as a cook, taverner, and brewer; and Thomas de Tollerton as a cook and brewer, and he may possibly be the same Thomas de Tollerton who was enrolled as a Freeman with the craft of girdler.<sup>15</sup>

Overall, there has been little scholarly work focussing on the urban cooks. It is this lack, which I hope to address in this thesis. I shall take an interdisciplinary and synthetic approach and explore a variety of sources relating to medieval urban cooks with the intent of providing a better understanding of the role of cooks in the urban environment. My aim is to contextualize the urban cook. Not only will the activities of cooks be examined, but I will attempt to determine as much as possible the attitudes and perceptions held by various segments of the urban population with respect to cooks and their craft. To reiterate, however, for this thesis I shall be considering primarily professional cooks: persons or groups who are referred to singly or collectively as

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<sup>12</sup> Reginald R. Sharpe, ed., *Calendar of Letter-Books of the City of London: D : 1309-1314* (London: HM Stationery Office, 1902), 73.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 76.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 44.

<sup>15</sup> Michael Prestwich, ed., *York Civic Ordinances, 1301*, Borthwick Paper 49 (York: St Anthony's Press, 1976), 22-28; Collins, *Register of the Freemen of the City of York*, 10.

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cooks. I do this in the full knowledge that the majority of those who cooked do not fall into that category.

### **Major Sources Used**

Although I will be using a wide variety of sources in this thesis there are several broad categories or types which I rely on heavily or which I utilize in different ways in different chapters. Those major types are outlined below. In all cases throughout this thesis, where translations are given, they are mine unless otherwise noted.

### **Memoranda Books**

This thesis makes extensive use of civic ordinances and other entries in civic records. This is a fruitful exercise since they not only contain information on the regulatory concerns of the civic authorities, but also reflect embedded assumptions about social class and economic status from the point of view of the civic authorities, and reflect an implicit understanding of how cooks operated in and interacted with the urban environment and population. Such sources must be used with caution. As James Davis puts it, 'The enactment of an ordinance or statute did not necessarily elicit compliance nor directly mirror the practice of traders in the market.'<sup>16</sup> Regardless of whether a given law was regularly or diligently enforced or not, it indicates both a concern of the regulator and has a perspective. These concerns and the perception of cooks may be deduced to some extent from the records. I have chosen ten reasonably large urban areas with good surviving records which contain information specifically relating to cooks and to a few closely related trades. I have furthermore restricted myself largely to published records, since the lateral nature of the thesis precludes extensive examination and transcription of unpublished civic archives. By examining records across a number of cities and towns, more general trends and conclusions may be

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<sup>16</sup> James Davis, *Medieval Marketplace Morality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 137.

determined. The wide lateral scope is also needed since the data concerning professional cooks is limited and fragmentary, as it is with many of the poorer and less literate segments of society.<sup>17</sup>

**Table 1: Population of Urban Areas Under Consideration**

| Town or City Name | 1377 Poll Taxpayers |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| Beverley          | 2,663               |
| Bristol           | 6,345               |
| Colchester        | 2,955               |
| Coventry          | 4,817               |
| Ipswich           | 1,507               |
| Leicester         | 2,101               |
| London            | 23,314              |
| Norwich           | 3,952               |
| Southampton       | 1,152               |
| York              | 7,248               |

Source: Adapted from Russell, *British Medieval Population*<sup>18</sup>

It is worth noting at the outset that these ten towns and cities were among the largest in England during the Later Middle Ages, and, while actual population figures are difficult to assess accurately, they all had taxed populations of over one thousand as reported in the 1377 poll tax, which indicates that the actual population was much

<sup>17</sup> Some of these problems are explained with great clarity by Barbara Hanawalt. Barbara A. Hanawalt, "Reading the Lives of the Illiterate: London's Poor," *Speculum* 80, no. 4 (2005), 1067-1086.

<sup>18</sup> Josiah Cox Russell, *British Medieval Population* (Albuquerque: Univ. of New Mexico Press, 1948), 142-143. See also: Jennifer Kermode, "The Greater Towns 1300-1540," in *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain*, ed. D. M. Palliser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 442. I have not used Russell's analysis of actual population, restricting myself to his data concerning the poll tax numbers. These figures are in accord with Kermode's data for towns which had taxed numbers close to, or in excess of, 2,000. That is to say, all of the listed areas except for Ipswich and Southampton.

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higher, since children under the age of 14 and the very poor were not included.<sup>19</sup> The question of how best to estimate population based on existing evidence is a complicated one, and one which I do not intend to address; for my purposes, it is enough to know that these are large towns by the standards of England in the Later Middle Ages.

An important feature of these various urban areas is that they had some level of self-government. Indeed, this was almost a necessity for a town to function. This ability was usually achieved by a grant of rights from some higher authority, secular or ecclesiastic. Once the right to self-government had been granted, the administrative and bureaucratic structure to implement that right began to appear. In some cases, this structure could be quite complex, while in others it was relatively simple.<sup>20</sup> The administrators themselves were typically drawn from the upper strata of the inhabitants, that is to say, wealthy merchants, artisans, or tradesmen. The mayors, aldermen, jurats, and council members, regardless of what name was in use, came from the burgesses or citizens of the borough, were involved in the business of the borough, and usually remained in the borough or city when their term of office was done. Many of these people were part of an oligarchic structure which governed the borough, appearing again and again over the years in various offices.<sup>21</sup> These officials were embedded in the life of the city, and possessed an internal view and understanding of the cooks as opposed to an external one.

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<sup>19</sup> For further analysis of the poll tax and its utility and limitations see: P. J. P. Goldberg, "Urban Identity and the Poll Taxes of 1377, 1379, and 1381," *The Economic History Review* 2nd ser. 43, no. 2 (May, 1990), 194-216.

<sup>20</sup> The topic of medieval civic government is a complex one. For some general insight see: Stephen H. Rigby and Elizabeth Ewan, "Government, Power and Authority 1300-1540," in *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain*, ed. D. Palliser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 291-312.

<sup>21</sup> 'Throughout Britain urban government may have seemed magisterial in appearance but was almost invariably oligarchic in practice.' R. B. Dobson, "General Survey 1300-1540," in *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain*, ed. D. M. Palliser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 280. For examples, see also: Maryanne Kowaleski, "The Commercial Dominance of a Medieval Provincial Oligarchy: Exeter in the Late Fourteenth Century," *Mediaeval Studies* 46 (1984), 355-384; R. H. Britnell, *Growth and Decline in Colchester, 1300-1525* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 127-130; Jane Laughton, *Life in a Late Medieval City: Chester, 1275-1520* (Oxford: Windgather, 2008), 118-123; Arthur F. Leach, ed., *Beverly Town Documents* (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1900), xxvii.

A concomitant of the development of a governing structure was the generation of civic records. A wide variety of records exist in an urban setting – court records, wills, guild accounts, and correspondence to name a few. Many urban areas created some sort of general register, custumal, or memorandum book, wherein important ordinances and other records were enrolled.<sup>22</sup> These are particularly useful since their common feature is that they are reflective to some extent of the concerns of the civic administration. Simply put, at some point the civic authorities, or some subset of persons within it, thought that the data were worth recording. Their judgement as to what was worth recording in memorandum books or general registers was made not from the perspective of an outsider, nor do I think from the single perspective of a town-clerk, as has been suggested by Mary Bateson, but from that of persons with an active interest in the borough and who were involved in its governance.<sup>23</sup> Large towns of the Later Middle Ages had many common concerns, and these registers reflect that. One common thread running through all of these sources is concern about the management of the food resources of the town, that is to say the victualling trades, including cooks. I have focussed on these sources for reasons outlined before in the full knowledge that these sources represent only a fraction of the archival material which exists, even for the towns and cities I have selected. The specific sources for my chosen *urbs* are as follows:

*The Great Gild Book of Beverley* was begun at the beginning of the fifteenth century, and entries continued to be made until the late sixteenth century. It begins with a section claiming to record the customs of the town from time out of mind, and concludes with ordinances for various guilds, including cooks.<sup>24</sup> The ordinances of the

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<sup>22</sup> For a discussion of the types of sources available for the study of urban history in this time period see: Caroline M. Barron, "Sources for Medieval Urban History," in *Understanding Medieval Primary Sources: Using Historical Sources to Discover Medieval Europe*, ed. Joel Thomas Rosenthal (London: Routledge, 2012), 163-176. The topic is also touched upon in: Dobson, "General Survey 1300-1540," 278-281.

<sup>23</sup> 'These records treat of mediaeval life almost exclusively from one point of view, that of the town clerk.' Mary Bateson, ed., *Records of the Borough of Leicester, Vol. 1* (London: C. J. Clay, 1899), lxi.

<sup>24</sup> Leach, ed., *Beverley Town Documents; Report on the Manuscripts of the Corporation of Beverley* (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1900).

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cooks are not included in full in the published edition, and I have supplied that lack myself from the manuscript.<sup>25</sup>

*The Little Red Book of Bristol* also contains the ancient customs, but adds to them proclamations of the common council. It also includes guild ordinances, and a wide variety of other material. The entries range from the mid-fourteenth to the late sixteenth century.<sup>26</sup> *The Great Red Book of Bristol* probably originated at a slightly later date – E.W.W. Veale suggests c. 1376 – and contains primarily deeds and wills, although it may have been pressed into service later to record information similar to that of the *Little Red Book* as the pages of that volume were filled.<sup>27</sup>

*The Coventry Leet Book* while nominally the record of the Leet, a petty court, contains a series of ordinances and by-laws, showing the Leet, in the words of Mary Dormer Harris, as 'less as a judicial than as a legislative body.'<sup>28</sup> It is, in fact, a record of the borough government. Its entries range from 1420 to 1555. Cooks and matters relating to cooks appear in the business of the Leet from time to time, and ordinances relating to them are recorded.

*The Ipswich Domesday* is from the outset a recording of the old customs of Ipswich, written in the early fourteenth century, with some parts having been erased and rewritten. It contains some additional material, such as boundaries, and names of officials. A translation of the Anglo-Norman was made during the reign of Henry VI,

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<sup>25</sup> Beverley, East Riding Archives, BC/II/3/1

<sup>26</sup> Francis B. Bickley, ed., *The Little Red Book of Bristol, Vol. 1* (Bristol: Bristol Council, 1900) ; Francis B. Bickley, ed., *The Little Red Book of Bristol, Vol. 2* (Bristol: Bristol Council, 1900).

<sup>27</sup> E. W. W. Veale, ed., *The Great Red Book of Bristol, Text (Part I)*, Vol. 4 (Bristol: Bristol Record Society, 1933) ; E. W. W. Veale, ed., *The Great Red Book of Bristol, Text (Part III)*, Vol. 16 (Bristol: Bristol Record Society, 1951). The speculation about dates and use is contained in the first volume, on pages 1-3.

<sup>28</sup> Mary Dormer Harris, ed., *The Coventry Leet Book, Parts 1 and 2*, (London: Early English Text Society, 1907), ix.



and contains some additional ordinances. The clear implication is that the ordinances and regulations were still in use.<sup>29</sup>

London has a particularly rich series of municipal records. Among them is a remarkable series known as the 'Letter-books,' as they are distinguished by a single or double letter, as 'A' or 'AB,' comprising fifty volumes, with entries beginning in 1275 and continuing well into the Early Modern era. They are the records of the court of the aldermen and common council, and contain a diverse range of material, including civic ordinances and guild ordinances. Extracts were published as *Memorials of London and London Life, in the XIIIth, XIVth, and XVth Centuries* in 1868, and extensive calendars of all the volumes began to appear in 1899.<sup>30</sup> The calendars usually do not reproduce material which was published in *Memorials*. All of the above are available online in electronic editions.<sup>31</sup>

*The Oak Book* of Southampton, with entries dating from c. 1300 into the sixteenth century, consists primarily of the 'ancient laws and ordinances' applicable to the borough. As with the Ipswich *Domesday*, a medieval English translation was made of the original Anglo-Norman. The date of the *Oak Book* translation is 1473.<sup>32</sup>

York has a set of records known as *The Memorandum Books*, which cover the period from 1376 to 1493, and which contain a wide variety of material. They have complete ordinances for many guilds, including that of the cooks, and much other information about the functioning of the city.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Travers Twiss, ed., *Monumenta Juridica, the Black Book of the Admiralty, Appendix Part II*, Rolls Series, 55 (London: Longman & Co., 1873).

<sup>30</sup> Henry Thomas Riley, ed., *Memorials of London and London Life, in the XIIIth, XIVth, and XVth Centuries*. (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1868); Reginald R. Sharpe, ed., *Calendar of Letter-Books of the City of London: A : 1275-1298*, (London: HM Stationery Office, 1899)

<sup>31</sup> *British History Online*, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk>

<sup>32</sup> P. Studer, ed., *The Oak Book of Southampton, Vol. 1*, (Southampton: Cox & Sharland, 1910).

<sup>33</sup> Maud Sellers, ed., *York Memorandum Book Part I. (1376-1419). Lettered A/Y in the Guildhall Muniment Room*, Surtees Society, 120 (1912); Sellers, ed., *York Memorandum Book Part II*.

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Although not recorded in a general register, there also exists a set of civic ordinances concerning York which is dated to 1301, and which survives in the exchequer plea roll.<sup>34</sup> These ordinances have a particular focus on the victualling trades, and were produced by a royal council of Edward I in cooperation with the civic authorities, as a result or by-product of the temporary relocation of the royal government to York during the King's campaigns against the Scots. They reflect a more direct royal influence than the entries in the purely civic registers, but provide a useful point of comparison, and one which is remarkable both for its early date and the scope of the data recorded.

*The Red Paper Book of Colchester* is of a very miscellaneous character, with results of court cases, town ordinances, charters, and more. The oldest entries are from the mid-fourteenth century, and the latest from the mid-sixteenth.<sup>35</sup> As with other memorandum books, cooks and their trade appear as objects of regulation.

Two sets of records are more fragmentary and the published editions are more heavily edited, especially with regard to which records have been included, than most of the other sources mentioned. This does not render them useless, but it does restrict their utility. *The Vellum Book* of Leicester was written, for the most part, in the fourteenth century, and contains records of interest to the borough, including copies of earlier charters. *The Hall Book* is a fifteenth-century innovation and was the place where many ordinances and regulations were recorded.<sup>36</sup> Norwich has an extensive set of archives. Of particular interest to this thesis is a surviving set of books which contain legislation and ordinances enacted by the civic authorities. These records begin in the late thirteenth century and proceed well into the seventeenth.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Prestwich, ed., *York Civic Ordinances*.

<sup>35</sup> W. Gurney Benham, ed., *The Red Paper Book of Colchester* (Colchester: Colchester Town Council, 1902).

<sup>36</sup> Bateson, ed., *Records of the Borough of Leicester, Vol. 1* ; Mary Bateson, ed., *Records of the Borough of Leicester, Vol. 2* (London: C. J. Clay, 1901).

<sup>37</sup> William Hudson and John Cottingham Tingey, eds., *The Records of the City of Norwich, Vol. 2* (Norwich: Jarrold & Sons, 1910).

## **Court Rolls**

Court rolls provide an insight into the interactions of various people, including cooks, from a legal perspective, but not necessarily a top-down perspective. The actions I will be considering are those in which cooks are either plaintiffs or defendants, but where the other party is also a private person, that is to say, private litigation through the courts. I will be using primarily the Nottingham Borough Court Rolls, which survive in good detail for the period 1303 to 1457, and which have been extensively calendared by Trevor Foulds and J.B. Hughes.<sup>38</sup> The relatively complete and continuous survival of the Nottingham Borough Court Rolls for such a span make them particularly useful for extracting data about individuals over multiple years. The court dealt with disputes between burgesses, and had jurisdiction over a number of different plaints; the most common appears to be debt, perhaps to a theoretical maximum of 40s., but often for much smaller amounts.<sup>39</sup> It is worth noting at the outset that cooks who did not run afoul of other burgesses will not appear in the record; those who heeded Polonius' advice to 'neither a borrower nor a lender be' were unlikely to appear in a record which is so heavily slanted toward debt (unless they also had a propensity toward small acts of violence).

## **Wills and Probate Inventories**

The third category of document I will examine are wills of urban cooks and their spouses. I will be concentrating on the diocese of York, and utilizing primarily the Exchequer Probate Registers held at the Borthwick Institute for Archives. I have chosen this set of wills primarily because of the scope of the record. There is a large set of wills with fairly good coverage across the Later Middle Ages. Within the Exchequer Probate Registers, there are twenty such wills which were enrolled before 1500, with

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<sup>38</sup> *Nottingham Borough Court Rolls 1303-1457*. (NBCR) A useful users guide is provided. Richard Goddard, *Nottingham's Borough Court Rolls: A user's Guide*, <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/ucn/documents/online-sources/nottinghamsboroughcourtrolls-usersguide2.pdf>

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 3 and fn 9, 4 and fn. 11.

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the earliest dating to 1390. I have augmented these wills with other wills of cooks from other records and from published collections.

Probate inventories were made after death and were concerned with assessing and valuing the goods of the deceased. These inventories are tied to wills, and thus to the will-making class. Ninety probate inventories survive for the York diocese for the years 1350 - 1500, with all but four dating to the fifteenth century; these have been translated by P.M. Stell.<sup>40</sup> It is worth noting, in passing, that probate inventories survive much less frequently than wills do, and that this number is exceptionally high. This makes this source particularly valuable. While none of the inventories are for cooks, they provide insight into the physical environment in which cooks operated. The inventories are usually divided by room, with the goods present in each room listed and valued. However, of the ninety, twenty are either compressed summaries or list only cash values without itemizing goods. One further inventory, that of Richard Symson, is defective, missing at least one membrane and the missing data includes that for the kitchen.<sup>41</sup> Of the remaining sixty-nine, forty-eight contain entries for rooms which are labelled as kitchens. However, other spaces also contain equipment and utensils which indicate that food preparation took place, so the remaining twenty-one must not be neglected in the investigation.

### Literary Material

I will also be considering literary material, much of which was generated in an urban environment. Chaucer lived and worked in London, and Langland spent time there as well.<sup>42</sup> My analysis includes an investigation of the mystery plays of York, of Chester,

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<sup>40</sup> P. M. Stell, ed., *Probate Inventories of the York Diocese, 1350-1500* (York: York Archaeological Trust, 2006).

<sup>41</sup> Stell, *Probate Inventories*, 673-675. The rest of the inventory is sufficiently extensive, and includes enough service items, that I am confident a kitchen existed.

<sup>42</sup> Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. Larry D. Benson, Third ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), xi-xxii; R. H. Hilton, "Lords, Burgesses and Hucksters," *Past & Present*, no. 97 (Nov., 1982), 3-4.

and of the Towneley manuscript.<sup>43</sup> The way that cooks are depicted in fiction in the Middle Ages must, to some extent, reflect contemporary views or stereotypes of those cooks; quite simply, such characters do not exist in a vacuum. That is not to say that these depictions are true to life; they must necessarily be affected by the designs of the author with respect to their own opinions, the audience for whom the work is intended, and larger issues of literary convention. A thorough investigation of these factors is well beyond the scope of this thesis. However by treating these works in a fashion similar to the way that any other historical text is approached, useful information may be gleaned from them concerning the topic at hand.<sup>44</sup>

## Structure

This thesis presents three chapters, each touching on a different aspect of medieval urban cooks and their craft. The first chapter examines common cooks from what might be termed an administrative perspective, parameterizing activity, and exploring such civic attitudes as may be present explicitly and implicitly in sources generated by those in positions of authority. The second chapter considers common cooks from the perspective of other inhabitants of the town. I attempt to determine in more detail their socioeconomic situation and develop a clearer indication of social determinants of their activities. The third chapter investigates how common cooks interacted with other households and spaces, considering questions of how and when they served as private or household cooks and how they functioned in their roles as caterers or additional help for larger feasts. In my conclusion, I will attempt to braid these three strands together to

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<sup>43</sup> Clifford Davidson, ed., *The York Corpus Christi Plays* (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications/TEAMS Middle English Text Series, 2011); R. M. Lumiansky and David Mills, eds., *The Chester Mystery Cycle, Vol. I*, (London: Early English Text Society, 1974); R. M. Lumiansky and David Mills, eds., *The Chester Mystery Cycle, Vol. II*, Vol. 9 (London: Early English Text Society, 1986); Martin Stevens and A. C. Cawley, eds., *The Towneley Plays. Vol. 1* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994); Martin Stevens and A. C. Cawley, eds., *The Towneley Plays. Vol. 2* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1996).

<sup>44</sup> For a discussion of using such sources see: Stephen H. Rigby and Alastair J. Minnis, "Preface," in *Historians on Chaucer*, eds. Stephen H. Rigby and Alastair J. Minnis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), v-viii; Stephen H. Rigby, "Reading Chaucer: Literature, History, and Ideology," in *Historians on Chaucer*, 1-23.

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provide a clearer understanding of urban professional cooks than has been heretofore available. I shall also suggest some distinctions in the way they worked and how the ways they worked affected the way they were perceived by their contemporaries.

### A Note on Currency and Money

In the medieval era, currency was divided into three denominations: pounds, indicated by £ or abbreviated in texts as simply the letter 'L'; shillings indicated by the letter 's'; and pence, indicated by the letter 'd,' from the Latin *denarius*. There were 12 pennies to the shilling, and twenty shillings to the pound. A pound was, therefore, 240 pence. The mark was not a unit of currency, no mark coins were issued, but was used for accounting purposes. One mark was equal to two-thirds of a pound – 160d, or 13s 4d. Some values which appear odd or arbitrary at first glance, such as 3s 4d, become less so when one realizes that they are fractions of a mark; 3s 4d is 40d, or one-quarter of a mark.

The real value of money in the Middle Ages is difficult to assess, and I do not intend to address it in any great detail. For an overview and analysis the reader is directed to Christopher Dyer's *Making a Living in the Middle Ages*.<sup>45</sup> I will provide only a few reference points. A 1350 London regulation fixed the day rate for masons, carpenters, and plasterers at 5d or 6d, depending on the time of year. In the same ordinance, cooks were limited to charging a single penny for preparing a capon or rabbit pasty.<sup>46</sup> In *Standards of Living in the Later Middle Ages*, Dyer points out that although masons and carpenters 'could earn £3 to £5 in the late thirteenth century, and £5 to £7 in the late fifteenth' this was gross annual income, and after expenses their profit would be perhaps two-thirds that amount.<sup>47</sup> It is hoped that these few examples provide some context for the relative value of some of the fines, fees, and prices which follow.

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<sup>45</sup> Christopher Dyer, *Making a Living in the Middle Ages: The People of Britain 850-1520* (New Haven Conn.: Yale University Press, 2002). Part Three (Chapters 8 - 10), and specifically Chapter 8, section iv are particularly relevant.

<sup>46</sup> Henry Thomas Riley, ed., *Memorials of London and London Life, in the XIIIth, XIVth, and XVth Centuries*. (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1868), 253-254.

<sup>47</sup> Christopher Dyer, *Standards of Living in the Later Middle Ages : Social Change in England c. 1200-1500* (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 196.

### Chapter One, Cooks and the City

In this chapter, I will consider the situation, role, and understanding of urban professional cooks from what might be termed an administrative perspective. I will be looking primarily at records generated by civic authorities, which by their very nature are reflective of the concerns of those authorities. As James Davis put it, 'A fear of famine, dearth, and social disorder meant that many town councils desired detailed supervision of the victual trades.'<sup>48</sup> Given those overriding concerns, it is only to be expected that a common thread running through all of these sources is the management of the food resources of the town, that is to say the victualling trades, including cooks. These are the entries on which I shall be focussing my attention in this chapter, in an attempt to provide some context for cooks in the larger population of victuallers. I will discuss the punishments indicated for cooks who violate laws and ordinances, and what that suggests concerning the economic status of cooks. I will also include a discussion of those whom the civic authorities perceived as the clientele of the cooks.

I will first touch on a key statute, the *The Statute of York*, which was, at least in theory, directly applicable across the entire realm, and which demonstrably had an effect on local regulation. I will proceed to examine three broad categories of regulation which appear in the records. The first concerns what might today be called food safety and consumer protection, the second addresses sanitation, and the third deals with trade and market regulations applicable to cooks. In each case, I will consider what these regulations have to say about the practices of the cooks, but also attempt to extract what implications they have for the way the authorities viewed the cooks. Next I will consider what the ordinances have to say about the clientele of common cooks. I will conclude by investigating the ordinances of the cooks' guilds, which require special consideration, since they exist at a unique intersection of civic and guild interests.

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<sup>48</sup> James Davis, *Medieval Marketplace Morality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 29.



## The Statute of York

In 1318, on the heels of the 'Great Famine,' the Statute of York was promulgated. Much of the statute is concerned with the use of the courts, and with abuse of privilege by officers and administrators. Capitulum VI prohibited officers of cities and boroughs who, because of their office, were responsible for enforcing assizes of wine and of victuals from trafficking in wine or victuals either wholesale or retail.<sup>49</sup> As was common with statutes of the realm, this article made its way into local regulations. An entry in *London Letter-book G*, dating to 1370, which is concerned with various matters relating to public order, including issues of regrating and food quality, concludes with this:

It is further forbidden that any Mayor, Sheriff, Alderman, or their clerks, serjeants, beadles or valets of serjeants, or officer of Neugate henceforth brew, by themselves or by others, for sale, or keep an oven or follow any mercantile pursuit that is thought degrading; nor shall they be regrators or "hucsterres" of any kind of victuals, and he who refuses to swear to this let him be put out of office.<sup>50</sup>

This local legislation resembles the statute, but has a certain local flavour, and reflects similar concerns. Embedded in the London ordinance is an idea that the victualling trades in general are, in some vaguely understood way, untrustworthy.<sup>51</sup> The statute bans office holders from pursuing victualling trades, while the London ordinance bans only 'degrading' pursuits, regrating, and the petty retailing of the huckster. As will be shown, the cooks were often associated with regrating, and cooks were likely forbidden

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<sup>49</sup> 'nul ministre, en Cite ne en Burgh, qi p(ar) reson de son office deit garder assise des vins & des vitailles ... ne marchaunde des vins ne des vitalles, en gros ne a retail.' *Statutes of the Realm, Vol. 1*, 12 Edw. II, 178.

<sup>50</sup> Reginald R. Sharpe, ed., *Calendar of Letter-Books of the City of London: G, 1352-1374* (London: HM Stationery Office, 1905), 272.

<sup>51</sup> Helen Carrel elaborates on this: 'Throughout the *Liber Albus*, it is evident that food retailers were regarded with suspicion by the London authorities.' Carrel also notes that the 1370 Letter-book entry quoted was included in slightly modified form in the *Liber Albus*. Helen Carrel, "Food, Drink and Public Order in the London *Liber Albus*," *Urban History* 33, no. 2 (2006), 185-186.

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from holding these offices, although as Heather Swanson points out, the wealthier trades often circumvented the restrictions.<sup>52</sup>

In 1382, a statute was enacted which broadened the scope of the earlier statute to include all victuallers from holding any judicial office, unless no other suitable person could be found, in which case the victualler should cease to practice that trade during his time in office on pain of losing all the victuals sold.<sup>53</sup> The basic premise from which this suite of regulation and legislation proceeds is the reasonable position that the fox should not guard the henhouse, inasmuch as those responsible for enforcing the assizes should not have a fiduciary interest in subverting them, and ends up with what is essentially a blanket condemnation of all victuallers as unfit for judicial office. While the original intent may have been laudable, a side-effect was to ban victuallers, including cooks, from one of the most effective avenues of social advancement, civic government.<sup>54</sup> The victualling trades, so essential to the survival of the *urbs* that significant legislation was deemed necessary to prevent their mismanagement and abuse, were consigned to a second-class state. There is no guarantee that the victuallers were in fact completely shut out of office-holding. As Davis puts it, 'for some petty traders and retailers, involvement in town government was possible, even if the law did not encourage it.'<sup>55</sup> However, in general, when speaking of the civic government, we are not speaking of cooks and it is important to remember in the following discussion that the perspective of most of these documents is external to the cooks who were affected by them.

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<sup>52</sup> Heather Swanson, *Medieval Artisans : An Urban Class in Late Medieval England* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989), 125-126.

<sup>53</sup> Reginald R. Sharpe, ed., *Calendar of Letter-Books of the City of London: H : 1375-1399* (London: HM Stationery Office, 1907), 209-210; *Statutes of the Realm, Vol. 2, 6 Ric. II, 28, c.ix.*

<sup>54</sup> For further discussion of the relationship between civic government, wealth, and power, see: Maryanne Kowaleski, *Local Markets and Regional Trade in Medieval Exeter* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 95-108.

<sup>55</sup> James Davis, *Medieval Marketplace Morality*, 168.

## Food Safety

One major concern of urban governance was providing food for the inhabitants, food which necessarily came from outside the *urbs* itself. Fernand Braudel considers the dependence of town-dwellers on the market for the food supply to be one of the defining features of a town, and Caroline M. Barron notes, 'A town therefore normally lives, at least in part, off food produced by people who live outside it.'<sup>56</sup> Food supplies for towns were of especial interest not only to the towns themselves, but also to the ruling classes. Not only did some of the aristocracy dwell in towns, but towns were the centers of trade and drove the economy. Urban governments not only needed to arrange for adequate food supplies but also to ensure that the food was safe for the inhabitants to eat. Bad food was thought to be a vector for infection, both by weakening the body's resistance to outside influence, but also by giving rise to 'miasmatic odours', which were themselves harmful.<sup>57</sup> This concern manifested itself in regulation.

The *Statutes of the Realm* contains a document known as the *Judicium Pillorie* which dates to roughly 1266.<sup>58</sup> Britnell notes that it 'is a list of the trading offences which some jury of presentment was required to report.'<sup>59</sup> It begins by expounding the punishments for violating the previous provision, the *Assisa Panis et Cervisie*, the Assize of Bread and Ale, the staples of the medieval diet. The assize tied the price of bread and ale to the price of grain; in the case of bread by fixing the price and varying the weight of a loaf. The *Judicium Pillorie* continues with instructions concerning the weighing of bread of the town or in the court (*panem villarum* and *panem in Cur*). The

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<sup>56</sup> Fernand Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th - 18th Century, Vol. 1: The Structure of Everyday Life*, trans. Siân Reynold (London: William Collins, 1981), 481. Caroline M. Barron, "Sources for Medieval Urban History," in *Understanding Medieval Primary Sources: Using Historical Sources to Discover Medieval Europe*, ed. Joel Thomas Rosenthal (London: Routledge, 2012), 163.

<sup>57</sup> Carole Rawcliffe, *Urban Bodies: Communal Health in Late Medieval English Towns and Cities* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2013), 237-240.

<sup>58</sup> *Statutes of the Realm, Vol. 1*, Temp. Incert., 201-202. Both the *Judicium Pillorie* and the *Assisa Panis et Cervisie* are listed as of 'Uncertain Date.' The 1266 date is probably the earliest possibility, but the exact date is not relevant for this particular discussion.

<sup>59</sup> R. H. Britnell, "Forestalling and the Statute of Forestallors," *The English Historical Review* 102, no. 402 (1987), 94.

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responsibility is laid on the bailiffs and stewards, who, in the absence of urban self-government, represented the royal or seigneurial authority, to oversee the statute. While the statute is broadly constituted, it seems clear that the main venue for its implementation is towns and markets. Punishment by pillory is directly associated with town and market – 'Also if they have in the Town a Pillory of convenient Strength, as appertaineth to the Liberty of their Market.'<sup>60</sup> Other clauses also refer to implementation in towns. The *Judicium Pillorie* continues on to make sweeping statements concerning food quality and food safety, not merely in the sale of ingredients, but also in the sale of prepared food, mentioning cooks explicitly in a list of offences which require correction:

Also with respect to the cooks, if they shall cook meat or fish in bread or in water or in any other way whatsoever so that it is not suitable to the health of men, or afterwards hold it so that it loses its good nature and reheat it and sell it.<sup>61</sup>

Although it is not explicitly stated, this clause is clearly intended to apply to common cooks operating in an urban environment. Even at this early date, cooks are identifiable as a trade, capable of being referred to collectively and, to some extent, managed collectively. Paraphrases, translations, and variations of the injunction concerning cooks appear in civic records until the end of our period. Latterly, they are sometimes referred to as 'assizes,' probably by analogy with the assize of bread and ale. For example, in 1474, Richard Braytoft, mayor of Coventry, caused to be enrolled an entry about the 'assize of a cook,' and in Colchester in the late fifteenth century an entry was made with nearly identical wording. The Colchester entry reads:

Also the sise of a Cook is that he sell both fyssh and flessch, and that he sell no fyssh ne flessch but if it be gode and helsom for manys body, both in sethyng,

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<sup>60</sup> *Item, si habeatur in villa pilloria debite fortitudinis, secundum quod pertinet ad liberatam mercatorum...* Ibid., 202. The quoted translation is the given one in the volume.

<sup>61</sup> *Item de Cocis, si qui decoquant carnes vel pisces in pane, vel in aq(ua), vel alio modo, non sanas corpori ho(min)is, vel postq(ua)m talia tenu(er)int, ita quod debitam nat(ur)am amiserint, & ea recalefaciant & vendant.* Ibid., 202.

roosting, an bakynge; that he sethe, roste, ne bake no maner mete twise, and if it be provid, his fyne is at any tyme iij*s* iij*d* and the iij<sup>d</sup> tyme to be juged un to the pilorie.<sup>62</sup>

The dating of this entry is a little uncertain. W. Gurney Benham puts it during the reign of Edward IV and the previous entry is from 1483. The Coventry entry is unambiguously dated to 1474 in the manuscript, which suggests a roughly contemporaneous period of enrolment. The wording differs only in the phrasing of the punishment, 'for and itt my be provid his fyne is att euey tyme xld. and if he will not be warre be ij warnynges, the iij<sup>de</sup> tyme to be Juged to þe pillory.'<sup>63</sup> (The three shillings and four-pence of the Colchester entry is, of course, 40 pence, a unit of account equal to a quarter-mark, and the fine is thus the same.) The similarity of wording suggests a roughly contemporary origin, but it seems probable that they derive from the entry in the *Judicium Pillorie*.

Not all of the regulations concerning the cooks' products were as comprehensive as the *Judicium Pillorie*. That statute may be considered to have two clauses, one prohibiting the sale of food which is unwholesome and one which specifically forbids reheating food. This last is a practice made notorious by Chaucer, whose Host says to the Cook, 'And many a Jakke of Dovere hastow soold / That hath been twies hoot and twies coold.'<sup>64</sup> The specific prohibition against reheating does not appear in the records of several towns. The Southampton ordinances of c. 1300 simply require 'seine et nette chose et bien quizte,' which appears in the 1473 translation as 'wholesome and clean provisions, and well cooked.'<sup>65</sup> Ipswich, similarly, has ordinances recorded in the *Ipswich Domesday*, which appear in French, and apparently date to the early fourteenth century: 'Ne qe nul de eux ne vende as priveez, ne as estranges, vyuande corrupue ne

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<sup>62</sup> W. Gurney Benham, ed., *The Red Paper Book of Colchester* (Colchester: Colchester Town Council, 1902), 19.

<sup>63</sup> Mary Dormer Harris, ed., *The Coventry Leet Book, Parts 1 and 2*, (London: Early English Text Society, 1907), 398-399.

<sup>64</sup> Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. Larry D. Benson, Third ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), I:4347-4348.

<sup>65</sup> P. Studer, ed., *The Oak Book of Southampton, Vol. 1*, (Southampton: Cox & Sharland, 1910), 50-53.

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descovenable pur cors de homme,' which occurs in the fifteenth-century English translation as, 'ne that non of hem selle to privy ne to straunge vitayles corrupt and discovenable to mannys body.'<sup>66</sup> There are several points worth considering here. Both of these entries date to the early fourteenth century, but both claim earlier origins. Paul Studer argued that the Southampton *Oak Book* may have articles which 'take us back to the twelfth, or possibly even the eleventh century.'<sup>67</sup> The Ipswich *Domesday* begins with a preamble claiming that it is harkening back to an earlier, lost source.<sup>68</sup> The governors of both boroughs felt that it was important to reiterate that unhealthy food was forbidden, 'food safety' to use a modern term, but did not feel that reheating food was worth the specific mention it received in the *Judicium Pillorie*.

I think it probable that the old customs do predate the *Judicium Pillorie*. If they were conceived after it, then most likely they would reiterate its provisions more fully, if, indeed, a need was felt to enter any provision at all, since the *Judicium Pillorie* itself was in effect. The concern with reheating food, absent from two sources which may predate the *Judicium Pillorie*, is common in regulations which unambiguously postdate it. John Leder, mayor of Coventry in 1421, made a prohibition which states, 'no cooke sell no maner rechaufid meit up the peyn aforseyd at eury trespas,' said pain being a fine of 6s. 8d.<sup>69</sup> In 1472, John Stanley, mayor of Bristol, set the penalty for selling 'rechaufed' Flesshe' with a fine at the same rate as in the earlier Coventry ordinance.<sup>70</sup> The 1475 *Ordinaciones Cocorum* of London simply state, 'That no one of the Craft bake rost nor seeth Flesshe nor Fisshe ij tymes to sell, under penalty.'<sup>71</sup> A sixteenth-century Norwich ordinance says that cooks should 'rechafe no mete,' on pain of forfeiting the food and other penalties.<sup>72</sup> This suggests that this was either a fairly

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<sup>66</sup> Travers Twiss, ed., *Monumenta Juridica, the Black Book of the Admiralty, Appendix Part II*, (London: Longman & Co., 1873), 146-147.

<sup>67</sup> Studer, ed., *The Oak Book of Southampton, Vol. 1*, x, 50-53.

<sup>68</sup> Twiss, ed., *Monumenta Juridica, the Black Book of the Admiralty*, vii-viii, 116-19.

<sup>69</sup> Harris, ed., *The Coventry Leet Book*, 26.

<sup>70</sup> E. W. W. Veale, ed., *The Great Red Book of Bristol, Text (Part I)*, Vol. 4 (Bristol: Bristol Record Society, 1933), 142.

<sup>71</sup> Reginald R. Sharpe, ed., *Calendar of Letter-Books of the City of London: L : Edward IV - Henry VII* (London: HM Stationery Office, 1912), 129.

<sup>72</sup> William Hudson and John Cottingham Tingey, eds., *The Records of the City of Norwich, Vol. 2* (Norwich: Jarrold & Sons 1910), 316.

common or particularly pernicious practice, or both.

In the late thirteenth century, cooks in Norwich were regularly presented *en masse* for reheating food.<sup>73</sup> This raises the possibility that these amercements functioned as a *de facto* licensing system, in a fashion similar to the way that the assize of bread and ale operated for bakers and, most particularly, for brewers. William Hudson suggests that this process might have been in place for cooks, and points to the Norwich Leet Rolls as evidence.<sup>74</sup> Maryanne Kowaleski suggests that this may have been the case in Exeter as well, although not to the extent of the effective 'licensing fees' she tracks for violations of the assize of ale, selling drink by false measure, and selling oats by false measure in hostels.<sup>75</sup> Richard Britnell's study includes data for brewers, vintners, bakers and forestallers amerced in Colchester, but has no such information for cooks, indicating that such measures were not universal.<sup>76</sup> Further study of other court rolls would be needed to determine if the practice of amercing cooks *en masse* was sufficiently widespread to be functionally a licensing fee, but I have found little evidence to support the idea, and I suspect that it was rather sporadic. Bread and ale were staple foods, easily regulated with respect to size, weight, and measure, and required to be so regulated by statute, while pasties and roast meat, for example, are more difficult to standardize, and also far more perishable. This makes it unlikely that broad 'licensing' for cooks through the mechanism of amercement took hold.

A London ordinance from 1379 illustrates another aspect of such food safety ordinances. It concerns the related trade of pastelers, the trade of pie-bakers. Riley's translation is worth quoting in full:

Because that the Pastelers of the City of London have heretofore baked in pasties rabbits, geese, and garbage, not befitting, and sometimes stinking, in

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<sup>73</sup> William Hudson, ed., *Leet Jurisdiction in the City of Norwich*, (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1892), 13,15,32,40,49,54.

<sup>74</sup> William Hudson and John Cottingham Tingey, eds., *The Records of the City of Norwich, Vol. 1*, (Norwich: Jarrold & Sons, 1906), cxxxviii, 367.

<sup>75</sup> Kowaleski, *Local Markets and Regional Trade in Medieval Exeter*, 92, 189.

<sup>76</sup> R. H. Britnell, *Growth and Decline in Colchester, 1300-1525* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 269-281.

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deceit of the people; and also, have baked beef in pasties, and sold the same for venison, in deceit of the people; therefore, by assent of the four Master Pastelers, and at their prayer, it is ordered and assented to.—

In the first place,—that no one of the said trade shall bake rabbits in pasties for sale, on pain of paying, the first time, if found guilty thereof, 6s.8d., to the use of the Chamber, and of going bodily to prison, at the will of the Mayor; the second time, 13s. 4d. to the use of the Chamber, and of going etc.; and the third time, 20s. to the use of the Chamber, and of going etc.

Also,—that no one of the said trade shall buy of any cook of Bredestret, or, at the hostels of the great lords, of the cooks of such lords, any garbage from capons, hens, or geese, to bake in a pasty, and sell, under the same penalty.

Also,—that no one shall bake beef in a pasty for sale, and sell it as venison, under the same penalty.

Also,—that no one of the said trade shall bake either whole geese in a pasty, halves of geese, or quarters of geese, for sale, on the pain aforesaid.<sup>77</sup>

As demand for meat rose due to rising income in the second half of the fourteenth century, and London received a wave of migrants after the plague of 1348 - 1350, it seems likely that demand for hot food from the cookshops and pieshops also rose in the city.<sup>78</sup> A possible reason for the enrollment of these specific regulations is that the pastelers of the city, perhaps attempting to meet that need, had baked pasties with inferior and sometimes spoiled content. The regulation intends to correct that problem by forbidding the purchase of 'garbage,' that is offal or giblets, from other cooks, private or common. However, the ordinances make no mention of reheating. This may be due, of course, to the existing regulations which address reheating.

The restriction on geese and rabbits in pastry is an intriguing one, the more so in light of an entry from the year before which set the price for roast goose and roast

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<sup>77</sup> Henry Thomas Riley, ed., *Memorials of London and London Life, in the XIIIth, XIVth, and XVth Centuries*. (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1868), 438.

<sup>78</sup> Christopher Dyer, *Standards of Living in the Later Middle Ages : Social Change in England c. 1200-1500* (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), Chapter 7, particularly pp. 199 - 202.



rabbit, and for 'the paste, fire, and trouble upon a goose,' and an earlier entry from 1350 which set the price for putting a rabbit or a capon in a pasty.<sup>79</sup> The cooking and selling of goose or rabbit was not forbidden, nor was the making of a pasty of such, but the latter was apparently only allowed if the customer brought the goose or rabbit to be baked. A tentative explanation for these restrictions is that some other animal, presumably cheaper, older, or of lower quality, could be sold as rabbit or goose once hidden in a pie; if that were the case, however, one would expect that to be the specific practice forbidden. What is notable in the ordinances is the complaint that the pastelers have sold beef as venison. In fact, the emphasis of these instructions is on deceit – the word itself occurs twice. In these ordinances, this brings to mind the idea that the concern with reheating pies so prominent elsewhere in the regulation of food is in part so fraught because the food in pies is hidden – one cannot identify a reheated pie by looking at the outside, just as one cannot identify one that contains 'stinking' foods, or beef being sold as venison. This argument can be extended to cooked foods in general; the difference between raw meat and cooked meat is clear, while the difference between meat which has been cooked once and meat which has been reheated is less obvious. There arises from all these ordinances a subtle conflation of healthy and honest, or more accurately, unwholesome and deceitful; there is nothing inherently unsafe in selling beef as venison, but it is grouped with the sale of rotten and foul meat. The magnitude of the fine reflects the magnitude of the concern. The initial fine of 6s 8d represents nearly three weeks wages for a skilled labourer.<sup>80</sup>

## **Sanitation**

Cities and towns often enacted regulations relating to what might be called today sanitary practices. Carole Rawcliffe explores this topic in depth in *Urban Bodies*.<sup>81</sup> These are practices which contribute to the orderly functioning of the town, and the prevention of behavior which might contravene contemporary health, moral, or

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<sup>79</sup> Riley, ed., *Memorials*, 426; *Ibid.*, 257.

<sup>80</sup> See the 'Note on Currency and Money' on p. 23 of this thesis.

<sup>81</sup> Rawcliffe, *Urban Bodies*. See particularly chapters 1 and 3.

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economic norms. Cooks were occasionally singled out as a trade, or as part of a small group of trades, for specific legislation. *The Little Red Book of Bristol* contains a series of fourteenth-century ordinances which include several concerned with hygiene and cleanliness in the town. There are regulations for the disposal of ordure and other waste. The first is #21, which states, 'That no one of any condition shall cast urine or fetid or putrid water in the streets out of window or door on penalty of 40d.'<sup>82</sup> This is followed by #23 and #24 which prohibit leaving rubble, timber or dung in the streets or throwing it over the quay, #25 which forbids lepers from staying in the town, #26 prohibiting tanners and leatherworkers from working in the streets, and #29 requiring every man to clean the street in front of his dwelling.<sup>83</sup> In 1452, the mayor, sheriff, and common council issued a new series of proclamations, which address many of the same concerns. The earlier ordinances against leaving rubble in the streets or casting it in the marsh, banning lepers, and cleaning the street in front of dwelling-places are reiterated, only in English. Two new ordinances are made, #51 restricting places where butchers might slaughter animals, and #56 against letting pigs or ducks wander free. There is also an entry, which should be numbered 33, falling as it does between 32 and 34, and being distinct from 32, which reads, 'Item that no Coke caste no stynkyng' water in the high Strete in peyne of xl d. at euery tyme thei don' the contary'; this is followed by #34 which reads, 'Item no maner man caste no vryne ne Stynkyng water ne noon other felthe oute at ther wyn-dowes or dores in the Stretes vpon peyne of xl d. be night ne be day.'<sup>84</sup> The point to consider here is that cooks were singled out as polluters. The penalty is the same for cooks as for any other man, 40d., and it seems that the ordinance would be subsumed by the following one, so the necessity to identify cooks specifically is significant.

Cooks in Bristol were identified alone, but in other boroughs, they were grouped with other victuallers. Southampton, as noted before, had recorded ordinances at the beginning of the thirteenth century, and they include general orders dealing with

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<sup>82</sup> 'Item, quod nullus cuiuscumque condicionis fuerit proiciat vrinam vel aquam fetidam siue putrefactam in vicis extra fenestram vel ostium sub pena xl d.' Francis B. Bickley, ed., *The Little Red Book of Bristol, Vol. 2* (Bristol: Bristol Council, 1900), 228.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 228-229.

<sup>84</sup> Veale, ed., *The Great Red Book of Bristol, Text (Part I)*, 142-144.

sanitation, such as proscriptions against letting pigs run free or letting muck accumulate before a dwelling for more than two nights, but there is also a specific order forbidding butchers and cooks from throwing filth or other things (*'ordure ne autre chose'*) in the street making the town or the street dirtier, fouler or more corrupt; the injunction is repeated in the 1473 translation.<sup>85</sup> Leicester grouped cooks with fishmongers in a 1335 order: 'Item that no cook or fisher be so bold as to throw their dirty water into the high street to the annoyance and soiling of good people, under (pain of) grievous amercement.' (Fisher should be taken here to mean fishmonger rather fisherman, although the two might overlap considerably.)<sup>86</sup> Clearly, cooks, and sometimes butchers and fishmongers, were singled out because they were exceptionally troublesome in this regard.

A common thread between these three trades is that they all produce waste which was particularly noxious, and likely to attract vermin. That does not fully explain the concern, however, since there were other trades which also produced smelly waste-water, such as tanning and dyeing, and equally likely to attract vermin, such as anything involving the storage of grain. The victualling trades had the added burden of directly affecting health, as discussed in the previous section. A crucial feature which made cooks so troublesome is location. Most trades which are undesirable for reasons of stench tended to be banished to districts on the fringes of the *urbs*. In Chester, for example, the tanners and dyers were located outside the walls to the east.<sup>87</sup> In York, both trades appear to have been concentrated on the south side of the river, away from the main markets.<sup>88</sup> The cooks, by contrast, were located on the high street, according to the regulations noted above. The Chester Cooks' Row was in the center of the *urbs*, near the market and the church of St. Peter where the city authorities met.<sup>89</sup> In York,

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<sup>85</sup> Studer, ed., *The Oak Book of Southampton, Vol. 1*, 52-53.

<sup>86</sup> 'Item que nul Cu ne pessouner soit si hardi de gettre lour eawe corumpue en le haut estree a nuisaunce & corrupcioun des bones gentz, sur greuouse amerciement.' The translation is Bateson's. Mary Bateson, ed., *Records of the Borough of Leicester, Vol. 2* (London: C. J. Clay, 1901), 21.

<sup>87</sup> Jane Laughton, *Life in a Late Medieval City: Chester, 1275-1520* (Oxford: Windgather, 2008), 142,146.

<sup>88</sup> P. J. P. Goldberg, *Women, Work, and Life Cycle in a Medieval Economy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 66-67.

<sup>89</sup> Laughton, *Life in a Late Medieval City*, 43-44.

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they tended to live in the parish of Saint Martin, Coney Street, on the north side of the river, not far from a large market. Of nineteen wills for York cooks between 1350 and 1500 which contain information about the testator's parish, six are from Saint Martin, Coney Street, one was from Saint John at Ouse Bridge End, which was annexed to Saint Martin between 1331 and 1443, and another was located in Mickelgate, the main north-south road.<sup>90</sup> Cooks were in the heart of the city, and their ordure was likewise centrally located.

As mentioned, cooks were grouped with butchers in Southampton and with fishmongers in Leicester insofar as these ordinances were concerned. Southampton had a common fish market, while Leicester had a common shambles for its butchers; this follows, perhaps, from the relative importance of those victuals and the associated trade, with Leicester being inland and Southampton being a major port. With the butchers and fishmongers located in specific markets, a different understanding of the sanitary standards may have been in place. Cooks and other small scale providers were subject to the regulations above, since they were not operating out of a specialized common market. Additionally, it seems likely that as the cookshops became more established along a major street, their refuse became enough of an issue that they were worth singling out as a health hazard. Another factor that may reflect the extravagant attention lavished on cooks is that some trades were simply considered inferior and unclean, among them cooks, along with fullers, dyers, and launderers. Any trade associated with blood was also suspect.<sup>91</sup> Cooks were, in this model, inherently contemptible and dirty.

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<sup>90</sup> For Saint Martin, Coney Street : Borthwick Institute for Archives (BIA), Exchequer Probate Registers (Prob. Reg.), Vol. 3, fo.101 r-v. (Ralph de Bethom), Vol. 3., fo. 217v. (William de Scardeburgh), Vol. 3, fo. 394 r. (John del Hall), Vol. 2, fo. 268 r-v. (John Marshall), Vol. 4., fo. 56 r. (Lawrence Damysell), Vol. 4, fo. 56 v. (Robert Pottow). For Saint John: BIA, Prob Reg., Vol. 1, fo. 9 r. (John Isabell). For Mickelgate: BIA, Prob Reg., Vol. 3, fo. 435 r. (Matilda Gardener). See also: Goldberg, *Women, Work, and Life Cycle*, 66. For the annexing of Saint John and Saint Martin, see: P. M. Tillott, ed., *A History of the County of York: The City of York* (London: 1961), 365-404.

<sup>91</sup> Jacques Le Goff, *Time, Work & Culture in the Middle Ages* [Pour une autre Moyen Age.] (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 59-60.

## Trade and Market Regulations

To understand the position of cooks in the complex web of market regulation and operation, an understanding of a pair of related activities, forestalling and regrating, and their regulation is required. R. H. Britnell provides a detailed analysis of the evolution of the term, and states that by 1321 it was a well understood concept in English law.<sup>92</sup> Forestalling was generally recognized as purchasing food before it was commonly available with an eye toward selling it later at a profit.<sup>93</sup> and was forbidden by statute in the clause of the *Judicium Pillorie* which follows that concerning cooks:

And also Forestallers, that buy any Thing afore the [due and accustomed Hour,] against the [good State and Weal] of the Town and Market, or that pass out of the Town to meet such Things as come to the Market, [being] out of the Town, to the Intent that they may sell the same in the Town more dear to the Regrators, [that utter it mor dear], than they would that brought it, in case they had come to the [Town or] Market.<sup>94</sup>

The prohibition was elaborated upon in the *Statutum de Pistoribus etc.*, also from the late thirteenth century, which forbade forestallers from dwelling in the town, vilified them in strong terms as oppressors of the poor and of the whole country, and outlined their punishment.<sup>95</sup> Victuallers, including cooks were commonly suspected of forestalling, sometimes *en masse*, as in 1395 when it was alleged that 'all the cooks of Nottingham sell sometimes meat and fish unprepared and warmed up again, hurtful to the human body, and that each of them is a common forestaller of birds, poultry,

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<sup>92</sup> Britnell, "Forestalling."

<sup>93</sup> Ibid, 89. '(ii) The offence was understood as the interception of goods on their way to market ... (iv) The rules against forestalling were designed to eliminate excessive profits, and it is implied that goods forestalled would have been sold more cheaply had they been allowed to come to market without being intercepted.'

<sup>94</sup> *Item de Forstallariis, qui ante horam debitam, & in villa statutam, aliquid emunt cont(ra) statutum ville & m(er)cati, vel qui exeant villam rebus venalib(us) obviantes, & ext(ra) villam emant, ut in villa eas carius vendant ad reg(ra)tatores, q(ua)m fac(er)ent hii qui eas asportabant, si in m(er)cato venissent.* *Statutes of the Realm, Vol. 1*, Temp. Incert., 202. The quoted translation is the given one in the volume.

<sup>95</sup> '...which is an open Oppressor of Poor People and [of all the Commonalty, and an Enemy of the whole Shire and Country...' Ibid., 203-204

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pigeons, eggs, and such victuals, to the deception of the people, etc.'<sup>96</sup>

Regrating was the act of buying something, often but not necessarily victuals, usually in small quantities, to sell again. Forestalling was illegal, but regrating was, within limits, legal. Both required regulation. The York civic ordinances of 1301 limited the profits of regrators and regulated their display, while forestallers were simply forbidden from operating.<sup>97</sup> The charge of the Norwich mayor's sergeants, c. 1450, includes the phrase, 'and alle maner of forestalleres of any maner vitayll fresshly founden 3e shal arresten and brynge hym to prison or atte leste enforme the Mayre of suyche forstalleres.'<sup>98</sup> The distinction between the two practices was not sharp, however, since forestalling would only lead to profit by regrating the forestalled product; a Southampton ordinance of c. 1300 stated that no regrator should go out of town to purchase victuals on their way to market, which is by definition forestalling, and a Leicester ordinance of 1335x36 put it this way: 'Item, the forestaller may not be so bold as to go to the ends of the said town to meet or buy any kind of victuals coming to the said town, to regrate (them).'<sup>99</sup>

In 1389, the mayor, bailiffs, and commonality of York made a regulation concerning the sale of poultry and wildfowl (*pultaria et volatilibus*) which included provisions for the hours of the Thursday market, opening it at five in the summer and

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<sup>96</sup> 'Item, dicunt quod omnes coci Notingham' vendunt carnes et pisces aliquando crudas et recalefactas, nocivas corpori humano, et quod quilibet eorum est communis forstallator volucrum, pullaliorum, columbarum, avium et hujusmodi victualium, ad deceptionem populi, etc.' W. H. Stevenson, ed., *Records of the Borough of Nottingham*, Vol. 1 (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1882), 270-271. The quoted translation is the given one in the volume. Many of the victualling trades are accused *en masse* in this entry: the cooks, the fishers (*piscatores*), and the '(female) poulterers' (*anxiatrices*) are all accused of forestalling, while the brewers (*braciatores*), bakers (*pistors*), butchers (*carnifices*), and 'taverners of wines' (*tabernarii vinorum*) were accused of other offenses.

<sup>97</sup> Michael Prestwich, ed., *York Civic Ordinances, 1301*, Borthwick Paper 49 (York: St Anthony's Press, 1976), 11-14.

<sup>98</sup> Hudson and Tingey, eds., *The Records of the City of Norwich, Vol. 1*, 124.

<sup>99</sup> Studer, ed., *The Oak Book of Southampton, Vol. 1*, 70-71. 'Item Forstaller ne soit si hardi de aler a bouts de la dite ville d'encountre ne achater nuyll manere des vitailles venauntz a la dite ville pour regrater.' Bateson, ed., *Records of the Borough of Leicester, Vol. 2*, 21. The translation is the one given in the volume.

seven in the winter, but victuallers were forbidden from buying until ten, altering an earlier restriction from the early fourteenth century which set the time at prime.<sup>100</sup> Similar regulations forbidding victuallers from purchasing food before a given hour appear with monotonous regularity elsewhere. Southampton registered an ordinance around the year 1300 which specified prime.<sup>101</sup> Leicester likewise mandated prime in 1335, as did London in 1345.<sup>102</sup> In the first part of the fourteenth century, Bristol restricted cooks to after terce.<sup>103</sup> After the plague, the times were given by the clock rather than by canonical hours. Beverley, by a 1409 ordinance, restricted cooks from buying fish before eight in the morning.<sup>104</sup> Coventry set the hour at nine in 1421.<sup>105</sup> The c. 1450 oath for the mayor's sergeants of Norwich forbade cooks from buying fish and wildfowl before nine, and a sixteenth-century proclamation lifted purchasing restrictions from cooks at eight in the morning.<sup>106</sup> Those who had used the canonical hours often changed them. In addition to York, in 1379 another London ordinance was instituted which banned poulterers, cooks, pastelers, or other regrators from buying before ten, and in 1452 Bristol changed the time to ten.<sup>107</sup> The purpose of these restrictions seems clear, but the implications are complex, bespeaking an embedded understanding of the role of the cook in the provisioning of the city. By forbidding the cook access to the market until some time after the market had opened, the householders of the town had the opportunity to serve themselves and have the pick of the products available.

The fear, of course, was that cooks, or others, would buy in bulk in order to

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<sup>100</sup> Maud Sellers, ed., *York Memorandum Book Part I. (1376-1419). Lettered A/Y in the Guildhall Muniment Room*, Surtees Society, 120 (Durham: Surtees Society, 1912), 45-46, 224.

<sup>101</sup> Studer ed., *The Oak Book of Southampton, Vol. 1*, 70-71.

<sup>102</sup> Bateson, ed., *Records of the Borough of Leicester, Vol. 2*, 21; Riley, ed., *Memorials*, 221.

<sup>103</sup> Bickley, ed., *The Little Red Book of Bristol, Vol. 2*, 229.

<sup>104</sup> Arthur F. Leach, ed., *Beverley Town Documents*, (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1900), 29.

<sup>105</sup> Harris, ed., *The Coventry Leet Book*, 25.

<sup>106</sup> Hudson and Tingey, eds., *The Records of the City of Norwich, Vol. 1*, 124; Hudson and Tingey, eds., *The Records of the City of Norwich, Vol. 2*, 316.

<sup>107</sup> Riley, ed., *Memorials*, 432; Veale, ed., *The Great Red Book of Bristol, Text (Part I)*, 134-135.

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regrate the food later, to the detriment of those who might desire to buy their own supplies. Carole Rawcliffe puts it this way, '[Cooks] were also notorious for cornering supplies, often for resale at excessive profits.'<sup>108</sup> This is made explicit in both legal actions and ordinances. In 1299-1300 a great number of London cooks were attached to answer on 'a charge of forestalling capons, hens, geese and other victuals, before they reached the City and also within the City, before the hour of Prime and before the freemen could buy their necessaries.'<sup>109</sup> The Southampton ordinance noted previously put it thus: 'No regrater ... shall buy any kind of such victuals to sell again, before the hour of prime has struck, nor before the discreets of the town, and other free men of the country, have bought their eatables.'<sup>110</sup> The London regulation, from 1345, is also explicit:

Also,—that all foreign poulterers bringing poultry to the city, should take it to the Leaden Hall, and sell it there, between Matins and the hour of Prime, to the reputable men of the City, and their servants, for their own eating; and after the hour of Prime, the rest of their poultry that should remain unsold, they might sell to cooks, regratresses, and such other persons as they might please.<sup>111</sup>

An early fifteenth-century entry in the *York Memorandum Book* noted that the common cooks of the city would regularly collude to purchase fish outside of the regular time in order to sell it at a much higher price, and goes on to forbid them from selling raw fish at all.<sup>112</sup> A 1452 proclamation from Bristol put it this way, 'Item that no Coke ne noon other vitayler regrate no maner pullayle ne wildefowle comynge to market ne no maner of Fresshe Fysse in to tyme the communes be serued vpon peyne

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<sup>108</sup> Rawcliffe, *Urban Bodies*, 279. She addresses forestalling in general at more length in this section.

<sup>109</sup> A. H. Thomas, ed., *Calendar of Early Mayor's Court Rolls of the City of London A.D. 1298-1307*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1924), 50-51.

<sup>110</sup> Nul regratour ... ne achate tile manere de vitaille a reuendre auant hour de prime soneie, ne auant que les proddeshommes de la vile et autres frauns hommes del paus eient achate lour manger.' Studer, ed., *The Oak Book of Southampton, Vol. 1*, 70-71. The English is the 1473 translation.

<sup>111</sup> Riley, ed., *Memorials*, 220-221.

<sup>112</sup> Sellers, ed., *York Memorandum Book Part I*, 222-223.



of xl d. at euery tyme thei doon the contrary.<sup>113</sup> A Leicester ordinance of 1467 went further: '... no cooke bye ne groce vppe no denteythes (dainties) ne vitail or the town be serued ... And yf he do, what man of the town haue nede þerof, by hym no cost done þeron, shall haue hit on the same prise that he bought hit.'<sup>114</sup> These cast the cook in the role of an outsider to some extent, subordinating the cook's needs and requirements to those of a 'man of the town,' whose need explicitly superseded the cooks'. It is interesting to note that each ordinance referred to a slightly different group: regrators, regrators and cooks, cooks and victuallers, and cooks alone. It seems clear that across a broad spectrum of times and places cooks were of special concern when it came to abuse of the market through regrating or forestalling – which may have been justified, if the noted collusion of the York cooks was at all typical.

The entry in the York *Memorandum Book* which forbade cooks from selling raw fish, allowed them to sell only boiled, baked, or roasted fish, as is suitable to their craft.<sup>115</sup> This sort of restriction is common. The Leicester *Consideracio Regratorum* of 1279 conflates cooks and regrators when it states that regrators may purchase live calves, piglets, and sheep, and sell them cooked and not raw, and that wives of butchers who hold meat to regrate may not sell it raw.<sup>116</sup> The York cooks' ordinances of 1425 note that although the cooks used to sell raw fish, this is no longer permitted, and accordingly they are no longer required to contribute to the fishmongers' pageant.<sup>117</sup> A 1472 Bristol ordinance prohibits cooks from buying fish for any reason other than cooking it for sale and forbids the sale of raw fish, and goes on to forbid cooks or any other person from buying food to regrate before ten o'clock.<sup>118</sup> This was not universal, of course. In London cooks were selling raw flesh in 1444, since an ordinance only forbade them from doing it on Sundays. By 1475 this appears to have changed as the

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<sup>113</sup> Veale, ed., *The Great Red Book of Bristol, Text (Part I)*, 143.

<sup>114</sup> Bateson, ed., *Records of the Borough of Leicester, Vol. 2*, 289.

<sup>115</sup> '... that thay sell no rawe fysshe at thayr houses mare than sall be outhr sothen or rosted or baken in thayre houses, lyke als thayr crafte asks ...' Sellers, ed., *York Memorandum Book Part I*, 223.

<sup>116</sup> Mary Bateson, ed., *Records of the Borough of Leicester, Vol. 1* (London: C. J. Clay, 1899), 180-181.

<sup>117</sup> Maud Sellers, ed., *York Memorandum Book Part II. (1388-1493) Lettered A/Y in the Guildhall Muniment Room*, Surtees Society, 125 (Durham, Surtees Society, 1915), 161.

<sup>118</sup> Veale, ed., *The Great Red Book of Bristol, Text (Part I)*, 134-135.

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ordinances for the mystery of cooks mandate a fine if any of the fellowship sell any victual raw or tainted.<sup>119</sup> Throughout, it appears that the cooks were attempting to expand their economic options by regrating raw foodstuffs.

Another link is apparent in the Leicester *Consideracio Regratorum*. The ordinance says that the regrators may buy raw food to sell cooked, with the implication that they are functioning as both regrators and cooks.<sup>120</sup> This sort of language, grouping cooks with regrators, is repeated in other ordinances, and the London ordinance of 1379 is explicit when it talks in terms of, following Riley's translation, 'no poulterer, cook, piebaker, or other regrator whatsoever of victuals in flesh or in fish.'<sup>121</sup> It seems that in the eyes of the authorities, cooks who sold raw foods were essentially forestalling, while once they had cooked it, they were regrating. Cooks, rather reductively, should only sell food they have cooked. Put another way, while forestalling was illegal, regrating was legal, within limits, and cookery played a role in defining the effective difference.

There are other indications that cooks were associated in the civic mind with forestalling. There are the mass attachments of cooks in London and Nottingham previously mentioned. Additionally, the York civic ordinances of 1301 set the punishment for cooks who violated the ordinances the same as that of forestallers: 'Anyone convicted of selling bad or unhealthy meat, or any badly-cooked food, or of putting other than good, sound, meat in bread is to be judged as is set out above for forestallers.'<sup>122</sup> By contrast, the regrators were to be punished in the same fashion as the tradesman whose goods they were regrating, typically bakers or brewers.<sup>123</sup>

There is another important distinction which is implicit in the *Judicium Pillorie* and in many of the other regulations relating to cooks, and which has ramifications for how the authorities, at least, understood common cooks to fit into the scheme of

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<sup>119</sup> Reginald R. Sharpe, ed., *Calendar of Letter-Books of the City of London: K, Henry VI* (London: HM Stationery Office, 1911), 293; Sharpe, ed., *Letter-Books of London: L*, 130.

<sup>120</sup> Bateson, ed., *Records of the Borough of Leicester, Vol. 1*, 180-181.

<sup>121</sup> Riley, ed., *Memorials*, 432.

<sup>122</sup> Prestwich, ed., *York Civic Ordinances*, 16.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, 11-12.

provisioning and supply. It is apparent from the beginning that the assizes of bread and ale were concerned with regulating a product – bread or ale. They address weights and measures, and are interested in maintaining a regular supply of these basic foodstuffs at a price which is tied to the underlying price of grain. The section on cooks, however, is written to manage people and their activities. To be sure, bread and ale must be managed by managing people, but the focus is on the product, and much of the entry is prescriptive. The entry for the cooks is both focused on activity and essentially proscriptive. Conceptually this places common cooks into a category of what we might today call a 'service provider' rather than a craftsman or craftswoman. This is made explicit in a 1350 entry in London *Letter-book F* which fixed the price that a cook may charge for 'putting a capon or rabbit into a pasty' at 1d.; while cooks might sell food that they prepared, they also simply cooked food that others provided.<sup>124</sup> This regulation is part of a suite of instructions which set wages and prices in London in the wake of the Black Death, and cooks are hardly singled out for attention. There is a certain parallel between cooks who cook food which is brought to them and, for instance, those in trades who worked upon a given project with materials purchased by their employer. I suggest that cooks were set apart, and that cookery, as fundamentally an ongoing domestic activity, informed the way cooks were perceived by the authorities. This idea of cooks as servants rather than independent artisans harmonizes well with the idea of cooks in households, that is private cooks, as servants – or the alternative formulation of servants in a private household who, as part of their duties, cook – and emphasizes the uncertain place of the common cook in a social hierarchy.

This idea of the common cook as a sort of exterior servant has further ramifications. Le Goff suggests that to the medieval mind, the work of man should emulate the work of God, that is creation, or if that was not possible, 'then there should be transformation (*mutare*), modification (*emendare*), or improvement (*meliorare*).<sup>125</sup> In this light, the service professions, including cooks, are almost by definition inferior.

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<sup>124</sup> Riley, ed., *Memorials*, 257.

<sup>125</sup> Le Goff, *Time, Work & Culture in the Middle Ages*, 61.

### Cooks and Other Victualling Trades

As we have seen, the market was a critical feature of the borough, and the prevention of forestalling so that food reached the market was the subject of much legislation, as discussed in the previous section. Of the victualling trades, brewers and bakers, providers of the staple foods, received a great deal of official scrutiny, but providers of meat, poultry, and fish, butchers, poulterers, and fishmongers, were also heavily regulated. These latter trades deal in foods which are relatively perishable, and the authorities wished to ensure that the food was wholesome, as the *Judicium Pillorie* makes clear when it forbids butchers from selling meat from animals that died of the murrain.<sup>126</sup> Towns were concerned with the output of cooks, their refuse, and controlling their prices, but their regulations also speak to an understanding of the way that cooks interacted with the other victualling trades and the role they played in provisioning the city. The *Judicium Pillorie* makes it clear that by the mid-thirteenth century cooks were identifiable as part of the commercial provisioning mechanism of the urban environment. What exactly their role was is specified or implied by regulations concerning the limits of their craft or mystery.

In the previous section, we examined a number of regulations intended to manage regrating and prevent forestalling, but many of those regulations may also be viewed as protecting the interests of the other victuallers, usually butchers and fishmongers, from infringement by the cooks on their prerogatives. There were restrictions in Leicester from 1279 forbidding regrators from selling raw meat, and from the early fifteenth-century in York and 1472 in Bristol which banned cooks from selling raw fish.<sup>127</sup> The lack of later regulation with respect to butchers and cooks does not indicate that cooks were at that time regularly selling raw meat, rather it represents a battle won by the butchers. The butchers were comparatively well off and became more so in the decades following the plague as demand for meat rose. Furthermore their trade generated by-products such as tallow, hide, and horn, which were used in other

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<sup>126</sup> *Statutes of the Realm, Vol 1*, Temp. Incert., 202.

<sup>127</sup> Bateson, ed., *Records of the Borough of Leicester, Vol. 1*, 180-181; Sellers, ed., *York Memorandum Book Part I*, 223; Veale, ed., *The Great Red Book of Bristol, Text (Part I)*, 134-135.

trades.<sup>128</sup> A butcher's operation also required capital to purchase large animals and the tools to slaughter and butcher them. A cook would find it difficult to operate as a casual butcher, although the converse is not true; the same Leicester ordinance restricted butchers' wives from regrating raw meat but not cooked, that is to say that the wives could operate as casual cooks with little difficulty. Cooks could quite easily purchase small quantities of fish and prepare it themselves, and it seems clear from the York and Bristol ordinances that they were doing so. Jane Laughton suggests that in early fifteenth-century Chester, the trades of cook and fishmonger were often combined.<sup>129</sup> Whether the motivation for the restrictions originated with the primary providers, the butchers and fishmongers, out of a desire to prevent competition, or from a desire on the part of the urban authorities to manage regrating and prevent forestalling is unclear, but an attempt was being made to force the cooks to deal only in cooked food or as providers of the service of cooking, rather than as regrators of raw foodstuffs as well.

Cooks were linked with other victualling trades in other ways as well. There are more subtle perceptual links in the way that ordinances or regulations are articulated. The *Statutum de Pistoribus et c.* of the mid-to-late thirteenth century laid out the penalties for butchers in detail; the offences are enumerated, selling bad meat or meat purchased from Jews to Christians, and included a rising scale from a fine for the first offense, through pillory and imprisonment, and concluding with a requirement that, upon the fourth conviction, the offender forswear the town. The final sentence directs cooks to be treated in the same manner: '& hoc iudiciu(m) fiat de cocis transgredientibus.'<sup>130</sup> That clause of the statute was one of the clauses selected for entry in *The Little Red Book of Bristol* in the early fourteenth century.<sup>131</sup> This lack of explicit statement concerning the activities of the cooks in the *Statutum de Pistoribus* might therefore indicate either that the actions of cooks, and even more so, their transgressions were well-known and well-understood, or that they were partly or entirely considered subsidiary to the butchers.

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<sup>128</sup> Laughton, *Life in a Late Medieval City*, 135-136; Swanson, *Medieval Artisans*, 16.

<sup>129</sup> Laughton, *Life in a Late Medieval City*, 137.

<sup>130</sup> *Statutes of the Realm, Vol 1*, Temp. Incert., 203.

<sup>131</sup> Bickley, ed., *The Little Red Book of Bristol, Vol. 2*, 218.

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Around the same time, two ordinances that were entered into the *Oak Book of Southampton*, compiled c. 1300, conflate cooks and butchers almost completely:

*That no butcher or cook sell other than nice-looking and clean meat under pain.* No butcher or cook shall sell to any man other than wholesome and clean provisions, and well cooked ; ...

*That no butcher or cook throw into the street any filth or other matter under pain.* And that no butcher or cook throw into the street any filth or other matter whereby the town or the street become more dirty, filthy, or corrupt; ...<sup>132</sup>

That people in the victualling trades had more than one occupation was relatively common, but the specificity of the regulations prompts the speculation that the two trades overlapped significantly in Southampton at that time, and that many or most butchers functioned not only as providers of ingredients, but of cooked meat as well, or alternatively that cooks were selling raw meat.

The Leicester *Consideracio Regratorum* of 1279 suggests another scenario. It specifically prohibits the wives of butchers from selling raw meat and the implication is that they were selling cooked meat:

... that all regrators may buy calves, porkers and sheep alive and sell them cooked but not raw, and that the wives of butchers who hold meat to sell again, may not sell raw meat...<sup>133</sup>

In a similar vein, the 1425 *Constituciones cocorum* of the York cooks' guild

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<sup>132</sup> 'Que Bocher ne nul queu ne vende viande autre que auenaunte et nette sur peine. Nul Bochier ne queu rien ne vende a nul homme que seine et nette chose et bien quizte; ...' and 'Qe nul Bocher ne queu nule ordure ne autre chose ne jette en la Rue sur peine. Et que nul Bocher ne queu n(e)ule ordure ne autre chose ne jette en la Rue, par quei la vile ou la Rue seit plus soille, ou plus orde, ou plus corumpue; ...' Studer, ed., *The Oak Book of Southampton, Vol. 1*, 50-53. The English is the 1473 translation.

<sup>133</sup> '...quod omnes regratores possunt emere vitulos, porcellos, multones, viuos, et vendere coctos et non crudos, nec vxores carnificum qui regratum tenent carnes, non vendant crudas...' Bateson, ed., *Records of the Borough of Leicester, Vol. 1*, 180-181. The translation is Bateson's.

contains this clause:

Item, that wives of anyone of other artisans neither bake nor boil nor roast in public shops for retail sale, unless they be fit to the task, for the honour of the fellowship and of the men of the aforesaid art.<sup>134</sup>

The clear implication is that some of the wives of other craftsmen functioned as common cooks, at least in a by-industrial fashion. Although butchers are not explicitly mentioned, the resonance with the Leicester ordinance is striking. Bearing this in mind, the other regulations which link butchers and cooks take on greater significance. Since husbands were legally responsible for their wives, the entry of the injunction of the *Statutum de Pistoribus* in Bristol to treat cooks the same as butchers may reflect a similar state of affairs in Bristol in the early fourteenth century – that is to say that the regulation may be working from an understanding of common cooks primarily as wives or other members of butchers' households.

Whatever their links with fishmongers or butchers, it is the connection with regrators and forestallers which is most apparent in the legislation, and which figures most strongly in the punishments mandated for transgressors. The *Statutum de Pistoribus* outlined the penalty for cooks by linking it to that of butchers, but the *Ipswich Domesday*, which might possibly predate it, has an entry for butchers which does not accord with the statute, and a separate entry for cooks.<sup>135</sup> The entry for butchers prescribes the punishment as follows: for the first offense, forfeiture of the bad meat; for the second, forfeiture and pillory; and for the third, forfeiture and the offender to forswear the craft for a year and a day.<sup>136</sup> The cook who offends, however, has the following scale of punishment: first, by his chattels; second, by the pillory; and third, by forswearing the craft a year and day on pain of losing all his chattels.<sup>137</sup> Thus far the

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<sup>134</sup> 'Item, quod uxores aliquorum alterius artificis neque pinsant, bulliant neque assent in shoppis publicis ad vendendum per retalliam, nisi sint habiles ut occupent, pro honore civitatis et hominum artis predicte.' Sellers, ed., *York Memorandum Book Part II*, 160.

<sup>135</sup> See the discussion of sources in the introduction for the discussion of the dates of the material in *The Ipswich Domesday*.

<sup>136</sup> Twiss, ed., *Monumenta Juridica, the Black Book of the Admiralty*, 144-145.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, 146-147.

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punishments seem analogous, but it is the subsequent provision for the cooks, which has no parallel for the butchers, which is most interesting:

And 3if ony [that use swich craft in the seid toun] hath not wheroff he may be punysshed but by the body, be he chastised be the pillorye, forswere he after the craft a 3er and a day with outyn grace. And 3if he be an other tyme atteynt, forswere he the craft for evermore.<sup>138</sup>

There was a specific process outlined for cooks who had no money or goods, but who could only be punished corporally. The York civic ordinances of 1301 dealt with the punishment for cooks by setting it to match forestallers, to wit:

Anyone convicted is to go to the pillory, from the hour of Prime to midday for the first offence. For the second, they are to be dragged on a hurdle from the church of St. Michael at the bridge over the Ouse, through the middle of the main street to the great church of St. Peter. For the third offence, they shall be imprisoned for forty days, and then be exiled from the city.<sup>139</sup>

Notable in this list is the lack of any sort of fine. Of all the categories of people mentioned in the York ordinances, both victuallers and others, only these two – cooks and forestallers – are punished corporally without a fine being levied (two others, doctors and apothecaries, are neither fined nor pilloried). Clearly in Ipswich and York, at least in the early fourteenth century, cooks were not expected to be wealthy, and might not even be able to pay a fine or forfeit goods, with the further implication that some cooks did not own their own premises, nor indeed much in the way of movable goods associated with their craft.

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<sup>138</sup> 'E si nul, qe 'tel' mester use en la dite vyle, ne ad dunt il peot estre puny for qe par le cors, seyt it chastie par le pillori quant il serra de tel trespas atteynt ; e quant il avera deux feze este chastie par le pillori, foriurge il apres le mester un aan e vn jour saunze grace aver. E si autre feze seyt atteynt, foriurge il le mester attoutz jours en meyme la vyle.' Ibid., 146-147. The English is the fifteenth century translation. (The published transcription uses 'z' when a yogh is intended, as 'zer' for '3er.' I have made that substitution in the quoted material.

<sup>139</sup> Prestwich, ed., *York Civic Ordinances*, 14.



Several London pleas provide evidence that cooks were punished by the pillory rather than by fine: in 1351 Henry de Passelewe was convicted of selling putrid capons baked in pasty and sentenced to the pillory. There is no mention of fine. In 1382, John Welburgham was convicted of selling bad conger and forced to refund the money he received and to go to the pillory.<sup>140</sup> In 1374 John West went to the pillory for being found with 'bullock's flesh' which was 'unfit for human food.' On the same date, it should be noted, five butchers were convicted of selling bad meat, three went to the pillory, one was fined and sent to prison, and one – Isabella, the wife of John Myntone – went to prison.<sup>141</sup> By contrast, the mid-to-late fifteenth century ordinances in Colchester and Coventry both begin with a fine of 40d. for a first and second offence before escalating to corporal punishment.<sup>142</sup>

It is worth considering that the civic authorities would lose nothing by imposing fines as penalties, and they regularly did; as Davis puts it, 'The main weapon in the armoury of officials was the amercement ... For flagrant or repeat offenders, corporal punishment could be utilized.'<sup>143</sup> Corporal punishment, however, also had an element of spectacle to it. A fine could be paid relatively quietly, but a spell in the pillory must be served in public. Indeed, the public display and humiliation of the offender was so important that one punishment was specifically mandated a duration of three market days, which would most likely not have been three consecutive days.<sup>144</sup> Most of the ordinances reserve corporal punishment for subsequent offences by cooks, emphasizing the severity of repeated offences. Corporal punishment was more likely to be utilized in times of heightened food uncertainty. For example, the London pleas noted above took place in 1351, 1374, and 1382, shortly on the heels of the great plague of 1348-1350, during the outbreak of 1374-1375, and during another epidemic in 1382. In the early fourteenth century, both York and Ipswich, however, mandate corporal punishment immediately, and Ipswich explicitly made provision for the punishment of cooks with

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<sup>140</sup> Riley, ed., *Memorials*, 266; Sharpe, ed., *Letter-Books of London: H*, 179-190.

<sup>141</sup> Sharpe, ed., *Letter-Books of London: G*, 332-333.

<sup>142</sup> Benham, ed., *The Red Paper Book of Colchester*, 19; Harris, ed., *The Coventry Leet Book*, 398-399.

<sup>143</sup> Davis, *Medieval Marketplace Morality*, 263.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, 264.

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no goods. It is well worth noting that the punishment which was written down in the regulation was not always the punishment administered. Exemplary punishments could be reduced if the offender was suitably contrite.<sup>145</sup> As James Davis puts it:

In practice, the use of corporal punishment and even the amercements proffered do not seem to have followed the levels or graduations prescribed in law. Indeed, the idealism of the laws was tempered by a recognition that many officials were prepared to be flexible in their interpretation of legal practices.<sup>146</sup>

Even so, the Ipswich authorities had some reason to make explicit reference to cooks with no goods. This implies that the circumstance of impoverished cooks was relatively commonplace in Ipswich, and, I would argue, probably in other places as well.<sup>147</sup> It is possible that the condition of cooks improved with time, but even in the later fourteenth century, corporal punishment was common, at least theoretically.

### **Clientele of Common Cooks**

Civic legislation also reflects underlying assumptions about the clientele of common cooks, particularly those operating cookshops; considering the regulations as a whole, there is a subtle implication that bourgeois householders were not the primary clientele of the common cook. Martha Carlin explores this idea more fully, and while I agree with her conclusion that the cookshops were not primarily serving 'well-to-do' residents, her conclusion that cooks were also not primarily serving travelers is worth re-examining in the light of some of the market regulations.<sup>148</sup> Her argument against cooks serving travelers is based on the geographical distribution of cooks in London and

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<sup>145</sup> Rawcliffe, *Urban Bodies*, 11. This is a short, but useful, discussion of fines and punishments.

<sup>146</sup> Davis, *Medieval Marketplace Morality*, 270.

<sup>147</sup> Davis comes to a similar conclusion with respect to Ipswich, '... implying that there were many cooks who were poor retailers with few assets.' *Ibid.*, 404.

<sup>148</sup> Martha Carlin, "Fast Food and Urban Living Standards in Medieval England," in *Food and Eating in Medieval Europe*, eds. Martha Carlin and Joel Thomas Rosenthal (London: Hambledon Press, 1998), 27-51.

on records relating to wealthy travelers. Particularly she notes that the cooks were not located near London Bridge, the best place to sell to travelers. However, the 1475 London *Ordinaciones cocorum* forbade selling food to hucksters or sending food out of the cookshop unless it had already been paid for, which indicates that it was probably a common practice.<sup>149</sup> Additionally, regulation such as the 1301 ordinances of York required trades to be localized in specific places, 'so that no degrading business or unsuitable trade is carried out among those who sell food for humans.'<sup>150</sup> This suggests the possibility that cooks might not have been able to afford premises in such a desirable spot, but could move their output there relatively easily. This, in combination with such 'zoning' regulations means that the location of the shop itself might be less significant than Carlin claims.

There are other regulations which indicate more directly that travelers made an important segment of the market for cooks. The 1389 regulations for the Thursday market in York forbid cooks from buying any form of flesh, fish or any kind of victuals before prime, 'bot on to the valu of xiiij d. q<sup>a</sup> for dyners of travelyn men.'<sup>151</sup> Likewise, in the early fifteenth century, York enacted regulations that no shops were to be opened on Sunday, except for those of taverners and common cooks, for the use of travelling men.<sup>152</sup> What these regulations express is an awareness that those who travelled to York, implicitly on market day in the first case, needed to be fed. The wealthy would not generally have need of the common cooks, and Carlin claims they had 'a positive aversion' to cookshop food.<sup>153</sup> This suggests that at least some of the travelling men referred to in the ordinances were travelling poor, and given the market day timing, probably purveyors from the hinterland coming to market to sell their goods.

Other boroughs also made exceptions for cooks on Sunday. Norwich had an ordinance, dating to 1422, that 'no one of the said city of whatsoever state, position, or condition he may be for the future shall keep any open shop on Sundays in Lent, nor on

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<sup>149</sup> Sharpe, ed., *Letter-Books of London: L*, 129-130.

<sup>150</sup> Prestwich, ed., *York Civic Ordinances*, 17.

<sup>151</sup> Sellers, ed., *York Memorandum Book Part I*, 224.

<sup>152</sup> 'tabernariis et cocis communibus pro aisiamento hominum viatorum.' Sellers, ed., *York Memorandum Book Part II*, 158.

<sup>153</sup> Carlin, "Fast Food," 34.

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any Sunday of the whole year for selling anything there, cooks, brewers, and taverners nevertheless excepted.<sup>154</sup> While this does not explicitly mention travelers, the similarity to the York ordinance is suggestive of similar concerns. The London Pastelers' ordinances of 1495 mention keeping but two shops open on Sunday, that the craftsfolk 'may serve Godde the better on the Sondag as trow Cristen men shuld do,' which indicates that the shops were being kept open on Sunday, although the question of who they were serving is not addressed.<sup>155</sup> All of these may reflect relatively local practice, of course, since similar exceptions are not, to my knowledge, found elsewhere, although it is also possible that the practice was so widespread and well understood that it did not generally merit mention.

The ability to serve travelling men gained in importance as markets and trade gained in importance. The York regulations mentioning travelling men are late fourteenth-century, and most of the Sunday trading exceptions appear in the fifteenth century. These exceptions were predominantly made for victuallers, including in some places butchers and ale-sellers, but cooks and taverners were the most common trades mentioned.<sup>156</sup> Ultimately these regulations are pragmatic; Sunday or not, people must eat. The presence of these regulations indicates that, in addition to the urban working poor who must eat even on Sundays, travelling men likely made up a significant part of the clientele of the common cook. In York, in particular, travelers were a significant enough market to warrant explicit protection in the civic regulations.

### **Guild Ordinances**

Cooks, in some localities, were organized into guilds, as were many other trades and crafts; cooks' guilds were not powerful or wealthy guilds, and they do not appear to be particularly widespread, although cooks themselves were a common feature in urban

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<sup>154</sup> Hudson and Tingey, eds., *The Records of the City of Norwich, Vol. 2*, 87.

<sup>155</sup> Sharpe, ed., *Letter-Books of London: L*, 311-312. The Pastelers' guild may well have subsumed or been coeval with the cooks' guild at this time.

<sup>156</sup> Davis provides a useful overview of Sunday trading. Davis, *Medieval Marketplace Morality*, 184-186.

areas. Ordinances for guilds were often registered in the civic documents we have been examining, and ordinances for cooks' guilds survive for London, York, and Beverley. The origins, structures, and development of guilds is a complex subject, and well beyond the scope of this thesis; however, the enrolled ordinances may be examined as an almost unique point of direct interface between the guild and the civic authorities.<sup>157</sup> Although the ordinances may well be aspirational on the part of both the authorities and the masters of the guild, it was in the interest of both parties to have the ordinances included in the town documents, and the ordinances were neither completely imposed from above, nor entered without the sanction of the civic authorities. Those authorities can be seen working with or against the guilds, trying to manage or control them, and by enrolling their ordinances both giving them a stamp of approval and also asserting their control over them. Although many of the ordinances relate to the way the guild operated in the borough or city, and will therefore be discussed at greater length in chapter three, the ordinances do contain information about the civic attitudes toward and understanding of the guilds and the cooks who made up their membership.

The earliest surviving ordinances appear to be the York *Constituciones cocorum* of 1425.<sup>158</sup> The first clause states that no one should be allowed to cater food without being admitted to the franchise and contributing to the expenses of the guild. This suggests both an attempt by the cooks to enlist the aid of the city authorities to support and protect their art, but also shows the interest that the authorities have in regulating the craft and supporting their own agenda. One of the expenses of the guild is supporting their pageant. Even if, as Goldberg argues, 'It was the desire of collectivities of craftworkers to give religious meaning to their labours and to participate in this

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<sup>157</sup> The nature of the interface is still under debate. For some discussion see: Davis, *Medieval Marketplace Morality*, 169-175; Heather Swanson, "The Illusion of Economic Structure: Craft Guilds in Late Medieval English Towns," *Past & Present*, no. 121 (Nov., 1988), 29-48; Swanson, *Medieval Artisans*; P. J. P. Goldberg, *Medieval England: A Social History 1250-1550* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2004), 59-68; Gervase Rosser, *The Art of Solidarity in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 235.

<sup>158</sup> Sellers, ed., *York Memorandum Book Part II*, 160-162. There is a marginal note in a later hand indicating that the ordinances were reformed in the late 1500s. Those reformed ordinances must have been recorded elsewhere; examination of the manuscript itself indicates that the body of the text was not amended.

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collective manifestation of civic pride,' that display of civic pomp was nevertheless of great importance to the civic authorities.<sup>159</sup> This clause ties guild membership to the franchise and to support of the pageant, which is to the interest of the urban government, and simultaneously restricts the major catering activities to the guild, supporting the interest of guild members.

Notably absent in this clause is a mention of cookshops or of selling food as 'piece-work.' The next clause may provide an explanation for this; it is a rather resigned sounding item forbidding wives of other artisans from selling cooked food retail unless they are fit to do so:

Item, that the wives of any man of another craft shall neither bake nor boil nor roast in public shops for retail sale, unless they be fit to the occupation, for the honour of the city and of the men of the aforesaid art.<sup>160</sup>

This suggests not only that such selling by wives of artisans was common, but that the cooks were powerless to prevent it. It makes no mention of how or if this was to be enforced. The subsequent clause goes on to require all who operate open shops or hearths to submit to the correction of the searchers and to support the burden of the craft just as others of the craft are required to do under the fellowship.<sup>161</sup> Taken together, these paint an interesting picture of the way that the civic authorities viewed the operation of the craft. The franchise was required before a cook could perform functions which might broadly be called 'catering.' Those who operated cookshops and sold retail should be subject to the searchers and required to pay to support the guild. They might not be required to take up the franchise, as the first clause explicitly mentions the franchise as being required for catering. The phrasing of the third clause

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<sup>159</sup> P. J. P. Goldberg, "Craft Guilds, the Corpus Christi Play and Civic Government," in *The Government of Medieval York : Essays in Commemoration of the 1396 Royal Charter*, ed. Sarah Rees Jones (York: Borthwick Institute of Historical Research, 1997), 148.

<sup>160</sup> 'Item, quod uxores aliquorum alterius artificis neque pinsant, bulliant neque assent in shoppis publicis ad vendendum per retalliam, nisi sint habiles ut occupent, pro honore civitatis et hominum artis predictae.' Sellers, ed., *York Memorandum Book Part II*, 160

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, 160.

prompts the speculation that it may be intended to operate with the second to manage the wives of the other craftsmen who are selling retail first by acknowledging their existence and activities and then placing those activities within the regulatory framework, without requiring them to be guild members. The third clause mentions both shops and hearths, and the use of *focos*, hearths, rather than *furnos*, ovens, refers to a relative fixed location and workspace, but one which might not be a full shop; small ovens may be relatively portable, but hearths are not. This could be an effort to require regular by-industrial cooks, such as the wives of the second clause, to support the guild expenses as if they were guild members without actually requiring guild membership, which could be problematical for wives of craftsmen. This resulted in a three-tiered hierarchy. This suggests that the more prestigious, and remunerative, work was in the catering of the large feasts and special events, rather than in the day-to-day operation of a retail cookshop; this was restricted to those who were both guild members and who held the franchise. Those who operated cookshops or other fixed places of work were effectively forced to support the guild, at least as far as paying annual costs and expenses. Wives of other craftsmen working in a fully by-industrial capacity should be competent, but it is not clear how that should be enforced, unless the third clause is intended to apply to them as well, which may very well be the reason for the inclusion of *focos* in that clause.

The situation in London was complicated by the existence of two related and overlapping groups of craftsmen, cooks and pastelers. Alan Borg argues that the two groups had 'come together as a single Guild' by 1378.<sup>162</sup> There is other evidence to support the idea that the two terms were used almost interchangeably, and that, perhaps, the name used was chosen based on the specific activity under discussion. In 1281, some thirty men were arrested for various violent offenses, and in their number was one 'Roger the Cook,' whose profession was noted as 'pasteler.'<sup>163</sup> A 1378 ordinance for cooks set prices not only for roast meat but also for meat baked in pies.<sup>164</sup> In 1428 four

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<sup>162</sup> Alan Borg, *A History of the Worshipful Company of Cooks* (Huddersfield: The Worshipful Company of Cooks, 2011), 32.

<sup>163</sup> Reginald R. Sharpe, ed., *Calendar of Letter-Books of the City of London: B, 1275-1312*, (London: HM Stationery Office, 1900), 1-3.

<sup>164</sup> Riley, ed., *Memorials*, 426.

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cooks were sworn as Master Cooks, and in 1438, four were listed being sworn as 'Cokes and Pastelers,' including two of the same men – John Beke (or Bekke) and John Stokwell.<sup>165</sup> No ordinances are recorded, under either name, until the 1475 *Ordinaciones Cocorum*.<sup>166</sup> By contrast with the York ordinances, these 1475 London ordinances are essentially proscriptive. They follow some of the usual formulae, with the opening clause written as a petition of the men of the mystery of the cooks asking for their ordinances to be approved, and closing with the injunction that they be shown to the fellowship on a regular basis; however, they have every appearance of being a concerted effort by the civic administration, or perhaps senior members of the fellowship, to correct what they saw as problems with the trade. While several of the clauses are concerned with food safety, the majority are concerned with managing undesirable behavior and practices. Two clauses attempt to restrict the hawking of food on the street, one by forbidding any food to be sent out the door or cut off the spit without it having been paid for. Most telling, however, is the first clause:

That for asmoche as divers persones of the saide Craft w<sup>t</sup> their handes embrowed and fowled be accustomed to drawe and pluk other Folk as well gentilmen as other comon people by their slyves and clothes to bye of their vitailles whereby many debates and strives often tymes happen ayenst the peas —such conduct should be forbidden, under penalty.<sup>167</sup>

Borg suggests that the first clause is intended to restrict the drawing and plucking of poultry to the mystery but such a reading is spurious.<sup>168</sup> In fact, it is intended to prohibit cooks with grubby hands from besmirching the clothes of passers-by as they try to sell their goods. In this it is cut from the same cloth as the regulations which single out cooks as fouling the streets. These ordinances do, in their form and language, suggest the existence of an organized body, including a statement that they should be shown to the 'whole of the Fellowship twice a year.'<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> Sharpe, ed., *Letter-Books of London: K*, 99, 222.

<sup>166</sup> Sharpe, ed., *Letter-Books of London: L*, 129-130.

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*, 129.

<sup>168</sup> Borg, *A History of the Worshipful Company of Cooks*, 193.

<sup>169</sup> Riley, ed., *Memorials*, 426.



Baking, roasting, and seething are all mentioned in the 1475 ordinances, reinforcing the idea that cooks and pastelers may well have been coeval. The 1495 *Ordinacio dez Pastelers, etc.* confirms this.<sup>170</sup> It uses the same language of bake, roast, and seethe, and contains restrictions on sending food into the streets for sale similar to that of the 1475 ordinances. These ordinances are far more extensive, however, and include charitable provisions for members. They also extend the authority of the wardens to examine any sort of prepared food, in a fashion similar to that of the York ordinances. They address the catering of feasts, as well. One clause requires that anyone undertaking one of several major feasts – those of the sergeants, the mayors, the sheriffs, and the tailors are specifically named – must do so with the advice of the wardens of the craft, that they should be well dressed 'for thonour of this Citee.'<sup>171</sup> The civic authorities were doubtless pleased to have this clause enrolled, as they would be the beneficiaries thereof. The ordinances include a clause which states that the wardens may, accompanied by a sergeant of the mayor, arrest any outsiders who dare to make feasts, dinners, or suppers within the city or its liberties. This illustrates a point where the interests of the authorities and the guild overlap. It encourages guild membership, and therefore franchise, which brings the trade under control, it directly enriches the city coffers by a fine, and it articulates a certain amount of trade protectionism for the cooks, specifically the catering specialists, whom we have seen most probably represent the elite of the common cooks.

The civic government regulated common cooks, while those who operated within a household either as named cooks or under the general heading of servants, were not directly under their control but were rather managed by the head of the household. The regulations which state that cooks may buy only after the households of the good men of the city have supplied themselves and their households make it clear that the authorities understood this distinction, and as good men of the city themselves, had a vested interest in gaining first access to the market.<sup>172</sup> They also understood those

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<sup>170</sup> Sharpe, ed., *Letter-Books of London: L*, 310-313.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, 311.

<sup>172</sup> Studer, ed., *The Oak Book of Southampton, Vol. 1*, 70-71; Riley, ed., *Memorials*, 220-221; Veale, ed., *The Great Red Book of Bristol, Text (Part I)*, 143; Bateson, ed.,

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distinctions to be fluid; the 1495 London *Ordinacio dez Pastelers etc.* states:

That whate persone or persones of the same Crafte that hereafter shall serve the Maire for the tyme beyng or any of the Shireffes for the yere of Mairaltie or Shervalte as their householde Coke or Cokes shalle neither in his own propre persone nor by any his servaunt or servauntes by Colour Crafte or otherwise that yere dresse or do to be dressed any Festes brekfastes dyners or Sopers for any Weddynges obites Craftes or otherwise out of the Maire or Sherriffes houses without suche Fest brekefast dyner or Souper be made at the cost and charge of the said Maire and Sherreffes for the tyme beyng to thentent that every man of the same Feaulisshippe may have a competent livyng.<sup>173</sup>

There are a number of levels to this ordinance. At the most straightforward level, it simply forbids a cook who has become a household cook for certain officials from catering meals from his or her employer's kitchen. The ostensible reason for this is to prevent unfair competition for the members of the fellowship. It also forces the cook to be dedicated only to that employer, and serves to make appropriation of household stocks for private gain more difficult. While the ordinance may not have been specifically intended to prevent pilferage, it is nevertheless reflective of a certain level of distrust about the probity of the cooks. It does not explicitly forbid a cook from keeping separate facilities for purposes of catering other meals, but it discourages the practice since it would be both expensive and inconvenient to operate such a bilocated enterprise. There is also an implication, which will be explored in more depth in later chapters, that the dignity of the mayor's and sheriffs' houses required a cook, and, perhaps aspirationally on the part of the guild, a professional cook and guild-member. The dignity of those houses would be ill-served by a cook who was also operating a catering business out of the house. It seems likely, as well, that the cooks, now purchasing food for the good men of the city, would be allowed to purchase freely when the market was open; the idea of waiting until the households of good men had made their purchases when one is purchasing for just such a household is unreasonable. This

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*Records of the Borough of Leicester, Vol. 2*, 289. See also the discussion on pp. 34-36 of this chapter.

<sup>173</sup> Sharpe, ed., *Letter-Books of London: L*, 311.

ordinance then also serves to prevent the cook from circumventing market regulations for his or her own benefit. Not only does it neatly point out some of the functional differences of common and private, or 'household,' cooks, it demonstrates that the distinction could be made while retaining guild status. Private London cooks becoming common was not a new idea, of course. There are a number of private cooks who were admitted to the franchise, and it seems likely they continued in their trade. In 1310, Simon Burgeys, cook for the Friars Minor, was admitted to the franchise at the plea of the friars; in 1311, Hervey, the cook of Sir William de Carletone who had died, was admitted upon paying a hefty 22 s. 6 d. – the equivalent of two months wages for a skilled labourer;<sup>174</sup> also in 1311, Master John de Laxfeld was admitted, and charged nothing, by reason that 'he had stood with divers Sheriffs of the City, and had served them well and faithfully.'<sup>175</sup> The ordinance represents a rare instance of an attempt to regulate private, household cooks by any form of guild or civic authority, and illustrates the difficulty all the regulatory bodies had conceptualizing the duties and position of a professional cook, in this case a member of the Cooks' Guild who had undertaken a long-term contract.

The Beverley *Ordinaciones Cocorum* were enrolled in the Great Gild Book of Beverley in 1485, after the proscriptive London ordinances of 1475, but before the much broader *Ordinacio dez Pastelers etc.* of 1495.<sup>176</sup> The Beverley ordinances are concerned less with the activities of the cooks in their professional capacity than either the York or London ordinances. The bulk of them deal with administrative matters. The first and most pressing matter was that of the Corpus Christi pageant the guild should support, the 'Redemption of Adam and Eve, called the Cook Pageant.'<sup>177</sup> The next clauses address when and how officers should be elected, require members to obey their elected alderman, keep the peace among themselves, and the fee an apprentice must pay to enter the guild. These clauses, taken together, suggest that the primary concern of the Beverley civic administration was the maintenance of the Corpus Christi

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<sup>174</sup> See 'A Note on Currency and Money' on p. 23 of this thesis.

<sup>175</sup> Reginald R. Sharpe, ed., *Calendar of Letter-Books of the City of London: D : 1309-1314* (London: HM Stationery Office, 1902), 44, 73, 76.

<sup>176</sup> Beverley, East Riding Archives, BC/II/3/1. f. 79 The transcriptions which follow are mine.

<sup>177</sup> 'Redempc(i)onem Ade (et) Eue vocat(us) le Coke pageant.'

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pageant. Entirely lacking is any attempt at regulating the activities of the guild at this level. At Beverley this control was probably implemented through the aldermen and stewards of the guilds, who represented the craft to the Twelve Keepers.<sup>178</sup> It is the last clause of the ordinances that is most interesting. It requires each master of the art to contribute 8d. to the upkeep of the pageant. It goes on to say:

'Those who sell certain things belonging to the Cooks craft as the Pye-bakers, Pasty-bakers, Flaune-bakers, and Chese cake makers to pay yearly 6d., and Otemele makers 4d., and the Dyner makers 2s.'<sup>179</sup>

This has two points of particular interest. The first is simply that it shows that a distinction is being drawn between members of the guild of cooks and a wide variety of persons who were working as professional cooks albeit in some specialized aspect and possibly in a by-industrial capacity. The distinction between 'pye bakers' and 'pasty bakers' is an intriguing one, which indicates an even greater degree of specialization than is commonly suspected. What that distinction is, however, is unclear.

What is clear is that, in the eyes of the civic authorities of Beverley, there is a distinct economic hierarchy among those who are considered professional cooks: at the bottom is the humble oatmeal maker, above them what can be collectively be referred to as pie-makers, or perhaps pastelers. All of those contribute less than the guild members themselves. The dyner makers pay three times what the guild members do, four times that of the pastelers, and six times that of the oatmeal makers. The dyner makers, by which I think is meant what I have been calling caterers, make a contribution of 2s. which seems almost punitive considering that the entry fee to the guild is also 2s. There are several possible reasons why a dyner maker might not join the guild. They might

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<sup>178</sup> 'duodecim custodum.' For general discussion of the system: Leach, ed., *Beverley Town Documents*, xxxiii-xxxv; J. Allison, ed., *A History of the County of York East Riding: Volume 6, the Borough and Liberties of Beverley* (London: Victoria County History, 1989), 19-30.

<sup>179</sup> *Report on the Manuscripts of the Corporation of Beverley* (London: HM Stationery Office, 1900), 103. This is the translation given in the text. The original is a mix of Latin, French, and English: 'vt lez pye-bakers pastry bakers fflaune bakers (et) chese cake makers ... otemele makers ... les dyner makers'

wish to avoid the responsibilities of guild membership, such as office-holding. Conversely they might be denied entrance by the guild itself, that wished to keep the lucrative catering business to itself. That is merest speculation, but the understanding of the guild and borough that dyner makers, or caterers, are at the economic peak of the common cook's craft is not.

## **Conclusion**

The rules and regulations discussed show that the municipal authorities seem to hold a fairly hostile view, not only of cooks but of the victualling trades in general. Some of this is illusory, a reflection of the sources used; regulations will address disruptive behavior rather than praising good behavior, that is their nature. Bearing that in mind, however, cooks are routinely grouped with other transgressors or singled out for special attention. Britnell writes concerning Colchester:

One set of rules, some of them established by statute law, was designed to protect urban consumers from monopolistic practices and to ensure that victuallers earned only conventional rates of profit. But the attitude of the authorities to middlemen and processors of food and drink could not be antagonistic... Rules to limit the profit of middlemen did not derive from hostility to hucksters as such.<sup>180</sup>

There is more to be said here. Implicit in his formulation is a certain tension between urban consumers and victuallers, and the regulations do indicate some antagonism on the part of the authorities toward victuallers. These attitudes are not restricted to Colchester, but pervade the sources I have examined. Cooks, as noted before, tend to be singled out as polluters and marked as lesser artisans. What is unclear is to what extent this is based on the actions of the cooks themselves, and how much is based on external factors or biases. Was prejudice, prompted perhaps in part by a fear that they contributed to the spread of the great plague of 1348 - 1350 and subsequent recurrences, a cause of the cooks being singled out, or were the cooks singled out because they were,

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<sup>180</sup> Britnell, *Growth and Decline in Colchester*, 35.

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in fact, regular foulers of the town and its inhabitants?<sup>181</sup> The language of the 1475 London cooks' ordinances, referring to cooks with 'handes embrowed and fowled' plucking the sleeves of passers-by, suggests that the filth of cooks is at least partly rooted in their actions, but how many complaints were required before the authorities were moved to implement these ordinances, or was this a proactive measure by cooks attempting to counteract a prejudice which viewed them as dirty?<sup>182</sup> In a similar vein is the fifteenth-century York market regulation, which, when reiterating the time and place for cooks to buy their victuals includes the rather tetchy aside, 'Thay knawe it wele ynogh,' as is the extended description of the cooks' practice of collusion to avoid the restrictions on buying fish.<sup>183</sup> Whatever the cause, cooks were marked out, even among victuallers, as difficult to manage, dirty, and inclined to deceit.

The civic authorities understood the need for common cooks in the provisioning of the city, and their regulations express a concern for the safety of the consumer, but also for the supply of unprepared victuals to the inhabitants of the city. The resultant tension positions common cooks as outsiders in some sense; cookshops may almost be viewed as kitchens without a house, feeding houses without kitchens. The traditional means of provisioning and feeding a household – domestic preparation of food – is privileged by market regulations, some of which explicitly subordinate the needs of the cooks to those of households. Cooks are sometimes treated as artisans and craftspeople, and sometimes as service providers. There remains a certain opprobrium attached to the profession, or at least a certain distrust. Cooks who were operating cookshops were, however, more than any other of these victuallers, with perhaps the exception of the oft maligned brewsters, explicitly performing a function usually associated with a member of the household. The authorities express this ambivalence in the regulations and ordinances they impose upon the common cooks under their jurisdiction. Cooks operating as caterers, on the other hand, functioned with the structure of a household or institution, and the regulations are generally silent about their management except with regard to market hours and, significantly, conflict of interest regarding their

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<sup>181</sup> Rawcliffe, *Urban Bodies*. Chapter five speaks directly to food and drink as it relates to civic health concerns.

<sup>182</sup> Sharpe, ed., *Letter-Books of London: L*, 129.

<sup>183</sup> Sellers, ed., *York Memorandum Book Part I*, 222-224.

employment.

The existence of these regulations and the way in which they are articulated and recorded demonstrate not only that cooks were understood by the civic authorities to be part of the overall provisioning system of the borough or city, but also that they were a necessary part, a part that required control and management, and that it was the responsibility of the civic authorities to exercise that control and management. The *Judicium Pillorie* makes it clear that the common cooks of a town were as much the responsibility of the authorities as were the bakers and brewers. The regulations show a perception of cooks as posing a particular threat with respect to forestalling and regration, a threat addressed in many of the regulations. They also show, particularly with respect to the understanding of the clientele of the cooks, that the civic authorities appreciated the role that cooks played in supporting the provisioning of the city by supporting the market. By allowing the cooks exceptions from some regulations so that they could provide for travelling men, they enabled and encouraged external traders, including many of the suppliers of fish, grain, and other victuals, to trade in the borough or city markets.

Although the variations in the rules and regulations which have been discussed cover several centuries, they show remarkable consistency with respect to the treatment of cooks. Despite the changing nature of medieval life, the role and status of the cooks, at least in the eyes of the civic administration, seems to have remained relatively static – with one significant exception. The formation of guilds of cooks, as far as can be determined, took place relatively late, and in relatively few locations. The surviving ordinances all date to the fifteenth century, and those of Beverly and London to 1485 and 1495 respectively. This is roughly the same period as Coventry and Colchester enrolled their 'assize of a cook,' in 1474 and perhaps the early 1480s respectively.<sup>184</sup> This suggests that a more widespread effort was underway to manage urban cooks, with each individual municipality taking the approach which met its particular needs. It is difficult to say definitively why this might be taking place, given the few surviving data points, but I would like to suggest that it relates to the increasing importance of the cook

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<sup>184</sup> Discussed in the section on Sanitation and Food Safety.

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as a caterer, paralleling the increasing importance of civic feasts, including guild feasts. As these events became more common, the demand for specialists grew, and those specialists would have found it in their interest to attempt to monopolize those lucrative opportunities even as the officials would have found it in their interest to ensure the quality of those same opportunities.<sup>185</sup> The guilds would have been responsible for policing their craft, and in places where there were no guilds, further regulation (or reiteration of existing regulation) would help to supply the lack. That the guilds would also be responsible for supporting civic pageants was an added benefit in the eyes of the urban administration.

Taken collectively, the records leave the impression of civic authorities who understood and appreciated the need for common cooks, both in cookshops and for catering, but who were anxious about the potential of the cooks to capitalize on, or even abuse, their position in the provisioning mechanism of the city to the detriment of the wealthier inhabitants or to cause unrest among the general population. Cooks along with the other victualling trades, notably butchers and fishmongers, were needed to support the health of the populace but were also a threat to that health. The authorities saw strong links between the accepted practice of cookery, the tolerated practice of regrating, and the forbidden practice of forestalling, and took measures to curb and correct the latter. The victualling trades were heavily regulated in general, and butchers in particular received a great deal of attention.<sup>186</sup> Cooks, too, seem to be associated with filth and pollution, especially in public places, to high degree, especially when their relative scarcity is taken into account - the *Register of the Freemen of York* has over twice as many butchers enrolled as cooks, for example.<sup>187</sup> There is provision made for the poverty of cooks which is lacking for most of the other victualling trades, indicating a corporate acknowledgement of such a state. Overall, the authorities seem a little uneasy with the entire trade, based, perhaps, on the difficulty of managing it effectively, its ambiguous position as a domestic craft functioning professionally, and

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<sup>185</sup> C. M. Woolgar, *The Culture of Food in England 1200-1500* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2016), 341. Chapter Seven provides insight into the importance of these events.

<sup>186</sup> Rawcliffe, *Urban Bodies*, *passim*. Section 3.5, pp 147-152 are of particular interest.

<sup>187</sup> Francis Collins, ed., *Register of the Freemen of the City of York: Vol. I: 1272-1558*, (Durham: Surtees Society, 1897). See Table 2, p 84, and Appendix B of this thesis.



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its important role in the life of the borough.

### Chapter Two, Cooks in the City

In the last chapter, I considered urban cooks from an administrative perspective, examining their situation as reflected in records generated by civic authorities. There are other sources, however, which originate with the cooks themselves and with other inhabitants of the urban space. These records, documents, and literary sources provide a different perspective than that of the civic authorities on the role of the cook in urban life, and reflect a different understanding of what it meant to be a professional urban cook. The sources include literary works, wills, and court rolls. I will first revisit some of the themes which arose in chapter one, and then go on to examine several other topics which do not appear in the administrative records, or which appear in passing, but which are more clearly apparent in the sources which originate from the populace of the cities themselves. These include issues of professionalization and household structure, and considerations of gender relating to cooks.

The idea of cooks as deceitful or untrustworthy and dirty was very much present in the civic documents. I will ask if this perception was shared by the other inhabitants of the municipality. I will then return to the activities of cooks, particularly with respect to cookshops and catering, and ask what were the distinctions between these activities and what were some of the ramifications of the variety of activities that cooks undertook. I will then endeavour to shed light on the economic situation of the common cook, drawing on a variety of sources to synthesize a coherent picture of their position in the urban environment.

#### Suspicious Cooks

The most famous cook in medieval literature is Roger of Ware, Chaucer's cook in *The Canterbury Tales*. He may conveniently be used as a starting place to examine a few traits or distinguishing features of common cooks. This is equally true regardless of the interpretative camp which one follows with respect to Chaucer. Whether one believes the pilgrims to be based on actual persons, to be descriptions of types, or to be ideals or

epitomes of social order, Chaucer found some of the traits to be notable enough to include in his narrative, and they provide a framework for discussion.<sup>188</sup> Roger, a common cook who runs a cookshop, may well incarnate many of the stereotypes of medieval professional cook – he is a drunkard, fat, generally uncouth, and, in Woolgar's words, there is 'a pervading sense of the underhand and of chicanery in business.'<sup>189</sup> He is accused straight out of selling reheated pies.<sup>190</sup> As discussed in chapter one, this was a large concern of the civic authorities, and the reappearance of the accusation here suggests that it was also a concern of the citizens themselves. The attention given to reheated pies is part of a larger issue, and one worth investigating in more depth – the idea of cookery as deception.

Pies serve to disguise their contents within a pastry crust. That is not the intent, but it is a concomitant of the nature of the foodstuff. The case of Henry de Passelewe illustrates this quite clearly. According to a 1351 entry in *London Letter-book F*, Henry was prosecuted for selling pies that were not fit for human consumption, specifically capons in pastry that were 'putrid and stinking.' The purchasers were unable to tell that the food was bad until after they had purchased it and opened the pastry.<sup>191</sup> In a similar vein, the ordinances of the London piebakers, recorded in 1379, state 'that no one shall bake beef in a pasty for sale, and sell it as venison,' a requirement since 'the Pastelers of the City of London have heretofore ... baked beef in pasties, and sold the same for venison, in deceit of the people.'<sup>192</sup> Many other dishes common in medieval cuisine were also prepared in a fashion that disguised their origin and nature, either by breaking

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<sup>188</sup> For an outline of some of the interpretive positions: Stephen H. Rigby, "Reading Chaucer: Literature, History, and Ideology," in *Historians on Chaucer*, eds. Stephen H. Rigby and Alastair J. Minnis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 1-2.

<sup>189</sup> C. M. Woolgar, "The Cook," in *Historians on Chaucer*, eds. Stephen H. Rigby and Alastair J. Minnis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 271-272. It is worth noting that other characters receive similar treatment to similar effect.

<sup>190</sup> Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. Larry D. Benson, Third ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), I:4346-4348. The lines are included in full on p. 81 of this thesis.

<sup>191</sup> Henry Thomas Riley, ed., *Memorials of London and London Life, in the XIIIth, XIVth, and XVth Centuries*. (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1868), 266. The entry is in Letter-book F, the published edition of which simply cites Riley.

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*, 438.

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them down and reshaping them, or by covering them in a sauce, or both. A typical example is Mortreus de Chare:

Mortreus de Chare. ¶ Take porke, and seth(e) it ynow; and take it vppe, and bawde hit, and hewe it and grinde it, and in a mortar; And cast thereto grated brede, and then drawe the same broth(e) thorg(he) a streynour, And temper hit with(e) ale, and do al into a potte, and lete boile, and aley hit with(e) yolkes of egges, And then lete it boile no more, And caste thereto powder of ginger, Salt, And put hit in disshes in maner of Mortrewes, And cast thereto powder of ginger, & serue it forth(e).<sup>193</sup>

This dish of ground pork which, mixed with bread crumbs and broth, tempered with ale, enriched and thickened with egg yolks, and spiced with ginger and salt, is noted as a speciality of Chaucer's cook who could 'Maken mortreux, and wel bake a pye.'<sup>194</sup> This could be the very dish which caused Chaucer's Pardoner to complain, 'Thise cookes, how they stampe, and streyne, and grynde, / and turnen substaunce into accident / to fulfille al thy likerous talent!'<sup>195</sup> This practice is carried to the extreme with dishes known as sotelties, which present the food in ways intended to delight the eye as well as the palate. These dishes can range from the relatively simple, such as 'pommedorry,' meatballs made in the shape of gilded apples, to more complex dishes, such as a custard called 'lete lardes,' which can be coloured in up to six different shades, all of which might be present in a single slice, to the 'cokagrys,' which involves cutting a chicken and a pig in half, and combining them again to create a monster which is then gilded gold and silver.<sup>196</sup>

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<sup>193</sup> Thomas Austin, ed., *Two Fifteenth-Century Cookery-Books*, (London: EETS, 1888), 70-71. This dish, with relatively minor variations in spelling and ingredients, is common in many medieval cookery books.

<sup>194</sup> Benson ed., *The Riverside Chaucer*, I:384.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid., VI:538-540.

<sup>196</sup> Constance B. Hieatt and Sharon Butler, *Curye on Inglysch : English Culinary Manuscripts of the Fourteenth Century (Including the Forme of Cury)* (London: EETS,

The disguising of food is a central device in part of the romance of *Richard Coeur de Lion*, composed around 1300.<sup>197</sup> The King's cook is forced to take an inappropriate ingredient and disguise it by means of his art as something else; in this case, he takes a Saracen's head and presents it as pork.<sup>198</sup> The method of preparation for the Saracen's head is reminiscent of 'Gele of flessh,' which is something like modern headcheese, but which would in any case completely disguise the nature of the flesh by boiling it, picking it apart, and spicing it.<sup>199</sup> The idea of a cook being able to present human flesh as wholesome meat would have been both plausible and horrifying.

This ability of the cook to disguise food is turned to a different end and used as a source of humour in *The Feast of Tottenham*, a relatively short piece of the late fifteenth century, which although it may have been intended for bourgeois or lower-gentry readers, had a wider appeal, including an urban audience.<sup>200</sup> The narrator, who claims to be the master of this great feast in lines 10-11, 'For ther hade I the maistry / Of alle maner of cucry,' proceeds to list a series of improbable dishes generally combining a well known dish with an inappropriate central ingredient, as lines 19-24:

Ther was pestels in porra,  
And laduls in lorra  
For potage,  
And som saduls in sewys,  
And mashefattis in mortrewys

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1985), 224. For 'Pomedorry,' 70, #42; for 'Lete lardes,' 113, #69; for 'Cokagrys,' 139, #183.

<sup>197</sup> For summary and date of composition see "Database of Middle English Romance," <http://www.middleenglishromance.org.uk/mer/45>.

<sup>198</sup> Cristina Figueiredo, ed., *Richard Coeur De Lion*, (Forthcoming). Roughly lines 3025-3210. I am indebted to Dr Cristina Figueiredo for making available to me her transcription and glosses of this text prior to their publication.

<sup>199</sup> Heiatt and Butler, *Curye on Inglysch*, 121, #105.

<sup>200</sup> Erik Kooper, *Sentimental and Humorous Romances* (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications/TEAMS Middle English Texts Series, 2005), Introduction.

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Here, pestels, playing on both the kitchen implement and a leg of pork, are served in a vegetable dish, ladles are served in what Kooper glosses as gelatin, saddles are stewed, and mashtubs are made into morttrews. This conceit continues essentially unaltered for the next eighty lines to the poem's end. Most of the recipes are for sauces or more complex preparations which serve to mask the nature of the inappropriate ingredient; they are in soups, stews, or pastry, or minced, chopped or otherwise transmuted. While the intent here is humorous, it does demonstrate both an understanding of the cook's ability to disguise nature, and a concern over the wholesomeness of the result. The desirable ability of the cook to create foods with 'a nobull savour,' as the poem puts it, is continuously played off against the dangerous ability to hide unwholesome ingredients in innocuous looking dishes.<sup>202</sup> The mockery of the rustics with their feast of farm implements and excrement reflects the very real concerns of the city dwellers about what was going into their food.

In all of these, the skill of the cook lies in concealing the nature of underlying ingredients; as Christopher Woolgar puts it: 'Cookery was, therefore, a form of alchemy, a perversion of the natural order.'<sup>203</sup> This is a two-edged sword. A cook resembles a conjuror in that he deceives in order to delight; in like wise, the very thing which recommends him makes him on some level an object of suspicion. His 'alchemy' in these examples is not a true transformation, which might make it more acceptable, but rather it is simply a lie.<sup>204</sup> If a cook can serve one a soup-ladle or a Saracen's head and make one think it is chicken or pork, then one must either trust the cook a great deal, or keep a very close eye on him. Common cooks were outside of the consumer's household, and such oversight as a direct employer could provide was impossible. This understanding and presentation of cooks as deceivers, coupled with the lack of personal

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<sup>201</sup> Ibid., *Feast of Tottenham*.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid., *Feast of Tottenham*, ll. 61-62: 'Then come in the fruture / With a nobull savour'

<sup>203</sup> Woolgar, "The Cook," 275.

<sup>204</sup> For a short discussion of the importance of transformation, or lack thereof, with respect to cooks see p. 43 of this thesis.

oversight, contributed to the unease with which common cooks were viewed by their urban clientele – even as they sought out the product the cooks produced.

To return to Roger of Ware, the Cook in the *Canterbury Tales*, the tale he tells to the company may also be reflective of how cooks were viewed. His tale concerns the riotous Perkyn Revelour, a victualler's apprentice. Immediately one is struck by the simple fact of the setting of the tale. Not for a cook are tales from antiquity, or stories of nobles and knights, rather the bourgeois people of the city are a fit topic for Chaucer to place in Roger's care. He is not alone in this, of course. The miller and the reeve, for example, both deal with humble characters. Perkyn was, broadly speaking, in the same business as Roger, 'And of a craft of vitailliers was hee.'<sup>205</sup> Unlike some other tales, where the tellers mock the professions of other pilgrims, such as the summoner and friar who do literary battle with their tales, Roger is painting a none-too-flattering picture of the junior members of his own professional circle. The tale is cut short, so we do not know the eventual fate of Perkyn, but the placement of the tale of an ungoverned apprentice in the victualling trade coming hard on the heels of accusations of illicit activity on the part of Roger is certainly suggestive of a general view concerning cooks. This view might even extend to a wider circle of victuallers. The cook's tale is placed directly after the reeve's tale, in which a miller who is an unrepentant thief and brawler gets his comeuppance. Taken together, they show a pervasive concern with deception and deceit in the food chain, and a pervasive distrust of those who are involved with it.

In addition to concerns over his product, Chaucer raises questions about Roger's cleanliness. Roger has a mormel, an ulcerous sore of some kind, on his shin, and flies swarm in his shop, suggesting that his hygiene is poor, another concern of the civic authorities which featured in the discussion in chapter one.<sup>206</sup> The issue here is again related to oversight and lack of control over process on the part of the consumer. Medieval diners, at least in the higher echelons of society, were scrupulous about hygiene. For example, Russell's fifteenth-century *Boke of Nurture* instructs an aspiring servant:

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<sup>205</sup> Benson ed., *The Riverside Chaucer*, I:4366.

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*, I:386, 'That on his shyne a mormel hadde he'; I:4352, 'For in thy shoppe is many a flye loos.'

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Good son, loke þat þy napery be soote / & also feyre and clene,  
bordclothe, towelle & napykn, foldyn alle bydene.  
bryght y-pullished youre table knyve, semely in syzt to sene ;  
and þy spones fayre y-wasche / ye wote welle what y meene.<sup>207</sup>

As Terence Scully puts it, 'Some of the rules for behaviour at table bore upon strictly sanitary matters, perhaps what we might aseptically call hygienic concerns. Curiously it is the French and English treatises that tend to emphasize these concerns.'<sup>208</sup> Roger's slovenliness would dissuade such elites from using his services. Aspirational bourgeoisie might well have viewed the filth of his shop in the same manner.

Both the issues of deceit and cleanliness are related to a larger concern, that of control over process and product where the product is inextricably linked to health and, indeed, to survival. When someone else prepares food there is cause for concern on several fronts. First and foremost, the cooks literally have the consumer's life in their hands, as illustrated by a verse in the *Boke of Nurture*:

Cookes with þeire newe conceytes, choppynge / stampynge, & gryndynge,  
Many new curies / alle day þey ar contryvyng & Fyndynge  
þat provokethe þe peple to perelles of passage / þrouȝ peyne soore pyndynge,  
& þrouȝ nice excesse of suche receytes / of þe life to make a endynge.<sup>209</sup>

The first line hearkens back to Chaucer's Pardoner, cited earlier, and suggests that this perception of cooks' activities was fairly common.<sup>210</sup> The lines make clear that such complex food can tempt people, even to the point of death. In addition, because food is

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<sup>207</sup> Frederick James Furnivall, *Early English Meals and Manners*, (London: EETS, 1904), 4, ll. 61 - 64.

<sup>208</sup> Terence Scully, *The Art of Cookery in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1995), 178. More generally, the discussion on pp. 170-179 is of use. Scully does not elaborate why the English and French emphasis is particularly curious. See also: Woolgar, "The Cook," 192-194 ; Peter Brears, *Cooking and Dining in Medieval England* (Devon: Prospect Books, 2008), 425-438.

<sup>209</sup> Furnivall, *Early English Meals and Manners*, 33, ll. 505 - 508.

<sup>210</sup> Benson ed., *The Riverside Chaucer*, I:384.



a necessity, this lack of control leaves the diner ripe for economic exploitation; Langland expressed it thus in *Piers Plowman*:

Bothe schyrues and seriauntes and such as kepeth lawes  
To punischen vpon pilories and vpon pynyng stoles,  
As bakers and breweres, bocheres and cokes;  
For thyse men don most harm to the mene people.<sup>211</sup>

The poor, at least in this case, are the prey of the victuallers.

Thus far I have been concerned primarily with literary texts and what the texts themselves suggest about views towards cooks. It is worth remembering, however, that although these texts may well have been read privately and also read aloud, Mystery Plays were intended to be performed and not simply to be read.<sup>212</sup> The Plays of York and Chester were performed and both the performers and the audience are known to some extent; it seems likely that the Towneley MS pageants were also performed, given that a few of the plays do have craft attributions. The Plays were performed in their towns by the inhabitants of those towns, and each pageant was the responsibility of a guild or guilds, which undertook to provide the wagons, actors, and other necessities for each performance. For Chester and York, the manuscripts or supporting documents make it clear which guild was responsible for which play, although how a guild came to be responsible for a specific play is unclear,<sup>213</sup> for the Towneley cycle, with a few

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<sup>211</sup> William Langland and Derek Albert Pearsall, *Piers Plowman: A New Annotated Edition of the C-Text* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2008), 83, ll. 77-81.

<sup>212</sup> Joyce Coleman, *Public Reading and the Reading Public in Late Medieval England and France* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996). Coleman suggests that public reading persisted throughout the middle ages as an adjunct to private reading.

<sup>213</sup> The subject of how a pageant came to be associated with a specific craft, guild, or mystery has received some scholarly attention, and is quite possibly linked with the formation of guilds themselves. A full discussion is beyond the scope of this paper. For two rather opposed views, see: P. J. P. Goldberg, "Craft Guilds, the Corpus Christi Play and Civic Government," in *The Government of Medieval York: Essays in Commemoration of the 1396 Royal Charter*, ed. Sarah Rees Jones (York: Borthwick Institute of Historical Research, 1997), 141-163; P. J. P. Goldberg, "From Tableaux to Text: The York Corpus Christi Play c. 1378 - 1428," *Viator* 43, no. 2 (2012), 247-276;

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exceptions, the mappings of guilds to plays is unknown. Beverley was also presenting pageants, and although there are no extant texts, it is possible to determine from surviving civic records some of the titles of the pageants and which guilds had responsibility for them.

In Chester, the cooks presented *The Harrowing of Hell*, and by the early sixteenth century so did the cooks at Beverley.<sup>214</sup> The 1485 ordinances of the Beverley cooks refer to the cooks presenting *The Redemption of Adam and Eve*.<sup>215</sup> The redemption of Adam and Eve takes place during the Harrowing of Hell, which suggests that the Beverley cooks were presenting a limited version of the larger pageant, prior to becoming responsible for the full *Harrowing* a few years later. In York *The Harrowing of Hell* was presented by, among others, the glaziers and verrouers. Anne Higgins suggests that these last, like cooks, labour over hot pots and vats, a common motif for devils in hell.<sup>216</sup> While there is no direct cookery connection, the pots and meathooks of the cooks might well have been the inspiration for props for the demons of Hell, if indeed the cooking implements were not simply used themselves.<sup>217</sup>

In York the cooks, along with the water-leaders, performed Play 32, *The Remorse of Judas*.<sup>218</sup> The inclusion of the water-leaders came after the combination of two earlier pageants, the dating of which is uncertain, but which certainly came before the scripts were recorded, and most probably occurred much earlier, between 1415 and 1436, and most likely at least a few years after 1415.<sup>219</sup> That the bakers retained the

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and Heather Swanson, "The Illusion of Economic Structure: Craft Guilds in Late Medieval English Towns," *Past & Present*, no. 121 (Nov., 1988), 29-48.

<sup>214</sup> Anne Higgins, "Work and Plays : Guild Casting in the Corpus Christi Drama," in *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England*, Vol. 7, ed. John Leeds Barroll, (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1995), 79.

<sup>215</sup> Beverley, East Riding Archives, BC/II/3/1, f. 79.

<sup>216</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 79.

<sup>217</sup> For further discussion see: Clifford Davidson, "The Fate of the Damned in English Art and Drama," in *The Iconography of Hell*, eds. Clifford Davidson and Thomas H. Seiler (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1992), 41-66.

<sup>218</sup> Clifford Davidson, ed., *The York Corpus Christi Plays* (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications/TEAMS Middle English Text Series, 2011), Play 32.

<sup>219</sup> This date span is based on Meg Twycross' identification of the corrections to the Ordo paginarum as being in the hand of Roger Burton, and the date of the Ordo itself:

combined play, *The Last Supper*, is eminently reasonable given the association of their craft with the Eucharist – as noted, the bakers have the same pageant in Chester. The relocation of the water-leaders is an indication of the relative standing of the two craft groups; the bakers could support the pageant on their own, and likely did not wish to share the prestige of their pageant with another craft. If this is the case, then it also seems likely that the cooks were unable or unwilling to reject the addition of the water-leaders to their pageant, either through poverty or lack of political influence. Doubtless other reasons are also possible for such a merger. To return to the play, however, it appears to have no connection with the craft, either by activity (such as the story of the construction of the ark being presented by the shipwrights) or by virtue of religious devotion (as with the Baptism of Christ being presented by the barbers, who have a devotional association with John the Baptist).<sup>220</sup>

It is important to remember that these plays, at least until the late fifteenth century, were performed by the members of the craft themselves.<sup>221</sup> What would be the effect on the audience of seeing their fellow townspeople portraying the characters of the plays on wagons before their eyes? In the final play, *Doomsday*, reserved to themselves by the mercers in York, the inhabitants would see the powerful merchants sitting in judgment, emphasizing their power and dignity. The urban poor would see these majestic figures and hear them speak words of solace and charity. As Goldberg has noted, 'At the very door of this Gild Hall stood the maison Dieu or almshouse of the gild of St Christopher and the mercers' own gildhall was built above the Trinity hospital of their foundation.'<sup>222</sup> Some of these same urban poor would be among the regular clients of the common cooks. When they saw *The Remorse of Judas* performed by the

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Meg Twycross, "The *Ordo Paginarum* Revisited, with a Digital Camera," in *'Bring Furth the Pagants': Essays in Early English Drama Presented to Alexandra F. Johnston*, eds. David M. Klausner and Karen Sawyer Marsalek (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 105-133.

<sup>220</sup> Alan D. Justice, "Trade Symbolism in the York Cycle," *Theatre Journal* 31, no. 1 (Mar., 1979), 47-58; R. M. Lumiansky and David Mills, eds., *The Chester Mystery Cycle, Vol. I, Vol. 3*, Early English Text Society, (1974), Play XIX.

<sup>221</sup> It is at this point that references to professional actors begin to appear in York. Robert Davies, *Extracts from the Municipal Records of the City of York, during the Reigns of Edward IV. Edward V. and Richard III.* (London: J. B. Nichols & Son, 1843), 237.

<sup>222</sup> Goldberg, "Craft Guilds, the Corpus Christi Play and Civic Government," 160.

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cooks, when they saw those who betrayed Christ and connived to have him killed, they saw men who were familiar to them performing acts reprehensible to all Christian folk. Further, these men almost gratuitously engaged in sharp dealing to steal the field of blood from 'Armiger.'<sup>223</sup> The impact of seeing these men portrayed publically in such an unflattering light would hardly have encouraged trust and respect. Indeed, the subtle identification of cooks with traitors, cheats, sinners, and betrayers would be reinforced with each repetition of the cycle. If, as has been suggested, the plays served as a moral guidebook, the cooks (and water-carriers) of York were repeatedly used as bad examples in the most splendid of civic spectacles.

The Harrowing of Hell, in Christian theology, concerns the descent of Christ into Hell to release the tormented souls of worthy figures who were, nonetheless, not among the Christian saved, often because they had died before the coming of Christ. It was a common subject for pageants and the characters include both tormentors, in the shape of demons, and the souls of the damned. Both the Chester and York *Harrowing* include among others, Adam and John the Baptist, for example.<sup>224</sup> It was the pageant of the Chester cooks and they were seen in Hell, often presented as like a kitchen, surrounded by the tools of their trade. As tormentors, they were demons, not men, and so distanced from the persons performing the roles. The setting is also in a place which is 'not here.' The setting of the *Remorse* is full of familiar detail in a way that Hell is not. The repeated association of the hellish kitchen with the cooks who worked there would have had several effects. While the cooks would have been viewed as entertainers and also contributors to the civic spectacle, on a more subtle level the perception of them as devilish characters, and of a devilish character, would persist. Just as today some actors are identified with a famous role to the point where the perception of them in other walks of life is coloured by that famous role, so cooks would be unable to avoid a faint taint of the unsavoury.

Overall, the portrayals of cooks in both literature and drama are much of a piece with the attitudes of the authorities discussed in the previous chapter. The general

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<sup>223</sup> Davidson, ed., *The York Corpus Christi Plays*, Play 32, ll. 354 - 372.

<sup>224</sup> *Ibid.*, Play 37.

impression is that of filth, deception, and economic predation. That cooks were presented this way would affect the audience who read the literature or viewed the plays. That is not the entire picture, and cannot give a full impression of how cooks were viewed anymore than one can gather an accurate picture of contemporary life from nothing but popular novels, television, or motion pictures. The cooks in literature are both exceptional and stereotypical in a sense, in that they may represent commonly held attitudes, but are artificial constructs. To gain a more complete picture, other sources must also be investigated.

### **Cookshops and Caterers**

The activities of the common cook fell into two broad categories: catering, that is to say providing food for feasts and gatherings, and speculative cooking, which is to say cooking food for retail sale from a shop, window, or via a huckster. A single cook might engage in both types of activity; Chaucer's Cook explicitly does, and there is nothing to suggest that a different situation pertained among actual cooks. I shall examine these activities, catering and speculative cooking, separately in order to develop a finer grained understanding of how they were viewed, and how that informed the way common cooks were viewed.

In the previous chapter, I discussed the ordinances of the cooks' guild of York, and concluded that they worked to restrict catering to guild members and franchise holders.<sup>225</sup> The London *Ordinacio dez Pastelers etc.* has several clauses which work to similar effect. The wardens are given the authority to search all 'dressed victuals in open shops,' and the subsequent clause goes on to require all persons who 'seethe, roast, or bake victuals for sale,' that is to say who are operating cookshops or, more accurately, who are not performing catering services at the time, should pay quarterage 'as freemen had been accustomed to pay.' The similarity to the York ordinances is striking, suggesting that a similar economic milieu was in effect for cooks in both cities. The first clause to mention catering is the following one. It begins with the injunction 'That no persone nor persones enfranchised in the said Crafte of Pastelers from

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<sup>225</sup> See Chapter One, pp. 52 - 55.

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hensforth shalle take uppon hym or theym to make any grete Festes ..... as the Serjauntes Fest the Maires Fest the Shireffes Fest and the Taillours Fest without thadvice of the Wardeyns.<sup>226</sup> The catering of these feasts is explicitly linked to the franchise. This link is reiterated further in a clause which forbids any one of the craft from interfering with a person enfranchised in the craft who has made a contract to prepare a feast, dinner, or supper. The penalty for interference is large, viz. 20s. Another clause allows the wardens, with a sergeant of the mayor, to arrest any foreigner or stranger who attempts to make a feast, dinner, or supper. Foreigner and stranger, in this context, does not mean from outside England. Foreigner indicates the lack of franchise, and stranger implies an origin outside the city which also implies lack of franchise. As in York, the catering of meals was restricted to holders of the franchise and guild members, while operating cookshops does not appear to have required either, per se.

The types of activities restricted to franchise holders are listed in the ordinances and reward more detailed inspection. The York *Constituciones* mention wedding feasts, funeral feasts, and gatherings of guilds and fraternities.<sup>227</sup> The London *Ordinacio* mention the great feasts noted above as well as forbidding those in service to the mayor or sheriffs from preparing food for 'Weddynges obites Craftes or otherwise' out of the house of their employment.<sup>228</sup> Such feasts were instituted at the behest of a person or persons of some wealth, and were the most remunerative and prestigious activities a caterer could undertake. Serving the wealthy and respectable in situations which were charged with social significance – as weddings, funerals, craft feasts, and the like – would add to the prestige and social acceptability of the cook. More subtly, this sort of work placed the cook, albeit temporarily, into an established household hierarchy; the cook was functioning on a one-time basis as someone's or some institution's cook. The difference between a cook hired for a set period of time and one hired for a single event is much smaller than that between either of those two cooks and one who is cooking

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<sup>226</sup> Reginald R. Sharpe, ed., *Calendar of Letter-Books of the City of London: L : Edward IV - Henry VII* (London: HM Stationery Office, 1912), 311.

<sup>227</sup> 'in generalibus festis vel nuptiis, sepulturis, nec in congregacionibus gildarum vel fraternitatum.' Maud Sellers, ed., *York Memorandum Book Part II. (1388-1493) Lettered A/Y in the Guildhall Muniment Room*, (Durham: Surtees Society, 1915), 160.

<sup>228</sup> Sharpe, ed., *Letter-Books of London: L*, 311.

piecemeal out of a shop. The clientele of the cookshops was primarily the poorer urban residents – Martha Carlin suggests that both the 'working poor, especially those living alone' and the 'very poor and homeless' were the major clients of such shops.<sup>229</sup> I have argued in the last chapter that it also included travelling men. The 'caterers' provided meals for the elite. The cookshop cooks provided meals for the working poor and strangers.

The restriction of catering to franchise holders also restricted it almost entirely to men, or at least the oversight of men. That the members of guilds were primarily men is evident. It is generally accepted that the medieval artisanal household was a family affair, and the wife of the artisan was involved in the trade, and often carried it on after the decease of her husband.<sup>230</sup> However, this activity is rarely acknowledged in guild ordinances. By Maud Sellers' reckoning there are ordinances for sixty-seven mysteries recorded in the *York Memorandum Book*, but 'the framers of gild regulations in York as a rule ignored women.'<sup>231</sup> Given the general invisibility of women in the record, both the 1425 ordinances of the cooks' guild of York and the 1495 ordinances of the cooks' guild of London are noteworthy, as both make specific mention of women. I have previously cited the clause in the York ordinances which requires wives of other craftsmen who cook for retail sale to be competent.<sup>232</sup> That such wives would operate without benefit of the franchise seems likely. Not only would they, by definition, be involved in other crafts by virtue of marriage and therefore selling food in a by-industrial manner, but an examination of the register of the freemen of York reveals that although 164 people took up the franchise as a cook between the years 1350 and 1500,

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<sup>229</sup> Martha Carlin, "Fast Food and Urban Living Standards in Medieval England," in *Food and Eating in Medieval Europe*, eds. Martha Carlin and Joel Thomas Rosenthal (London: Hambledon Press, 1998), 27-51. The quoted material is on p. 51.

<sup>230</sup> See for example: Heather Swanson, *Medieval Artisans : An Urban Class in Late Medieval England* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989), passim; P. J. P. Goldberg, *Medieval England: A Social History 1250-1550* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2004), 100-101.

<sup>231</sup> Maud Sellers, ed., *York Memorandum Book Part I. (1376-1419). Lettered A/Y in the Guildhall Muniment Room*, (Durham: Surtees Society, 1912), xxviii.

<sup>232</sup> Sellers, ed., *York Memorandum Book Part II*, 160-162.

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not a single one was a woman.<sup>233</sup> By contrast, for the same period, four of sixty-six brewers admitted to the franchise were women.<sup>234</sup>

The situation in London differed from that in York, with the ordinances addressing women in the craft more directly. They include the entries: 'That every brother, on due warning, attend funerals, obits, &c., of Brethren and "Sistern" of the Fellowship,' and:

That every one enfranchised in the Craft that hereafter shalbe commaunded by the Wardeyns to bere the Corce of any brother or sister of the same Crafte to burying shall bere the same Corce or Corces to the Churche and to burying without any resistence grudge or geyneseyng of any persone or persones so commaunded upon peyn of ijjs. iiijd.<sup>235</sup>

A strict reading of these two entries makes it clear that women are occupied in the craft, but what is less clear is to what extent they are members of the guild or hold the franchise. Many of the entries, including the first one listed, make requirements only of brothers with no mention of female members of the company or fellowship.

That the distinction between cookshop operators and caterers was commonly understood is also apparent from literary sources which treat with cooks. When Langland wrote that cooks, among other victuallers, did 'most harm to the mene people,' the cooks in question were not those catering feasts, for the guests at such feasts were generally not the mean people.<sup>236</sup> Langland's opprobrium is directed at cookshop owners, reflecting both the difference in approach and in clientele. These lines reinforce the idea that the working poor of the *urbs* were one of the main, if not the dominant, clients of the cookshops. Chaucer covered similar ground with Roger of

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<sup>233</sup> Francis Collins, ed., *Register of the Freemen of the City of York: Vol. 1: 1272-1558*, (Durham: Surtees Society, 1897).

<sup>234</sup> Juliana de Bramwyth, 1377-8; Margareta Colton, 1448-9; Johanna Buntynge, 1471-2; Agnes Wodwerd, 1479-80. Francis Collins, ed. *Register of the Freemen*, 75, 169, 192, 201.

<sup>235</sup> Sharpe, ed., *Letter-Books of London* : L, 312.

<sup>236</sup> Langland and Pearsall, *Piers Plowman*, 83, ll. 77-81



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Ware, who operates a cookshop, and who seems to be of a piece with the cooks who show up in borough court records accused of selling putrid meat or reheated pies; as Chaucer's Host says:

For many a pastee hastow laten blood,  
And many a Jakke of Doveere hastoow soold  
That hath been twies hoot and twies coold.  
Of many a pilgrim hastow Cristes curs,  
For of thy percely yet they fare the wors,  
That they han eten with they stubbel goos,  
For in thy shoppe is many a flye loos.<sup>237</sup>

The implication here is that Roger sells not only dangerous food, but that his clients include many pilgrims. Roger is travelling with the some of the pilgrims, the five guildsmen, to cook their food, and these pilgrims, or those like them, may be the ones referred to in the lines above.<sup>238</sup> It seems likely, though, that if Roger was also selling to other, less-well provided pilgrims who passed through London, it would be in the context of his cookshop and not as a catered feast. *London Lickpenny* is classified by James Deane as a poem 'against Simony and the Abuse of Money.'<sup>239</sup> In this case, the presence of so many cooks in the poem is particularly interesting. The cooks are, again, those operating cookshops, and they ply the narrator with a variety of food, which he cannot buy – 'For lacke of money I may not spede' is his reiterated complaint.<sup>240</sup> The narrator falls into the category of travelling man, discussed in chapter one, and the cooks are presented as mercenary and, perhaps, gluttonous, but not malicious.

Cooks who cater are less well represented in the writings of the day, although they are not completely absent. The narrator of *The Feast of Tottenham* claims to be a famous caterer throughout the shire. He boasts:

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<sup>237</sup> Benson ed., *The Riverside Chaucer*, I:4346-4352.

<sup>238</sup> *Ibid.*, I:379-381.

<sup>239</sup> James M. Dean, *Medieval English Political Writings* (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications/TEAMS Middle English Text Series, 1996).

<sup>240</sup> *Ibid.*, *London Lickpenny*. The line, with some variation, closes each stanza of the poem.

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Now of this feest telle I can,  
I trow, as wel as any man,  
    Be est or be west,  
For over alle in ilke a schire  
I am send for as a sire  
    To ilke a gret fest.

For, in feith, ther was on,  
Sich on saw I never non,  
    In Inglond ne in Fraunce!  
For ther hade I the maistry  
Of alle maner of cucry,  
    Sich then was my chaunce.<sup>241</sup>

The humour of the piece derives from the idea of high status, expensively spiced foods being made with rustic implements, as if one was serving caviar in a sauce of iron-filings and paste. What exactly is being mocked is unclear: is it the ignorance of the peasants or the pretensions of the classes which could afford not only the spices and other ingredients, but also the cook to make them? This may put the Tottenham cook squarely in the same category as Roger of Ware; as Christopher Woolgar puts it concerning Roger: 'While the Cook's dishes would have found their place at aristocratic tables, the way they are presented in the 'General Prologue' suggests both aspiration – dishes that many of the far from noble pilgrims may have eaten – and, perhaps, an unpleasant content.'

It seems likely that the cooks who catered were viewed more favourably by society than those who exclusively operated cookshops or otherwise sold piecemeal. I would like to suggest that this is, in part, due to their place in the urban hierarchy. Whereas cookshop proprietors were feeding travellers and a relatively poor segment of the urban workforce, caterers were serving a higher-status clientele. Precisely because

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<sup>241</sup> Kooper, *Sentimental and Humorous Romances, Feast of Tottenham*, ll. 1-12.

they were less necessary, they were less suspect. They were likewise serving a relatively affluent clientele, not only by providing for the feasts and celebrations mentioned above, but by augmenting the capabilities of individuals or households to entertain. The lustre of their patrons would be reflected on them. Catering would have been more remunerative as well, helping to bolster the image of such cooks.

### **The Economic Situation of Urban Cooks**

Insight into the economic status of urban cooks must be approached obliquely, since few sources speak directly to their status. As noted before, there may also be considerable variation between types of urban professional cooks. In this section, I will attack on two fronts. I will consider cooks' wills and relate them, where possible, to other documentary sources, primarily records of admissions to the franchise. I will also consider the Nottingham Borough Court Rolls, examining them with an eye to actions which involve cooks.

The York Exchequer Court Probate Registers begin in 1389 and continue, with a gap in the early fifteenth century, through the end of our period. They contain entries for twenty cooks dated prior to 1500. Will-making cannot be used directly as a measure of wealth, because only a minority of the population at large made wills and had them registered, and the poor do not appear in the record at all.<sup>242</sup> The relative number of wills might, therefore, give some rough indication of the relative affluence of the professions, on the premise that registering the will required some expense and creating a will required not only some expense, but also the need to name an executor, and some money or goods worth recording. Even if the will specified only the goods to be expended in funerary arrangements, other chattels may have existed which were allocated elsewhere or which would have been inherited according to the custom of legitim.<sup>243</sup> The difficulty, of course, lies in determining how many people were active

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<sup>242</sup> P. J. P. Goldberg, *Medieval England: A Social History 1250-1550*, 366.

<sup>243</sup> For an overview of inheritance law in England at the time, see: R. H. Helmholz, *Canon Law and the Law of England* (London: Hambledon Press, 1987), 364.

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in any given craft. Since we are only interested in ratios, and furthermore only in those of the 'will-making class,' it is possible to use the Register of the Freemen of York to generate numbers of craftsmen who had taken up the franchise in York.<sup>244</sup> A selection of professions from the victualling trades yields the results shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: Ratio of Wills to Franchise-holders<sup>245</sup>**

| <b>Profession</b> | <b>No. of Wills<br/>(1390 - 1500)</b> | <b>No. of Entries in<br/>Register (1390 - 1500)</b> | <b>Ratio</b> |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|---|--------------|
| Bakers            | 49                                    | 267   | 1:5.4        |
| Butchers          | 65                                    | 252   | 1:3.9        |
| Cooks             | 20                                    | 115   | 1:5.8        |
| Saucemakers       | 9                                     | 18  | 1:2.0        |
| Vintners          | 21                                    | 57  | 1:2.7        |

Source: York, BI, *Prob Reg 1-5; Register of the Freemen of York*

Working from this hypothesis, we find that vintners were, on average, more affluent than butchers, and roughly twice as affluent as cooks and bakers. Bakers were somewhat more affluent than cooks, but not to a great degree. The small number of saucemakers renders their position more uncertain, but as they were providing a luxury commodity, rather than a staple, it is not unreasonable to expect them to be reasonably affluent. Vintners traded in wine, a prestigious and relatively expensive beverage. Bakers and butchers were long established trades and crucial to provisioning the urban market.

The question of what exactly is being tracked in these ratios requires more consideration, especially in light of the previous discussion concerning cooks and the franchise. If my argument concerning cooks without the franchise operating cookshops holds true, then those cooks would clearly not appear in the Freemen's Register. Furthermore, cooks who were in private service would also have no reason to take up

<sup>244</sup> Collins ed., *Register of the Freemen of the City of York*.

<sup>245</sup> The wills are listed in Appendix A. The register entries are listed in Appendix B.

the franchise. Butchers, bakers, and vintners, on the other hand, would have been better represented in the Register, since they were less likely either to be operating casually in the urban market or to be in service. If we accept the assumption that the franchise holders were among the most affluent of the cooks, and that the other trades had a higher presence across the spectrum in the register, then even the most affluent of the cooks compare poorly with the other victualling trades, and possibly even worse than the numbers in Table 2 suggest.

To pursue this line of investigation, it is important to determine whether the wills in question belong to those who have accepted the franchise, in order to determine if there is a relationship between franchise and economic situation. Of the twenty wills recorded in the register, two are for men who did not live in York, and were thus highly unlikely to possess the franchise in York. Two more lived in the liberty of Saint Peter, which was outside of the civic administration. Two of those wills belong to women, who would be much less likely to be enrolled directly given the general paucity of women in the register. There remain fourteen wills of men who were resident in York and outside of the Liberty of Saint Peter. Of those, five contain the word 'civis' in either the body of the will or the marginal heading, and those five names also appear in the *Register of Freemen of York*. Those five had unambiguously accepted the franchise. The names of three other testators appear in the *Register* although without an annotation in the will. It is clear at this point that at least half the will-making cooks resident in York who were eligible to take up the franchise had done so. The remaining six are more problematical. Three more may tentatively be identified as *civis*. John Chawmer (d. 1453) might be identified with a John Chambre who took up the franchise as a cook in 1423; John Shawe (d. 1448) might be identified with John Shall who took up the franchise in 1413; Ralph de Bethom, with probate registered in 1403, might be identified with 'Rad. de Wath, de Bowthom,' who appears in the register in 1396 without any professional designation.<sup>246</sup>

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<sup>246</sup> Radulphus Wath, de Bouthom appears in the *Register* in 1416, well after the date of the will. Again no profession is listed.

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Of the remaining three, there seems to be no strong reason to believe that they held the franchise. Two of the early cases are slightly unclear due to the method of recording freemen in the *Register*. Dobson notes that *per patres* admissions may well be missing from the register prior to 1432 and almost certainly have gaps prior to 1397.<sup>247</sup> John Sclaterer (d. 1434) should appear in the *Register* if he was a freeman, and since I can find no reference to him, it seems unlikely that he held the franchise, although with a death in 1434, he might be a missing pre-1432 *per patres* admission. As well, John Isabell (d. 1390), if he was not a private cook, might simply be missing from the *Register*, if his admission was *per patres*. Isabell makes no mention of his status in his will, which is not in itself significant. However, what may be significant is that one of his bequests is to William Allerton, who is identified as '*Civis Ebor*' and another is to William de Etton, '*Civis et Mercator Ebor*'. That he is so precise in identifying which of his legatees are citizens inclines me to think that he would also make a note if he himself was a *civis*. To this may be added the slightly odd formulation of the name clause of the will: *Johannes Isabell Coke de Mikelgate Ebor*. John Isabell specifically and explicitly locates himself in Mikelgate. With such attention to that detail, it seems very unlikely he would neglect to mention it if he was a freeman.

Lawrence Damysell, whose probate was granted in 1466, appears in the 1452 probate inventory of William Duffield. This wealthy canon owed wages to a number of servants, including 6s. 8d. to Laurence Damysell (*Laurentio Damysell*).<sup>248</sup> Although not specifically named as a cook, it seems probable that this is the same man; Duffield operated a large household, and there is no cook specifically recorded. Damysell would have had no reason to take up the franchise.

Between nearly three-fifths and just over three-quarters of the wills under consideration belong to freemen. What is difficult to ascertain is whether these proportions are higher or lower than would be expected compared to the number of cooks operating in the city. Fortunately there is one source which may cast light on the

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<sup>247</sup> R. B. Dobson, "Admissions to the Freedom of the City of York in the Later Middle Ages," *The Economic History Review* 26, no. 1 (1973), 1-22.

<sup>248</sup> Surtees Society, ed., *Testamenta Eboracensia, Vol. III*, (Gateshead: Surtees Society, 1865), 147.

relative frequency of entry into the franchise with respect to cooks, although it is quite an early one. In 1304, the citizens of York complained to the mayor, bailiffs, and other officials of the city that the 1301 ordinances of the city were not being enforced. The victualling trades were implicated as a whole, and in the process of the investigation, the jurors drew up an extensive list of bakers, taverners, cooks, butchers, fishmongers, poulterers, 'forestallers of fishmongers,' regrators, and hostellers. Thirty-five cooks were listed in the action, but there may have been some who were not accused. Five cooks are listed in the *Register of the Freemen of York* as having taken up the franchise in the decade preceding the action of 1304, and three of them, Ricardus Skot, Johannes de Dorem, and Rogerus de Wentbrigg, appear in the list of accused in the *Ordinances*.<sup>249</sup> The remaining two, Henry de Blakburn and Willelmus de Coton, do not appear in the list of offenders under those names. They were both enrolled in 1299, the year after the court moved to York, and it is possible that one or both died, left the city, or changed trades in the intervening years, but it seems equally likely that one or both were simply not listed in the charges. The list of accused can not, therefore, be taken as authoritative, but does seem to be, as Prestwich puts it, 'reasonably complete.'<sup>250</sup> Of those cooks who are listed in the action, Prestwich identifies six who were freemen of the city by 1304, and another three appear to have taken up the franchise at a later date. I believe I have identified another: 'William de Steingate' who appears in the list is probably 'Willelmus le keu, de Stayngat' who took up the franchise in 1283.<sup>251</sup> Three of the ten did not take up the franchise as cooks: Thomas de Tollerton in 1304 as zonarius (girdler), William de Lincoln in 1311-12 as cotoler (cutler), and William de Buttercramb in 1316-17 as pistor (baker). Tollerton took up the franchise at about the same time that the list of cooks was being compiled, and the other two did so well after

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<sup>249</sup> Collins ed., *Register of the Freemen of the City of York*, 1-11; Michael Prestwich, ed., *York Civic Ordinances, 1301, Borthwick Paper 49* (York: St Anthony's Press, 1976), 22-28. Prestwich notes that he has modernized given names, but left surnames as in the Latin originals in his translation of the Ordinances. Thus Ricardus Skot from the Register appears in his translation as Richard Scot, Johannes de Dorem as John de Duream or de Dureme, and Roger de Wentbrigg as Roger de Wentbrigg.

<sup>250</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>251</sup> Ibid., 21-28. Prestwich identifies six cooks, two with entries in the register after 1304: Richard Scot (1295), Henry de London (1297), Nicholas le Nouthird (1297), Jean de Duream (1298), Roger de Wentbrigg (1300), Thomas de Tollerton (1304), William de Lincoln (1311-12), and William de Buttercramb (1316-17).

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that time. This leads to the speculation that the men had operated opportunistically as cooks in the years the court was at York, but changed their occupation when the circumstances changed.

Three women were listed, none of whom appear in the franchise register. This gives nine men out of thirty-two as freemen, or about one quarter. This suggests that cooks who have taken up the franchise are perhaps two or three times as likely to make wills as those who do not. The difference in dates makes it difficult to compare the previous data directly, but the general trend does support the idea that franchise holding cooks were better off financially than those without the franchise, and indirectly supports the idea that catering, which I have argued was restricted, in whole or in part, to the franchise holders, was the more lucrative sector of the market.

The same 1304 action also provides insight into the role of women in the trade, at least in the early fourteenth century in York. There are three women in the list of transgressing cooks, none of whom appear in the franchise register – as noted before, no women are enrolled as cooks at all during our time period. There is also a list of regrators provided, consisting of twenty-seven names. Of those, eighteen are women. Three males who are listed as cooks are also listed as regrators, and one of those cooks, Nichols le Nouthird, was entered in the register in 1296 with no trade given. Table 3 summarizes the numbers of those who were listed in the victualling trades and the distribution by gender.



**Table 3: Gender Distribution in Victualling Trades in York in 1304**

| <b>TRADE</b>                | <b>MEN</b> | <b>WOMEN</b> | <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>Women as %</b> |
|-----------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Bakers of white bread       | 24         | 0            | 24           | -                 |
| Bakers of black bread       | 10         | 2            | 12           | 20                |
| All Bakers                  | 34         | 2            | 36           | 5.5               |
| Taverners                   | 26         | 0            | 26           | -                 |
| Cooks                       | 32         | 3            | 35           | 8.5               |
| Butchers                    | 49         | 0            | 49           | -                 |
| Fishmongers                 | 50         | 0            | 50           | -                 |
| Brewers                     | 51         | 19           | 70           | 27.1              |
| Poulterers                  | 32         | 5            | 37           | 13.5              |
| Forestallers of fishmongers | 6          | 3            | 9            | 33.3              |
| Regrators                   | 9          | 18           | 27           | 66.7              |
| Hostelers                   | 34         | 11           | 45           | 24.4              |

Source: Prestwich, *York Civic Ordinances*

Several notable features are evident in this table. Women are not involved in their own right in the trades of butcher and of baker of white bread, both of which are difficult to perform by-industrially, and both of which usually required the franchise to be taken up. Black bread was a lower cost and less prestigious product, and thus baking it was more open to being practiced by women. There are no female taverners, although female hostelers are well represented. Fishmongers were exclusively male, although forestallers of fishmongers were often women. Of all the trades which include women, cookery has the lowest proportion of women, unless one includes both the bakers of the high quality white bread and low quality black bread under the general heading of bakers. This does not tell the whole story, however, since in many of the entries, the women are listed as someone's wife, and often have no individual name given. Of the 19 female brewers, nine are listed only as 'The wife of ...' Of the five poulterers, all are listed by name, but two are identified as 'wife of ...' and a third as 'widow of Astun.' One regrator is listed as 'Juliana, wife of Adam,' and one hosteler is noted as 'in William Fader's house.' In the case of the brewers, it is generally accepted that the women of a

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household might brew by-industrially for sale, and the complete absence of the name of the brewer herself from roughly half the entries suggests that those households are operating in such a fashion.<sup>252</sup> The similarity in the way the entries are made for the other trades might indicate that those trades were also functioning in a by-industrial fashion. By contrast, none of the female cooks are listed in such a fashion. The implication is that they were not cooking by-industrially. However, it is possible that these female cooks were operating out of their husbands' shops but that the shops were unrelated to the victualling trades, and thus unrelated to the action being considered. I think it is likely that the women were operating independently as common cooks. The majority of the women were not preparing food or goods, but were selling the work of others as regrators, but cookery did provide a way for some of them to produce their own product for sale.

Court rolls, such as those of the Nottingham Borough Court, provide another method of investigating the relative affluence of cooks in a locality. There are twenty-nine persons who are identifiable as cooks in the extant Nottingham rolls for the period 1303-1457, with the first appearance occurring in 1313 and the last in 1436. The occupation of the litigants is not always noted, so cooks may be underrepresented for this reason. The identification of individuals in medieval documents is not always a simple matter, and I have opted for a conservative approach, listing those who are explicitly identified as cooks, and declining to count even those with the same name in the same time frame unless there is some other element which connects them with an already identified cook.<sup>253</sup> These cooks are listed in Table 4.

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<sup>252</sup> Judith M. Bennett, *Ale, Beer and Brewsters in England: Women's Work in a Changing World, 1300-1600* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

<sup>253</sup> For a discussion of many of the issues, see: E. A. Wrigley, *Identifying People in the Past*, (London: Arnold, 1973).

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**Table 4 - Cooks found in the Nottingham Borough Court Rolls**

| Name(s)  | Date Range  | Number of Actions*                   |
|--|-------------|--------------------------------------|
| Daniel the cook  | 1313?       | (1 - pledge)                         |
| John Norison (le Norisone, Norrison, Norissone, le Noricesone) | 1324 - 1335 | 25 (+1 - pledge)                     |
| Nichola le Cok   | 1324        | 1                                    |
| Robert of Drifffield   | 1327        | (1 - enrolment of charter)           |
| Thomas the Cook  | 1327 - 1328 | 2 (+1 - called as juror)             |
| William of Ockbrook  | 1330 - 1336 | 5                                    |
| William le Cook (the Cook, le Cok)                             | 1330 - 1336 | 5 (+1 - essoiner and affeerer)       |
| Coletta le Cok   | 1331        | 2                                    |
| Richard le Cook (the Cook, le Cok)                             | 1331        | 2                                    |
| Isabella the Cook  | 1352 - 1366 | 8                                    |
| Walter le Coke (Frerecoke, the Coke)                           | 1352 - 1356 | 4                                    |
| John le Coke (the Cook)  | 1353 - 1355 | 3                                    |
| Richard cook of Richard Colier                                 | 1360        | 2                                    |
| John of Breedon  | 1366        | 2                                    |
| John of Barrowby   | 1387 - 1389 | 3                                    |
| Richard Nevyll   | 1392        | 4                                    |
| John of Selby  | 1407        | 1                                    |
| John Drapour   | 1410 - 1438 | 5                                    |
| Thomas Copeland  | 1410        | 1                                    |
| William Strelley (Strelle)                                     | 1410 - 1414 | 6 (+1 - pledge for Thomas Copeland)  |
| William Shipman (Schipman)                                     | 1412 - 1414 | 2 (+1 - appraiser)                   |
| John Smytheman (Smythemon)                                     | 1413 - 1415 | 3                                    |
| Robert Osteler   | 1415        | 2                                    |
| William Tayllour (Taillour)                                    | 1422 - 1438 | 19 (+6 - pledge and called as juror) |
| John Alen  | 1429 - 1452 | 10 (+1 - pledge)                     |
| William Weloby   | 1429 - 1430 | 3 (+1 - uncertain)                   |
| William Parwych  | 1430 - 1437 | 14                                   |
| William Sampson of Strelley                                    | 1433        | 1                                    |
| John Beker of Chilwell   | 1436        | 1                                    |

Source: University of Nottingham Urban Culture Network website

\*'Actions' includes proceedings as plaintiff or defendant. A parenthetical number indicates some other, additional, mention, e.g. as a pledge, as a juror, or in a charter enrolment.

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Between them, these cooks account for 136 pleas, as plaintiff or defendant, and account for another 16 appearances in some other capacity. Given my conservative approach, there may be other actions which should be attributed to them, but which may equally be applied to other persons with the same name. I have considered only those actions which I can fairly confidently assign to an identified cook. Seven cooks appear for a single action, although each action may require multiple appearances and entries in the rolls, before it is resolved; and another five cooks appear twice. That is to say that roughly two-fifths of the identified cooks were involved in only one or two actions; furthermore the single appearance of one cook is as a pledge, and another's only entry is as the recipient of a message noted in the enrolment of a charter. At the other end of the spectrum, four cooks are involved in pleas in the double digits, with 25, 19, 14, and 10 pleas respectively, collectively accounting for half of the total pleas. The median and mean number of pleas are 3 and 5 respectively. With a few exceptions, then, cooks who were involved in legal action did not habitually resort to the courts; cooks who were never involved in legal actions, of course, do not appear in the record at all. There were a few litigious individuals, but the vast majority of those mentioned were rarely involved in litigation in the borough courts. It is also worth noting that cooks appear seven times as pledges, six times as juror (five times by one of the litigious individuals already mentioned), and one time each as appraiser, essoiner and recipient of a grant. There is a further mention of one cook, but it is impossible to determine the cause, due to manuscript defects. Regardless, cooks were integrated into the actions of the court not merely as 'consumers,' so to speak, but also as participants in the operational aspects; they were active in the life of the borough as reflected in the court rolls.

The type of action and role of the cook in the action may be extracted from the Rolls for most of the actions. This data is summarized in Table 5.

**Table 5: Types of Action and Role**

|       | Debt* as Plaintiff | Debt* as Defendant | Other as Plaintiff | Other as Defendant |
|-------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Men   | 34                 | 48                 | 20                 | 23                 |
| Women | 0                  | 1                  | 6                  | 2                  |
| Total | 34                 | 51                 | 26                 | 25                 |

Source: University of Nottingham Urban Culture Network website

\*'Debt' in this table includes detinue of money or property.

Debt is the most common action, accounting for just over 62% of the total actions. This is somewhat lower than might be expected compared to general debt litigation percentages. Richard Goddard notes that in Nottingham between 1395 and 1401, 84% of the business of the court was debt, and cites other studies which suggest ranges from 74% to around 85%.<sup>254</sup> The Nottingham cooks' percentage, while still being a majority, is much lower than the overall average. If detinue is removed from the debt column, the percentage drops another few points. Cooks are nearly half again as likely to be sued for debt as they are to sue for debt, whereas they are almost equally likely to be the plaintiff or the defendant in other types of actions, typically trespass of some sort. With respect to debt or detinue of goods, the values are not always given; of those that are, the values range from a few pence to 18s., with most being clustered around 2s. Given the very small sample size, I hesitate to draw any conclusions from that.

The combination of lower than average numbers of debt actions for cooks with the majority being as the defendant, can be explained in various ways, all of which inform our understanding of how the urban cook may have done business. The first possibility is that cooks tended to operate on more of a cash basis than other crafts, at least as far as their clientele is concerned. If they were disinclined to sell food on credit, then they would be less likely to need to attempt to recover money through the court. It may also be that the sums involved in most transactions involving common cookery

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<sup>254</sup> Richard Goddard, "Surviving Recession: English Borough Courts and Commercial Contraction, 1350-1500," in *Survival and Discord in Medieval Society*, eds. Christopher Dyer and others (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), 69-70.

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were too small to be worth the effort of recovering. This problem would only be compounded if the client was not resident in Nottingham. Prices for the services of common cooks were sometimes fixed by ordinance and tended to be, at most, a few pence where selling retail was concerned; the York Civic Ordinances of 1301 fixed the price of a roast chicken at 2d., for example, while in London in 1379, the best roast hen was to sell for 4d.<sup>255</sup> Cooks who were hired for special occasions or special events would likely have been paid more for their work; the funeral expenses of John de Scardeburgh in 1402 include 6s. and 5d. for three cooks and their servants, and that is for wages alone since the food itself is listed previously in the inventory.<sup>256</sup> The guild of the Holy Cross in Stratford spent 3s. 4d. in 1407-08 for a master cook, with a second cook hired for 2s. and assistants in addition to that.<sup>257</sup> Cooks hired for such events might be inclined to offer credit in those circumstances, especially since those employing them in those situations would be relatively affluent. The relatively poor urban workers, however, who were purchasing a pie or other cooked food from time to time would not, perhaps, be deemed creditworthy. Common cooks, particularly those cooking speculatively, would probably have needed to obtain credit from time to time to purchase the supplies they needed to make their food. The court rolls do not always mention what the cause of debt is for a given action, but in some the cause for debt is known, and in some the creditor's profession can be identified. Where the cause can be determined, it often suggests that cooks were purchasing on credit from suppliers of their raw materials. Three of John Alen's actions provided explicit information as to the goods involved and they included fish, meat, and fowl. Two of his creditors were identified as butchers, including a man named William Jell. Another is named Nicholas Bochor and another Hugh Baxster, both of whom appear as creditors in actions involving another cook, William Tayllour or Tailliour, as does William Gell, who I think may be identified with William Jell.<sup>258</sup> On balance, cooks were more likely to

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<sup>255</sup> Prestwich, ed., , *York Civic Ordinances*, 15; Riley, ed., *Memorials*, 426.

<sup>256</sup> P. M. Stell, *Probate Inventories of the York Diocese, 1350-1500* (York: York Archaeological Trust, 2006), 513.

<sup>257</sup> C. M. Woolgar, *The Culture of Food in England 1200-1500* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2016), 142.

<sup>258</sup> For Nicholas Bochor, NBCR 1431-32\_\_burgess\_pleas\_\_ca1322i\_, 63, #550; 69, #593. For Hugh Baxster, NBCR 1429-30\_\_burgess\_pleas\_\_ca1321\_, 88, #763; 91, #786. For William Gell, NBCR 1422-23\_\_ca1319\_, 7, #71; 8, #84, 10, 98.

purchase on credit than to extend it to their customers.

The low number of debt actions overall may also be explained in part by the presence of private cooks. The private cook is in service to an individual or household and the employer, whether individual or institutional, would have been responsible for the cost of the provisioning. While this does not mean that the cook could not take debt on for other reasons, it does suggest that if a debt for foodstuffs was incurred, it would devolve onto the employer. There are three clear cases of such private cooks, and two likely ones, which illustrate the situation.

The first is Robert of Driffield, identified as the king's cook, who was granted a messuage on 6 November 1327.<sup>259</sup> He makes no other appearance in the rolls.

John le Coke appears in three actions. He is referred to as the servant of Simon Bertvill in a 1352 action for trespass and bloodshed, although the action itself was apparently voided.<sup>260</sup> Bertvill appears in a different action as a bailiff in 1358.<sup>261</sup> He also appears in multiple notices as the guardian of William son of Walter of Burton, a man of some considerable estate.<sup>262</sup> Bertvill appears to be the sort of wealthy householder who might be expected to employ a cook. John the cook's second action was for unspecified debt in 1353.<sup>263</sup> The final action involving John occurred in 1355 and was also for trespass, in this case for stealing John of York's door and beating his wife.<sup>264</sup>

Richard, the cook of Richard Colier, complained of Hugh Kyndre for unspecified detinue in 1360, and complained of Matilda Godezere in the same year, once for debt and once for detinue, although there is no mention in any of the cases of

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<sup>259</sup> University of Nottingham Urban Culture Network, published electronically at <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/ucn/onlinesources/index.aspx>. *Nottingham Borough Court Rolls 1303-1457*. (NBCR) 1327-28\_\_ca1260\_, 3, #19.

<sup>260</sup> NBCR 1351-52\_\_ca1263\_, 61, #357.

<sup>261</sup> NBCR 1357-58\_\_ca1268\_, 109-110, #661.

<sup>262</sup> NBCR 1352-53\_\_ca1264\_. Many entries, particularly: 88, #501; 107, #592.

<sup>263</sup> NBCR 1353-54\_\_ca1265\_, 21, #96.

<sup>264</sup> NBCR 1355-56\_\_ca1267\_, 11, #63.

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the cause for which the debt was incurred.<sup>265</sup> In the first two actions, he is identified as the servant of Richard Colier, but in the second action, including a number of essoins, he is identified specifically as *cocus*. Richard Colier, his employer, appears often in the rolls. Colier was mayor in September of 1352, according to a charter enrolment, and continued to be active as both a litigant and a witness until the late 1360s.<sup>266</sup>

Two cases present a few more difficulties in interpretation. John Drapour, cook, appears in an action brought by Agnes Coke of Nottingham, who complained that he had covenanted with her to serve her for a year starting at Christmas in 1410, but that he had left after three days.<sup>267</sup> John Draper, cook, appears in four more actions: as plaintiff for debt in 1429; for debt incurred for ale in 1430; as defendant for trespass in 1430; and for trespass in 1438. It is difficult to say if this is the same man. There are numerous other mentions of men named John Drapour, or Drapur, or Draper, who are clearly different men, and the gap between 1410 and 1429 is considerable, although not unreasonable for a working career.

William of Ockbrook is recorded as 'sometime cook of John le Paumer,' although that designation is cancelled by being lined through.<sup>268</sup> The indication occurs in a suit for trespass brought by Cecilia la Paumer against both William and Alice his wife in 1330. In 1335-1336, he appears four more times in the court rolls, all for debt, thrice as plaintiff and once as defendant. The action in which he was the defendant was brought by William of Edwalton, an ironmonger. There is no information concerning the cause of the debts for which he was plaintiff. It is tempting to think that William left the service of John le Paumer, possibly upon John's death, in circumstances leading to his conflict with Cecilia la Paumer, and set up in business for himself, perhaps incurring his debt with the ironmonger for kitchen equipment.

What is clear from all these cases is that cooks identifiable as being household employees are even less likely than the other cooks in our sample to have incurred

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<sup>265</sup> NCBR 1351-52\_\_ca1269\_, 50, #313; 61, #357.

<sup>266</sup> NCBR 1351-52\_\_ca1263\_, 89, #538.

<sup>267</sup> NCBR 1410-11\_\_foreign\_pleas\_\_ca1306\_, 17, 90.

<sup>268</sup> NCBR 1330-31\_\_ca1261\_, 26, #196 and fn. 27.



debt. Setting aside the case of Robert of Drifffield, the king's cook, the two cooks most clearly identifiable as private cooks appear in five actions, only one of which is for debt, and that as plaintiff. The two cooks whose status is less certain appear in as many as ten actions. Four of those were as plaintiffs in debt actions and two as defendants in debt actions. This is a total of six debt actions as plaintiffs and only two as defendants – a 3-to-1 ratio. For cooks overall, as noted in Table 5, the numbers are 34 and 51, for a 1-to-2 ratio. Even given the small sample size for household employees, the data are suggestive. Cooks in general tended to incur debt, while cooks who were in service or otherwise employed by someone else, as assistants in a cookshop perhaps, but who were not directly responsible for the costs of the operation, did not.

Women also appear with some regularity in Nottingham borough court rolls, often as part of a husband and wife pair of defendants or plaintiffs. In those cases, they are usually identified simply as 'and his wife,' with her first name. In other cases, they appear on their own, and throughout the rolls three women may be identified with some confidence as cooks.<sup>269</sup> This ratio of 3 women out of a total of 29 cooks in our sample is similar to that in the York presentments of 1304 – roughly 1 women to every 10 male cooks. The sample size is small, so too much weight should not be attached to it. Women were identified as professional cooks, even though the numbers were relatively low. Referring to Table 5, it also seems that the women cooks had a more marginal existence. They never appear as plaintiffs in a case of debt, and only once as defendant, as opposed to eight appearances for trespass, six times as plaintiff. The sample size is too small to speak with any certainty, but it does suggest that the economic situation of women cooks was even weaker than that of cooks in general.

## Conclusion

Roger of Ware, Chaucer's Cook, is a caterer and a speculative cook, and he is dirty and deceitful. These traits are a commonplace in other representations of cooks, which suggests that they represent a stereotype, which is in turn reflective of generally held

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<sup>269</sup> A fourth woman, Elizabeth Cook, appears only in a series of failures to appear in the 15th century, and the name alone is not enough to identify her as a cook.

## Cooks in the City

attitudes. Some of the negative views of cooks may have been reinforced by the role they played in civic spectacles. Tellingly, Roger also asks the company if they will hear, 'A tale of me, that am a povre man.'<sup>270</sup> The records I have examined strongly indicate that in most cases cooks were relatively poor men or women. In York, around a quarter of them took up the franchise and moved into the relatively affluent ranks of their craft, but even they were not among the wealthy inhabitants of the city. A guildsman and caterer might be better off than his confreres who operated cookshops, but even his, or less likely her, living was meagre compared to many others in the victualling trades.

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<sup>270</sup> Benson ed., *The Riverside Chaucer*, I:4341.

### Chapter Three, Cooks and the Household

The interaction of urban professional cooks with urban inhabitants could take many forms. On the one hand, it might take place in public, with food being purchased from a cookshop or a huckster in the street. However, it might also take place within the home or within a corporate establishment. Affluent and elite households would have a cook on staff, such as that of Dame Marjory Selving (d. 1496), the widow of a knight, whose will mentions four servants, including her cook, Elizabeth.<sup>271</sup> Great households would have a number of cooks, scullions, and other kitchen helpers.<sup>272</sup> Cooks might be hired to cater feasts for guilds, for funerals, and the like. The location for these events would be within the guild hall, home, or other establishment. This chapter will focus on the way that professional cooks functioned in relation to such groups and locations, both as private cooks, but also as common cooks providing services in private or corporate spaces.

Common cooks are an urban phenomenon, but private cooks exist in both the urban and rural milieu. I will investigate what, if anything, differentiates the urban private cook from a rural or manorial cook, that is to say, what is distinctively urban about the urban private cook? In a similar vein, what differentiates the urban private cook from the urban common cook? I shall also examine the ways that the common cook and the private cook interacted, and shall try to determine what Horman meant when he wrote, 'That my coke can not do : the towne coke shal fulfyll.'<sup>273</sup> What, specifically can a private cook not do that a common cook could, and is the difference qualitative or merely quantitative?

In order to answer these questions, an understanding of medieval cookery techniques is needed. The first part of this chapter makes substantial use of medieval

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<sup>271</sup> Surtees Society, ed., *Testamenta Eboracensia, Vol. IV*, Vol. 53 (Durham: Surtees Society, 1869), 116-117.

<sup>272</sup> For a general discussion and some examples see: C. M. Woolgar, *The Great Household in Late Medieval England* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999), 136-140.

<sup>273</sup> William Horman, *Vulgaria* [Vulgaria viri doctissimi Gui. Hormanni Caesarisburgensis] EEBO Pagination, (London: Wynkyn de Worde, 1530), 169.

## Cooks and the Household

probate inventories. As noted in the introduction to this thesis, there are sixty-nine probate inventories from the York diocese for the period 1350-1500 which are of use in my analysis. Of these, forty-eight contain entries for a kitchen. I begin by discussing medieval cooking methods and the associated equipment and technology, making use of recipe collections, and with reference to the probate inventories. Further analysis of the probate inventories follows, which attempts to map types of cookery onto living spaces and determine what relationship exists between types of cookery and relative affluence. Building on this analysis, a schema of activities undertaken by various types of cooks may be built.

The second part of the chapter is concerned with contemporary views and perceptions of private cooks. I have argued in the previous chapters that the attitudes toward common cooks were predominately negative, and shaped in many ways by concerns about deception. It is my contention that the attitudes held about private cooks are more ambivalent, although there is still a significant perception of cooks as outsiders or occupying a liminal position in the household. I will examine the evidence for such views, and suggest some possible contributory factors.

### **Types of Cookery**

Broadly speaking, cookery followed an implicit tripartite division, mandated by the available technology and evidenced by documented practice. At the risk of some oversimplification, these divisions might be termed: pottages, roasts, and pies, and the corresponding methods are boiling, roasting, and baking. As the *Liber cure cocorum*, a late fifteenth-century verse cookery collection, puts it:

Fyrst to 3ow I wylle schawe  
Po poyntes of cure, al by rawe,  
Of Potage, hastery, and bakun mete,  
And petecure, I nylle for3ete.<sup>274</sup>

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<sup>274</sup> Richard Morris, *Liber Cure Cocorum* (Berlin: A. Asher and Co., 1862), 1.

A similar division is seen in Harleain MS 279, dated to the first quarter of the fifteenth century, which begins with three lists, the 'Kalendare de Potages dyuers,' 'Kalendare de Leche Metys,' and the note 'Here begynnyth dyuerse bake metis,' while the sections themselves are headed 'Potage Dyvers,' 'Leche Vyaundez,' and ' Here begynnyth Dyuerse Bake Metis.'<sup>275</sup> Harleain MS 279 makes 'Leche Metys,' or sliced food, a broader category, but viewed from a technological standpoint, the difference is slight. Some other recipe collections may have a similar ordering, but such an explicit delineation is rare. Many recipe collections have a slightly different order, loosely following the traditional menu order of a medieval feast; however, the division above is useful when considering both the methods used for preparing food and the equipment needed to prepare it.<sup>276</sup> I will address each of the three categories 'al by rawe,' as advised in the *Liber cure cocorum*.

Pottage, simply put, is something cooked in a pot. The *Liber cure cocorum* explicitly states where the pottage section begins and ends. The section begins with 'furmente' (frumenty), which in this particular recipe is wheat boiled with water, mixed with milk and boiled again; as with most recipes, both medieval and modern, many variations exist for recipes with essentially the same name. It moves on to a recipe for 'amydone' (amidon), wheat starch used as a thickener, which again calls for wheat to be boiled, but then strained and dried. The recipes move through boiled meats with thickened sauces such as 'conyngus in gravé' (boiled coney in a thickened sauce or gravy), thickened rice dishes such as 'blanc manger' (blancmange), boiled dishes of offal, a dish made by boiling lard, eggs, and milk together until it forms curds which are then fried and which is called 'lede lardes,' various dishes which are called potage or stew, and so forth.<sup>277</sup> The same variety of foodstuffs appears in Harleain MS 279.

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<sup>275</sup> Thomas Austin, ed., *Two Fifteenth-Century Cookery-Books*, (London: EETS, 1888), 1-4.

<sup>276</sup> Constance B. Hieatt, *The Culinary Recipes of Medieval England* (Devon: Prospect Books, 2013), 215. Hieatt discusses organization of recipe collections in more detail in the introduction.

<sup>277</sup> The case of the medieval 'blanc manger' (with various spelling variations) is an interesting one. The name has survived and become attached to a modern dish of milk or cream sweetened and thickened with gelatine or something similar. In this it more closely resembles an Elizabethan dish called 'leach.' Medieval blanc manger refers to a variety of dishes which share the central characteristic of being predominantly white.

## Cooks and the Household

Several recipes with the same name appear, such as frumenty, mortrews, and soppes, among others. Between them, the two collections contain 162 recipes which their authors or collators classed as pottage, and the only thing these diverse recipes have in common is that they call for something to be boiled, or, as Hieatt and Butler put it, 'at least partly cooked in the liquid from which the sauce is made.'<sup>278</sup>

From a technological standpoint, it is one of the simplest forms of cookery. Pottage requires only a pot and a fire, and needs little oversight once the fire has been made and the pot has been filled. It is an efficient method both in terms of labour and of fuel. Of the sixty-nine probate inventories analysed, all but four have some pottage cooking equipment. In several cases, it is no more than a pot or two, but that would be adequate. Of those four, however, three belong to clerics: William Welwyk, a vicar choral of York; Symon Lastyngham, listed only as a cleric; and William Ledale, a chaplain.<sup>279</sup> Welwyk's inventory has items listed as being located in his hall (*aula*), but also makes reference to 'Two towels given to the common *aula*,' which suggests that he may have been dining at the Bedern College of the Vicars Choral, eating meals which were prepared in the common kitchen there.<sup>280</sup> Lastyngham, who was employed by 'the brothers of the gild of Saint Thomas,' may have been in similar circumstances, but this is more speculative.<sup>281</sup> William Ledale is another cleric, a chaplain in this case, and his inventory has a note that all household utensils and bedding have already been given away according to instructions in his will, leaving open the question of whether those goods included pottage making materials, or if he, too, was lodged and fed communally.

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For example, one version, 'Blank maunger', calls for capons, almond milk, rice, salt, and sugar. For leach: Hilary Spurling, *Elinor Fettiplace's Receipt Book* (New York: Elisabeth Sifton, 1986), 81-82. For blanc manger: Constance B. Hieatt and Sharon Butler, *Curye on Inglysch : English Culinary Manuscripts of the Fourteenth Century (Including the Forme of Cury)* (London: EETS, 1985), 106, #38. A similar recipe follows on pp. 143-144, #200. There are many more examples.

<sup>278</sup> Hieatt and Butler, *Curye on Inglysch*, 208.

<sup>279</sup> P. M. Stell, *Probate Inventories of the York Diocese, 1350-1500* (York: York Archaeological Trust, 2006), 609, 496-497, 556 .

<sup>280</sup> Stell, *Probate Inventories*, 609. 'common *aula*' is Stell's translation. Gareth Dean, *Medieval York* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: The History Press, 2008), 75-76.

Archaeological evidence suggests the location of both a dining hall and kitchen in the Bedern College of the Vicars Choral.

<sup>281</sup> Stell, *Probate Inventories*, 497.

The last of the four inventories is that of Thomas Smyth, which mostly lists grain and livestock, but does contain some entries for household goods.<sup>282</sup> The lack of cooking equipment in this inventory is puzzling. In any case, at least sixty-five of the inventories contain pottage-making utensils, and another three plausibly belong to men who would be eating in a common hall with other clergy.

Roasting in medieval culinary terms meant spit-roasting or using a grill for foods too thin to be effectively spitted. *Le Ménagier de Paris* makes this clear: almost every one of the recipes in the section entitled 'Roasted meat' includes the specification to use a spit.<sup>283</sup> The *Liber cure cocorum* has a section for 'rosted mete,' in which six of the seven recipes are explicitly roasted, and the seventh, '*For fraunche mele*' is essentially a haggis which is first boiled and then broiled on a griddle.<sup>284</sup> Harleian MS 279 has a category of leche (sliced) metys, which seems almost an omnibus category for things which do not belong to the more clearly defined spheres of pottage and pies (or baked-meats). There are some recipes which call for things to be roasted, stuffed pigs and fowl, for example, but many more do not. The principle seems to be simply that they are foods which can be sliced. The dominant theme, however, is roasted foods, usually meat. That this was both an understood technique and a specialist one is apparent from the lack of specific directions in the culinary literature of the time. Instructions on roasting are rare, while recipes for the sauces to accompany the roast or the techniques for carving it abound. A typical example is 'Sawse noyre for capouns yrosted,' which reads:

Take þe lyuer of capouns, and roost it wel. Take anyse and greynes de parys, gynger, canel, & a lytull crust of brede, and grinde it smale, and grynde it vp with verious and wiþ grece of capouns. Boyle it and serue it forth.<sup>285</sup>

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<sup>282</sup> Ibid., 767-677.

<sup>283</sup> Gina L. Greco and Christine M. Rose, *The Good Wife's Guide (Le Ménagier De Paris): A Medieval Household Book* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009), 296-300.

<sup>284</sup> 'broyle hit on gredel' Morris, *Liber Cure Cocorum*, 36-37.

<sup>285</sup> Heiatt and Butler, *Curie on Inglysch*, 130, Recipe #141.

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The complete roasting instruction is to take the flesh of capouns and roast it well, with the rest being the directions for the sauce. The fire used for roasting is different from the fire used for pottage-making, and roasting is inefficient in terms of fuel, as much of the heat of a roasting fire is wasted.<sup>286</sup> The roast also requires nearly constant attention, as the spit must be turned regularly, if not constantly. Crucially, roasting requires specialized equipment – spits or griddles of some sort are needed.

Baking requires still more elaborate equipment than roasting; specifically it requires an oven. Small-scale ad hoc baking could be done in a Dutch-oven style as in 'Sew trappe' which directs the user to place one pan above the other to create a simple 'oven,' and a recipe for mushroom pasties which should be cooked on the coals between two dishes.<sup>287</sup> The scarcity of such instructions suggests that this was an exceptional dish, and the technique described is unsuitable for the majority of the pie and baked meat recipes which survive. A purpose-built piece of equipment is needed for those recipes. The *Liber cure cocorum* has eleven recipes in the baked foods section, two of which are to be fried rather than baked, and one of which is to be boiled. The first two are for 'risshens' and 'freture,' that is for rissoles and fritters. Risshens are fillings in a pastry wrapper which is then fried. Fretures are apples in batter, which is then fried. The last item, 'losyns,' is boiled pastry, or as we might term it today, pasta. Harleain MS 279 includes forty-one recipes for baked meats; each calls for something to be enclosed in pastry, or made of layers of pastry, and then baked. Hieatt suggests that baked foods meant, to the medieval mind, something baked in pastry. That is essentially correct, although by transference pastry itself may in some cases be the crucial item, as with losyns noted above.<sup>288</sup> Likewise, the fried pies and dumplings qualify as bakun mete by their resemblance to the understood category of baked pies. It is important to reiterate, though, that these are outliers, and generally speaking, 'bakun mete' is something – meat, fish, vegetables, cheese – baked in a pastry.

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<sup>286</sup> Terence Scully, *The Art of Cookery in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1995), 6; Woolgar, *The Great Household in Late Medieval England*, 137-140.

<sup>287</sup> Austin ed., *Two Fifteenth-Century Cookery-Books*, 54; Greco and Rose, *The Good Wife's Guide*, 300.

<sup>288</sup> Hieatt, *The Culinary Recipes of Medieval England*, 10.



Ovens, being immovables, are not a prominent feature in the inventories. They are mentioned mostly in passing, as a place where a lead – a cauldron or kettle – is located, for example. This does not mean that an oven is not present, of course. This is clear from the fact that those inventories which feature entries for bakehouses, which necessarily possess ovens, do not mention the ovens in the inventory except in that sort of passing fashion. The question is whether or not evidence for ovens, particularly pastry ovens, which would be somewhat smaller than bread ovens, can be deduced in some other way.<sup>289</sup> However, since they functioned similarly to bread ovens, they would not be useful for on-demand cookery, requiring a fast turn-around. For pastry making, which as noted above generally means pies, other equipment is needed, and these items, being movables may appear in inventories. Such an item, 'a table for pastry called a pastry-board,' appears in the kitchen inventory of Thomas Morton, Canon Residentiary of York (d. 1449), and a specific mention of an oven is also made. His inventory also has an entry for a bakehouse.<sup>290</sup> The inventory for William Duffield, likewise Canon Residentiary of York (d. 1452), follows that pattern nearly exactly, with the oven being mentioned, a 'paste board' being included, and a bakehouse being a separate entry.<sup>291</sup> 'A small table for pastry,' appears in the inventory of Henry Bowet, Archbishop of York (d. 1423), under the heading for the kitchen. The Archbishop also had a bakehouse.<sup>292</sup> It seems likely that if pastry was being made in the household, it was prepared in the kitchen and sent to the bakehouse to cook, since no pastry boards are listed for households which did not have bakehouses. Given the small sample size, however, it is possible that small pastry ovens were present in domestic kitchens, but I think it unlikely. If separate pastry ovens existed, they would most likely be located in the bakehouse.

Baking in the context of cookery generally excludes the baking of bread. Commercial bread baking was a separate craft, and one rigorously controlled at the national level via the assize of bread. As Maud Sellers so felicitously put it, "the bakers'

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<sup>289</sup> Peter Brears, *Cooking and Dining in Medieval England* (Devon: Prospect Books, 2008), 125.

<sup>290</sup> Stell, *Probate Inventories*, 576.

<sup>291</sup> *Ibid.*, 597.

<sup>292</sup> *Ibid.*, 542.

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gild stands on the border line between a state and a municipal undertaking."<sup>293</sup> Domestic cooks could bake their own bread, if they had the facilities, but this was not common. Bread ovens were not portable and represented a considerable investment. Only the largest and most affluent households would have their own bakehouse. Examining the probate inventories, only six contain entries labelled as bakehouses, and one of those belongs to Thomas Overdo, a baker.<sup>294</sup> The others are: Henry Bowet, Archbishop of York; William Bothe, likewise Archbishop; Thomas Morton, canon residentiary; William Duffield, canon residentiary; and Sir Peter Legh of Wollaton – all wealthy and extensive households.<sup>295</sup> Domestic cooks could prepare their own bread dough and take it to be baked, as evidenced by the famous 1327 case of the London bakers with false counters that allowed them to steal bits of dough from each loaf brought to them for such a purpose.<sup>296</sup> Most people, however, simply bought bread, and many large and wealthy households purchased their bread rather than making their own.<sup>297</sup>

### Wealth and Types of Cookery

The food that could be made in the household was limited primarily by three things: labour, equipment, and space. Many households had servants who helped with the various activities involved in running the household and any commercial endeavour associated with it.<sup>298</sup> The luxury of specialized servants indicates a household which is larger and wealthier, and professional private cooks fall into this category. In a rural context, these households would be predominantly those of the gentry or magnates,

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<sup>293</sup> Maud Sellers, ed., *York Memorandum Book Part I. (1376-1419). Lettered A/Y in the Guildhall Muniment Room*, (Durham: Surtees Society, 1912), xliii.

<sup>294</sup> Stell, *Probate Inventories*, 566. Thomas Overdo's inventory is separated by room, but the headings are illegible. However, the contents of one room are consistent with a bakehouse consisting of items such as a boulting vat and a trough, probably for kneading.

<sup>295</sup> *Ibid.*, 542, 619, 576, 597, 638.

<sup>296</sup> Henry Thomas Riley, ed., *Memorials of London and London Life, in the XIIIth, XIVth, and XVth Centuries*. (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1868), 162-165.

<sup>297</sup> Scully, *The Art of Cookery in the Middle Ages*, 96.

<sup>298</sup> P. J. P. Goldberg, *Women, Work, and Life Cycle in a Medieval Economy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992). See particularly Chapter Four.

while in an urban context, wealthy merchants or senior clergy might also be able to afford a staff of differentiated servants, as in the case of the London Mayor and Sheriffs who might hire a cook or cooks for their term of office.<sup>299</sup> The equipment requirements have been touched upon in the previous section. A dedicated space for cookery, a kitchen, is not a requirement for cooking any more than a dedicated cook is. An examination of such spaces, or their lack, however, and the contents thereof, as found in probate inventories, provides insight into the correlation between wealth and the types of cookery which were available in a household. I have selected sixty-nine inventories for use in my analysis, and of these fifty-seven are from urban sources. The differences between the urban and rural sources will be addressed in the analysis.

For many households, the hall would serve as kitchen, dining hall, and a social area where secondary activities, 'occasional' or 'by-industrial' crafts, to use Judith Bennett's useful distinction, took place.<sup>300</sup> The various uses of the hall are indicated by the contents of the room in surviving probate inventories. Seventeen of the sixty-nine inventories examined contain listings for a hall but not for a kitchen, and of those all but two have clear evidence that cooking was taking place in the hall, in the form of cooking utensils, pots, and the like. Of the two which do not, one is for William Welwyk, a vicar choral of York, who probably ate meals in the Bedern common hall which had been prepared in a common kitchen.<sup>301</sup> The other is for Thomas Smyth, and, while cooking utensils are lacking, brewing equipment is present. It seems clear that the hall, in those dwellings lacking a purpose-built kitchen, featured a hearth, and that it was used for cooking. This is the room where the domestic cook would prepare the meals for the household, surrounded by the comings and goings of the other members. Cookery in this room could be combined with other domestic tasks which were more or less coterminous with the hall, which as Sarah Pearson notes may have been the only

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<sup>299</sup> Reginald R. Sharpe, ed., *Calendar of Letter-Books of the City of London: L : Edward IV - Henry VII* (London: HM Stationery Office, 1912), 311.

<sup>300</sup> Judith M. Bennett, *Ale, Beer and Brewsters in England : Women's Work in a Changing World, 1300-1600* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 10.

<sup>301</sup> Dean, *Medieval York*, 75-76.

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heated room in the absence of kitchen.<sup>302</sup> Furthermore, while all of the halls that had kitchen equipment had pots suitable for making potage, only six had spits.

The presence of a designated kitchen is something of a rarity. Martha Carlin has noted that only 3 per cent of the households assessed in 1301 in Colchester had kitchens, and that the existence of a kitchen suggests a more affluent household.<sup>303</sup> This is corroborated by evidence which suggests that, as dwellings became more extensive, the next room added after a hall and a chamber was a kitchen; that is to say that separate kitchens only appear in larger dwellings, and were an important addition.<sup>304</sup> The hall would retain a hearth, of course, but it would now be used primarily for heating, rather than cooking. There are forty-eight inventories which list kitchens, and all of them contain pots; it would be somewhat shocking if pots were absent, since as noted above, potage is such a simple and low maintenance cooking method. Thirty-seven, that is to say roughly three-quarters, have at least one spit in the inventory. This is nearly double the frequency compared with the kitchen-less inventories where the proportion is about two-fifths. This correlation suggests that one of the distinguishing features of a medieval kitchen was the ability to roast meat. The possession of the equipment to roast meat does not mean that meat was being roasted regularly, however. The spits might be used rarely, only for special occasions, or might even never be used at all – they might simply be standard in a well-equipped kitchen – although this seems unlikely.

Eleven of the inventories had a named kitchen but did not have spits listed, while thirty-seven did. The value of the estates, goods and debts owed to the deceased,

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<sup>302</sup> Sarah Pearson notes that the hall 'played a critical role' in the household, and may have been the only heated room, unless a kitchen was present. Sarah Pearson, "Houses, Shops, and Storage: Building Evidence from Two Kentish Ports," in *The Medieval Household in Christian Europe, c. 850 - c. 1550*, eds. Cordelia Beattie, Anna Maslakovic and Sarah Rees Jones (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), 431.

<sup>303</sup> Martha Carlin, "Putting Dinner on the Table in Medieval London," in *London and the Kingdom: Essays in Honour of Caroline M. Barron: Proceedings of the 2004 Harlaxton Symposium*, eds. Matthew Davies and Andrew Prescott (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2008), 66.

<sup>304</sup> N. W. Alcock, "The Medieval Peasant at Home: England, 1250–1550," in *The Medieval Household in Christian Europe, c. 850 - c. 1550*, eds. Cordelia Beattie, Anna Maslakovic and Sarah Rees Jones (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), 461.

and net values, after subtracting the debts the deceased owed, are shown in Tables 6 and 7.

**Table 6:**

**Value of Estates Inventoried in Houses Containing Kitchens without Spits (N=11)**

|               | Goods and Debts Owed         | Net (includes Debts Owing) |
|---------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Highest value | £21 11s. 10 1/2d.            | £17 13s. 2d.               |
| Lowest value  | 10s. 6 1/2d.                 | -                          |
| Mean          | £10 7s. 6 1/2 d. (and a bit) | £5 19s. 5 1/2d.            |
| Median        | £8 15s. 10d.                 | £4 16s. 1/2d.              |

Source: Stell, *Probate Inventories*

**Table 7:**

**Value of Estates Inventoried in Houses Containing Kitchens with Spits (N=37)**

|                                   | Goods and Debts Owed            | Net (includes Debts Owing)   |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Highest Value                     | £1,842 5s. 6d.                  | £1,801 1s. 5d.               |
| Lowest Value                      | £5 9s. 10 1/2d.                 | 0                            |
| Mean                              | £231 5s. 11 3/4d.               | £174 4s. 8 1/4d. (and a bit) |
| Median                            | £65 7s. 2d.                     | £51 0s. 10 1/2d.             |
| For the Poorest<br>Eleven Entries |                                 |                              |
| Highest Value                     | £26 1s. 1d.                     | £13 8s. 8d.                  |
| Lowest Value                      | £5 9s. 10 1/2d.                 | 0                            |
| Mean                              | £11 9s. 10 1/4d. (and a<br>bit) | £5 18s. 8d. (and a bit)      |
| Median                            | £10 5s. 2d.                     | £5 1s. 7d.                   |

Source: Stell, *Probate Inventories*

As expected, the values for the owners of kitchens with spits are significantly higher than those of the kitchens without. These values are skewed by the extremely valuable estates of a few very wealthy magnates, both lay and ecclesiastical. The values

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for the poorest eleven spit-owners, however, are remarkably similar to those of the eleven non-spit-owners. The poorest of the non-spit-owners, however, are far poorer than the poorest of the spit-owners; the two poorest of the former had goods worth less than £1, and another two worth less than £5, while the poorest of the latter are valued at over £5. Wealthy households would certainly have had spits, households lower on the economic scale might or might not possess spits. This suggests that spit-ownership, with the implication that the capability to roast meat existed, was a sign of social status.

A comparison of urban households versus rural ones is shown in Table 8.

**Table 8: Distribution of Inventories Noting Spits**

|                             | Urban <sup>305</sup> | Rural |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|-------|
| With Spits (Poorest Eleven) | 7                    | 4     |
| Without Spits               | 4                    | 7     |

Source: Stell, *Probate Inventories*

This might simply be a reflection of a somewhat higher general state of wealth in an urban centre, but militating against that is the observation that the three most affluent households without spits are rural and belong to agricultural workers, with possessions valued between £17 and £21, whereas the three poorest households with spits are all based in York, and are those of craftsmen – a girdler, a stringer, and a brewer - each with the relevant work spaces. In fact, seven of these households with spits belong to craftsmen, and one to a vicar; with the exception of a smith in Northallerton, those are the households in York. Of the spit-less households, four show signs that their kitchens were used primarily as brewhouses. Only two of the households with spits show such signs. For the spit-less, three households have almost no cookery goods at all, suggesting either that the household members ate elsewhere or that the inventories are defective. None of the households with spits shows this lack. Again this indicates that the spits are the deluxe kitchen equipment of the day. All of the above, taken together

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<sup>305</sup> One household, that of William Garton, is not specifically located in York. Nor has he a listed occupation. However, given his bequests to Saint Maurice's of York and to the Minster, and a debt owed to 'the wardens of his pageant,' it is probable that he was a craftsman living in the parish of Saint Maurice, outside the walls of York.

suggests that, of the will-making class, if one was living in York, one was likelier to be wealthier, to be a craftsman, and to own spits. Kitchens are correlated with the ownership of spits to the point that spits may be considered as the defining feature of the dedicated kitchen.

The equipment for the baking of pies and pastries appears in only three probate inventories, those of Bowet, Duffield, and Morton, all of whom were associated with large ecclesiastical households that possessed bakehouses. This suggests that the regular baking of pies and pastries was only undertaken in households which had the facilities to bake them themselves. The baking of pies could be devolved onto the common baker, as happened when the priests at Munden's chantry gave a festive dinner and paid William Baker for flour for making pies and his labour.<sup>306</sup> In such cases, though, the preparation of the filling for the pie would be the responsibility of the cook; in this case Baker was paid only for the pastry and the cooking of the pies. Sometimes the baking of pies would fall to common cooks rather than common bakers; a 1350 London regulation fixed the price a cook could charge 'for putting a capon or rabbit in a pasty.'<sup>307</sup> The baking of pies and pastries in-house was generally restricted to large and wealthy establishments.<sup>308</sup>

Overall it seems clear that any professional private cook would be involved in not only the ubiquitous pottage making, but also in the roasting of meat. Relatively affluent artisanal households with kitchens probably did not employ a specialist cook full-time, the cooking was the responsibility of the mistress of the house possibly with the assistance of a female servant.<sup>309</sup> The household still had the capability to roast meat, but without dedicated staff it seems likely that this was restricted to special events. Very few households would be involved in the baking of pies, although they might be involved in the preparation of pies to be baked. This latter division would

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<sup>306</sup> K. L. Wood-Legh, ed., *A Small Household of the XVth Century, being the Account Book of Munden's Chantry, Bridport*; (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1956), 9. 'Item in solutis Willemo Baker pro farina pyis factis et eius labore.'

<sup>307</sup> Riley, ed., *Memorials*, 247-265.

<sup>308</sup> See also: Scully, *The Art of Cookery in the Middle Ages*, 96.

<sup>309</sup> Goldberg, *Women, Work, and Life Cycle*, 193-194.

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seem to be primarily along lines of wealth rather than location, but that difference masks the rural and urban divide. Common cooks capable of baking pies were an urban phenomenon. Commercial bread bakers were widely available, but the nature of their business naturally focussed on bread. It is only in the urban centres that the pie-baking could be conveniently devolved onto an outside provider, that is to say, it could be outsourced from the private kitchen. Urban areas were places where specialization was the norm, and this is as applicable to food preparation as it is to any other sort of craft, profession, or activity. The distinctive character of urban private cookery is here, in the ability of the cook to concentrate on the preparation of those things for which the kitchen is most suited, pottages and spit-roasts, while buying in the pies, bread, sauces, and other specialist foods, or indeed the roast meat itself.<sup>310</sup> The urban private cook did not require the number and variety of undercooks and kitchen helpers that his or her rural counterpart did, since the city itself provided the needed specialists.

### **Views Toward and Perceptions of Private Cooks**

Common cooks stood outside of the well-understood hierarchy of the three ancient orders of nobility, clergy and peasantry. They provided a function usually embedded in a household from outside of the household. Private cooks, by contrast, fit easily into the structure. In a noble or ecclesiastical household, they fit as neatly into the societal structure as any other member of the household, be it groom, clerk, or general servant. In such households, they were responsible for a portion of their master's glory, for when the master hosted a feast, the cook's art added luster to the proceedings. As Christopher Woolgar puts it '... from the foodstuffs reserved for the lord to the political messages of *entremets*, from the quality of the table linen, to the splendour of the plate on the buffets, all represented a significant investment, an elaboration of the purpose of the household beyond the honour and profit of the lord, to a statement of his

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<sup>310</sup> Paris may have been more advanced with respect to culinary specialization. *Le Ménagier de Paris* mentions the following outside specialists should be used when buying in food for a feast: baker, pastry-maker, wafer-maker, and sauce-maker, in addition to the various provisioners of raw ingredients. Greco and Rose, *The Good Wife's Guide*, 265-270.



magnificence.<sup>311</sup> For all that, cooks were usually hidden away in a separate room or building. Contrast this with the common cook, who was his own master, but whose job lacked the security of working for a baron, bishop, or wealthy bourgeois. As with the common cooks, perceptions of private cooks can to some extent be determined from both literary and documentary sources, and the picture thus painted is not so clear. Urban private cooks are noticeably lacking in the fiction of the Middle Ages, probably due in no small part to the relative lack of wealthy bourgeoisie as characters. Private cooks in general are scarcely better represented. Their products appear in feasts and on tables, but the cooks themselves are mostly absent, with a few notable exceptions.

In *Piers Plowman*, the professional private cook, albeit one not specifically urban, is used as the exemplar of the evils of the deadly sin of Wrath:

Y haue an aunte to nonne and an abbesse;  
Here were leuer swowe or swelte then soffre eny payne.  
Y haue be coek in here kychene and the couent serued,  
Mony monthes with hem and with monkes bothe.  
I was the prioresse potager and other pore ladies  
And made hem ioutes of iangelynge : "Dame Ione was a bastard  
And dame Clarice a knythes douhter, a cokewolde was her syre,  
And dame Purnele a prestis fyle – prioresse worth [s]he neuere;  
For [s]he hadde childe in the chapun-cote [s]he worth chalenged at the  
eleccioun.<sup>312</sup>

In subsequent lines, the nuns, aroused by Wrath, begin to fight and scratch. Langland presents the kitchen as a locus of discontent, and the cook as uniquely placed to create discord and disharmony. The language of cookery is subverted and the imagery used to further Langland's purpose. 'Ioutes' is a general term for a type of pottage usually based on leafy green vegetables, and appears with many variations in recipe collections. The

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<sup>311</sup> C. M. Woolgar, *The Great Household in Late Medieval England* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999), 165

<sup>312</sup> William Langland and Derek Albert Pearsall, *Piers Plowman: A New Annotated Edition of the C-Text* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2008), 126, ll. 128-136.

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*Forme of Cury*, for example, includes recipes for 'Iowtes of Flessh,' 'Frenche iowtes,' and 'Iowtes of almaund mylk.'<sup>313</sup> 'Iangelynge' means quarrelling or gossiping. Wrath, as the cook, prepares a metaphorical 'gossip soup' or 'quarrel stew.' Physically separated, the kitchen is an ungoverned area, where sin festers, fostered by a cook who is quite literally personified as a deadly sin. From that area, and prepared by that cook, evil spreads throughout the establishment.

As a counterpoint, in the romance of *Havelok the Dane*, the earl's cook, Bertram, is quite favourably presented. Almost immediately upon seeing Havelok's worth, Bertram hires him and brings him into the household, serving as a bridge between the outside world and the interior world of a noble household. The household, while not bourgeois, is located in an urban centre. Furthermore, Bertram clothes Havelok at his own cost and treats him well.<sup>314</sup> Indeed, Havelok tells him, 'Thou feddes and claddes me full well.'<sup>315</sup> Bertram is portrayed throughout as a dutiful servant, first of the bad earl, and later of Havelok and Goldeboru. Bertram is also portrayed as a good master to his own servants, and is the one who took care of Havelok when Havelok was his kitchen-knave. Bertram, a private cook, not only straddles the gap between the feminine craft of cooking and the masculine professional craft of cooking, but also between the insulated life of a magnate household and the larger world of the town, since it is he who purchases the 'erles mete' from the purveyors in the town. He has one foot in the world of the nobility, feeding the earl and his household, and one in the world of the lower classes, hiring knaves from the poor men who waited by the bridge for the chance at a bit of work.

Urban private cooks are tarred to some extent with the same brush as common cooks, not only simply by virtue of being cooks, but also by their strong association with kitchens. Many of the images of the punishments in Hell are associated with

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<sup>313</sup> Heatt and Butler, *Curye on Inglysch*, 99, recipe #8; 115, recipe #76; and 117, recipe #89. The base is always green vegetables, with the name coming from additional ingredients such as broth for 'flesh' or almond milk, or from some other association, in the case of 'Frenche iowtes.'

<sup>314</sup> Donald B. Sands, *Middle English Verse Romances* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966), 83. ll. 967-970.

<sup>315</sup> *Ibid.*, 127, l. 2907.

kitchens. While roasting and grilling are represented, it is boiling or seething that is the most common. The cauldron is a recurring and persistent motif, while flesh hooks and ladles, both associated most strongly with the cooking of pottage, are frequently seen in the hands of tormenting devils.<sup>316</sup> This association with boiling might resonate even more strongly with conceptions of private cooks, since common cooks operating cookshops were more likely to be selling pies and roast meat, rather than pottage.

Balanced against this is the desirability of employing a cook both as a marker of social success in itself and as a means of obtaining the elite food which is also a marker of success. Woolgar writes: 'Fine food was an aspiration. To have a cook might in itself be a sign of status.'<sup>317</sup> It is possible that a cook who could prepare the food of the elites might also have been thought to encourage the refinement of those who ate it. As Ken Albala, puts it:

The social connotations of food are perhaps the most powerful determinant of dietary preferences. This is especially the case in a nutritional theory whose basis entails the literal incorporation of a food's substance and qualities into the consumer. An item considered gross and crude and associated with the peasantry will render the consumer peasant like [...] To a courtier, magnificent banquet dishes not only signify wealth, power and sophistication, but transfer those properties directly into the individual diner.<sup>318</sup>

Viewed in this light, a cook is very nearly a pre-requisite for those who are of, or aspire to, elite status.

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<sup>316</sup> For a general overview of the imagery: Clifford Davidson, "The Fate of the Damned in English Art and Drama," in *The Iconography of Hell*, eds. Clifford Davidson and Thomas H. Seiler (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1992), 41-66.

<sup>317</sup> C. M. Woolgar, "The Cook," in *Historians on Chaucer*, eds. Stephen H. Rigby and Alastair J. Minnis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 267. Woolgar elaborates on this point on pp. 275-276.

<sup>318</sup> Ken Albala, *Eating Right in the Renaissance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 184.

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The role of the dedicated cook, and to some extent a cook who had other duties, especially in a large household, was complicated by the exigencies of the job itself and of the requirements of meal preparation and service. The centrality of communal dining to the medieval social experience has been addressed by many scholars over the years. Bridget Henisch goes so far as to note that: 'It was considered furtive, even faintly disreputable, to wish to slip away and huddle in a corner with a friend.'<sup>319</sup> The design of the medieval hall, Mark Gardiner argues, created a 'hierarchical space with places for the owners of the house, and for their servants and guests according to their status.'<sup>320</sup> The exact placement of persons in the hall receives attention as well in books of manners; John Russell wrote over a hundred and fifty lines to provide a comprehensive list of precedence and guidance so that a fifteenth-century usher or marshal should know precisely where to seat a guest of any rank, and with whom.<sup>321</sup> Communal dining in the hall served the dual purpose of establishing and reinforcing the community while clarifying each person's position in the domestic hierarchy. This is most obvious at the highest levels of society, where Russell notes that Bishops, Marquises, Viscounts, and Earls may all eat two to a mess 'yf pey be lovyngely' while the lower estates should have three or four to a mess.<sup>322</sup> No doubt diners paid careful attention to who was seated above or below them in the hall. Smaller halls were often laid out in a similar fashion. In rural peasant abodes, the classic model of a long hall with a raised area at one end for the 'high table' and service rooms at the opposite end was a commonplace in relatively humble lodgings, and a similar design was prevalent in the house designs of the relatively well-off in urban settings, and of the wealthy in both town and country.<sup>323</sup> This design had implications for the way a private cook interacted with the household.

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<sup>319</sup> Bridget Ann Henisch, *Fast and Feast : Food in Medieval Society* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1976), 17.

<sup>320</sup> Mark Gardiner, "Buttery and Pantry and their Antecedents: Idea and Architecture in the English Medieval House," in *Medieval Domesticity: Home, Housing and Household in Medieval England*, eds. Maryanne Kowaleski and P. J. P. Goldberg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 38.

<sup>321</sup> Frederick James Furnivall, *Early English Meals and Manners*, (London: EETS, 1904), 70-73. *John Russell's Boke of Nuture*. Russell notes as well that the bishops of Canterbury and York must be served separately.

<sup>322</sup> *Ibid.*, 72.

<sup>323</sup> See Gardiner, "Buttery and Pantry"; Jane Grenville, "Urban and Rural Houses and Households in the Late Middle Ages: A Case Study from Yorkshire," in *Medieval Domesticity: Home, Housing and Household in Medieval England*, eds. Maryanne

One of the concomitants of a high level of bourgeois affluence was a lodging with a dedicated kitchen. When the dwelling had such a space, it was generally used for the intended purpose. With reference to the probate inventories previously discussed, all of the designated kitchens had cooking equipment, even if only simple pots – although most had spits as well. That means that the scope of that cook's activities was almost certainly removed from the hall to the separate kitchen. This is equally true even if there was no professional cook, but only a servant whose duties included cooking. The food, once prepared, would move from the kitchen through or around the service areas (depending on the exact configuration) and into the hall for service. The cook or cooks would not be seated in the hall to dine with the rest of the household; they would be busy preparing the dishes to be sent out. To be sure, it is possible that for a relatively small household, as most were, eating a modest dinner, the cook might be able to accompany the food to table and there dine with the household.<sup>324</sup> However, the more extensive the household and the more elaborate the meal, the less likely such a scenario seems. Thus, at a single stroke, the cook was eliminated both from bonding with the household over a meal and from receiving the social validation afforded him or her via the mechanism of seating in the hall.

To complicate the situation further, the structure of the hall made it, in Jane Grenville's words, a 'workspace as well as a social space' and one where 'junior members could be seen and controlled by the senior members.'<sup>325</sup> The hall, in the rural setting was the focus of female domesticity and activity, while the field was the province of male activity.<sup>326</sup> In an urban setting, at least in artisanal households wealthy enough to afford houses with halls, the masculine focus shifted to the workshop, but the hall remained the focus for many activities associated with female domesticity, which

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Kowaleski and P. J. P. Goldberg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 92-123; Jane Grenville, *Medieval Housing* (London: Leicester University Press, 2000), Chapter Six.

<sup>324</sup> For household size see: Goldberg, *Women, Work, and Life Cycle*, Chapter Seven.

<sup>325</sup> Grenville, *Urban and Rural Houses and Households in the Late Middle Ages*, 118, 112.

<sup>326</sup> Barbara A. Hanawalt, ed., *Women and Work in Preindustrial Europe* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), ix. For a dissenting view see P. J. P. Goldberg, "Space and Gender in the Later Medieval English House," *Viator* 42, no. 2 (2011), 205-232.

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were undertaken by members of the household. For example, the probate inventory of Hugh de Grantham, a York mason, includes in the hall (*aula*) spinning wheels and material for carding wool, as does the inventory of the merchant William Plovell, also of York.<sup>327</sup> The hall was, as Goldberg and Kowaleski put it, 'the setting in which the social dynamics of the house are played out.'<sup>328</sup> Those social dynamics are very evident in the rituals surrounding the meal, and while the cook contributed to the prestige of the householder by adding lustre to the meal, he or she was excluded from participating directly in the end result if isolated in the kitchen. Furthermore, in the urban houses of the well-to-do, the kitchen would have been removed from the hall, probably in a separate structure.<sup>329</sup> Thus the direct oversight which is so crucial in the peasant halls discussed by Grenville was lacking to some degree. Cookery, significantly, was the only activity which by its very nature was both isolated in execution and isolated its practitioners both from oversight and from the socialization of the meal. Cooks were part of the household, to be sure, but somewhat apart and therefore slightly suspect.

The nature of the urban household meant that even if the cook was somewhat isolated both physically and socially, he or she still spent much of their time interacting with the other members of the household. The housewife would have provided some oversight in planning menus, in shopping, and in managing the household accounts. One of the few sources which directly addresses the role of the private cook in the household is *Le Ménagier de Paris*, a fourteenth-century treatise written by an older man for his young wife. While *Le Ménagier* is not English, in this case the management of an English urban household and a French share some similarities. The section concerning food speaks directly to the oversight exercised by the mistress of the

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<sup>327</sup> Stell, *Probate Inventories*, 517, 534. For other examples see Felicity Riddy, "'Burgeis' Domesticity in Late-Medieval England," in *Medieval Domesticity: Home, Housing and Household in Medieval England*, eds. Maryanne Kowaleski and P. J. P. Goldberg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 24-26.

<sup>328</sup> P. J. P. Goldberg and Maryanne Kowaleski, 'Introduction' in *Medieval Domesticity: Home, Housing and Household in Medieval England*, ed. Maryanne Kowaleski and P. J. P. Goldberg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 6.

<sup>329</sup> Sarah Rees Jones, "Building Domesticity in the City: English Urban Housing before the Black Death," in *Medieval Domesticity: Home, Housing and Household in Medieval England*, eds. Maryanne Kowaleski and P. J. P. Goldberg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 68-69.

house, 'The fourth article of the second section teaches you, as sovereign mistress of your household, how to order and plan dinners and suppers with Master Jehan and how to arrange the sequence of dishes and courses.'<sup>330</sup> Under such circumstances, a certain familiarity would grow between master and man, or more generally between master or mistress and servant. The ability to work together would be as important in this relationship as in any other employer/employee relationship, and it seems likely that genuine affection, or at least appreciation, of some sort would develop in some if not most cases. This is borne out by the examination of wills and probate inventories, where cooks are sometimes mentioned by name in bequests. In 1311, Sir William de Carleton 'devised certain houses ... and rents to Hervey his cook, charged with the maintenance of such a chantry for the good of the souls of the testator, Bartholome de Castello, and others.'<sup>331</sup> Thomas Dalby, a wealthy archdeacon of Richmond in the late fourteenth century left 40s. and a bed valued £3 to William the Cook; 100s. were earmarked for a lesser or junior cook (*'parvo Cok'*) to learn his trade; and, in the probate inventory, John, a page of the kitchen, received 6s. 8d. in alms.<sup>332</sup> The somewhat less grand William de Kexby, the precentor of York, left 3s. 4d. to his cook Robert.<sup>333</sup> Such examples indicate that the cook was not held in contempt by his or her master, but was a valued part of the household.

## Conclusion

Private cooks, whether professional or those who cooked as part of other duties, who operated in an urban environment may have differed from their rural colleagues primarily in the breadth of their activities – roasting, or the trappings associated with roasting, would appear to be more common in an urban environment than in a rural one. The making of pies was for the most part restricted to elite households or specialist artisans – common cooks or bakers. By using the resources of the town and the

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<sup>330</sup> Greco and Rose, *The Good Wife's Guide*, 253.

<sup>331</sup> Reginald R. Sharpe, ed., *Calendar of Letter-Books of the City of London: D : 1309-1314* (London: HM Stationery Office, 1902), 268.

<sup>332</sup> Surtees Society, ed., *Testamenta Eboracensia, Vol. I*, (Durham: Surtees Society, 1836), 262; Stell, *Probate Inventories*, 506.

<sup>333</sup> Stell, *Probate Inventories*, 516. The bequest does not appear in the will, but only in the inventory.

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specialist victuallers therein, urban cooks could provide the full spectrum of medieval cuisine without needing to prepare it all in-house. This put the cuisine of the elite within the reach of the bourgeoisie, allowing them to eat aspirationally. Private cooks were, in general, less suspect than the common cooks, but there remained about them a whiff of the disreputable. The concern with deception is less prominent with respect to the private cooks than to the common cooks. With the greater oversight possible within a household, such direct deception was less likely.



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... if you want to know why a zebra has stripes,  
you should look at it in the tall grass, right?<sup>334</sup>

Context is an important factor in interpretation, and for medieval cooks, particularly urban cooks, there has been little 'tall grass' available for scholars who study them. The cooks have been like zebras in zoos – interesting, perhaps, but relatively context free. In this thesis I have attempted to provide context for medieval urban cooks, so that a clearer idea of how they fit into their environment may be determined. By approaching the topic in an interdisciplinary fashion, I have been able to provide fuller detail about aspects of urban cooks than has been previously available. These aspects may be summarized as activities, economic situation, administrative concerns, and social position and perception.

## Activities

Common cooks provided essentially two types of services: catering-style meal preparation, and cookshop style 'fast-food.' Cooks were not necessarily restricted to a single service. Catering cooks would be able and expected to provide a full range of medieval cuisine. They often cooked feasts, with all that implies. While they may have operated out of their own premises, at least some of their operations were executed in the premises of their principals. Cookshop operators tended to focus on pies and roasted meats. The regulations concerning their activities and prices make this clear, as does the almost complete absence of mention of pottage. The portability of pies and roast meats was almost certainly a factor in the common cook's choice of offering. The higher complexity of roasts and pies in terms of equipment and oversight was also

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<sup>334</sup> Barbara Kingsolver, *Small Wonder* (New York: Harper Collins, 2002), 247.

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contributory. Private cooks made the ubiquitous pottage, and households with kitchens had the ability to roast meats, although they may have done so rarely or not at all. The households may have bought in roast meat when it was needed, or relied on outside specialists hired in – the common cooks functioning as caterers noted above.

### **Economic Situation**

The economic situation of urban cooks throughout the period was somewhat parlous. Some civic regulations make explicit provision for their poverty, which is an exceptional acknowledgement of their state. Evidence from Nottingham Borough Court Rolls indicates that where cooks were involved with the credit economy it tended to be as debtors rather than creditors. Private cooks, as opposed to common cooks, were in service, which removed some of the perils of the independent operator, and limited their need to interact with the credit economy. This view of cooks as not particularly well-off is reflected in literary sources as well. Common cooks were portrayed as poor, or outright criminal cheats. The economic situation of cooks can also be examined alongside those of brewers and bakers. The trades of brewing and cooking lend themselves to small scale production in a way that baking does not. The products of cookery, however, do not scale as well as brewing, which further limits its economic potential. In times and places where guilds existed, guild members and holders of the franchise were likely to be better off than others, partly because they did their best to restrict the more lucrative catering business to themselves, although this does not mean that they were not also operating cookshops as well.

### **Administrative Concerns**

Administratively, common cooks were problematic. They were a critical link in the life of the *urbs*, providing food to those who could not prepare it themselves, and providing auxiliary support for special events beyond the usual means of a household. They were suspect, however, since their trade required them to purchase the essential requirements of life in quantities greater than needed for their own sustenance, leading to concern

about forestalling. They were often specifically engaged in regration, which was legal, tolerated, and probably necessary, but still viewed with suspicion. This concern appears not only in regulations but in the literature of the time, with writers airing their opinions about the predations of common cooks. The nature of their trade also gave them an ability to practice deceit, and this ability was in the forefront of the perception of common cooks in particular, and was a concern of both authorities and townsfolk alike. This is reflected in literature as well as in the civic regulations designed to prevent such deceit and punish it when detected.

### **Social Position and Perception**

Socially, the overwhelming impression is that cooks were viewed as suspicious and unsavory characters. The suspicious nature of cooks is related in part to their ability to deceive and the fact that many people were in the uncomfortable position of relying on common cooks for survival while having little real control over the product they received. Civic regulations dwell on their filth and unsanitary practice. These practices are echoed in the portrayal of Chaucer's cook as a slovenly tradesman with flies in his shop and an unsightly sore on his leg. To be sure, the nature of the trade generated refuse which was (or could be) odiferous, and the regulations were based on very real concerns about hygiene and cleanliness.<sup>335</sup> The regulations often single out cooks, and the specificity and tenor of the ordinances suggest a belief that cooks, to an extent that belie their relatively small numbers, were unsanitary.<sup>336</sup>

Some of the reasons for these perceptions may be rooted in the uncertain nature of cookery as a trade. It is a domestic activity, and was in most households the province of the wife or female servants. Judith Bennet has pointed out that brewing began as a domestic activity but became more and more the province of men as it became

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<sup>335</sup> Carole Rawcliffe, *Urban Bodies: Communal Health in Late Medieval English Towns and Cities* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2013). Chapter 5, and Section 3.5 are particularly relevant.

<sup>336</sup> See Table 2, p. 84, and Appendix B of this thesis for numbers involved in some of the victualling trades. The conclusion of Chapter 1, pp. 64-65, also touches on this point.

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professionalized.<sup>337</sup> A similar process seems to have taken place with cookery, and the York guild ordinance which I have cited before illustrates this point perfectly.<sup>338</sup> The guild could not restrict women from practicing cookery, but strove to control their practice as much as possible. The craft occupied a strange position, associated with feminine domesticity, but at the higher echelons being practiced or overseen by men.

Additionally there was the problem of management. Private cooks, who were more favorably viewed in most respects, were to some extent a status symbol. Crucially, they were managed by the masters or mistresses of the household to which they were attached. Common cooks were not an adornment to the household, and were not subject to direct household oversight. Their management fell to civic authorities.

## Final Thoughts

The single dominant theme throughout this thesis is that of deceit, and cooks as deceivers. This idea colours the way that urban inhabitants viewed cooks and is apparent at every turn. Civic regulations prohibit deceit, literary depictions emphasize deceit and fraud, and the widely-known proscription against selling reheated food is, ultimately, a deception – selling old food as fresh. While the understanding of cooks as deceitful traders applied to both private and common cooks, suspicion fell most strongly on the common cooks. Their position outside the household made it easier for them to practice deception while simultaneously making it more difficult for their clientele to prove that they were. Doubtless many cooks were honest and diligent, but the overwhelming preponderance of evidence suggests that as a class, they were considered shifty deceivers.

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<sup>337</sup> Elegantly put as "If a venture prospers, women fade from the scene," by Joan Thirsk quoted by Judith Bennett. Judith M. Bennett, *Ale, Beer and Brewsters in England: Women's Work in a Changing World, 1300-1600* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 10.

<sup>338</sup> Chapter One, pp. 54 -55.

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The idea that most people have of a medieval urban cook, if indeed they have one at all, is probably something like a slovenly pie merchant such as Chaucer's Cook. When people imagine a private cook, it is probably one such as Chiquart the cook of Duke Amadeus of Savoy, who served his noble master well and who was, by his own account, 'learned in this science and art.'<sup>339</sup> Between these extremes lie the majority of the urban cooks – neither sharp dealers in questionable provisions nor respected servants of a great household, but men and women striving to survive in the city. They were often viewed with hostility, even as they provided an essential service. They not only fed the poor, but also the wealthy of the town, and even were called on to aid in feasts for the great and good. Chiquart himself, who represents the *ne plus ultra* of the private cook, advises hiring in outside support for truly great banquets.<sup>340</sup> It is my hope that this thesis may be useful in providing context for scholars and researchers who find urban cooks appearing in their work and wish to engage with those cooks on a deeper level.

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<sup>339</sup> Chiquart and Terence Scully, *Chiquart's 'On Cookery': A Fifteenth-Century Savoyard Culinary Treatise*, (New York: Peter Lang, 1986), 7.

<sup>340</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

## Appendix A

### Appendix A

Wills from the York Exchequer Court Probate Registers

held at the Borthwick Institute for Archives

The tables include name, volume, folio reference, and date of probate.

#### Cooks

| Name                   | Vol | Fol         | Date of Probate |
|------------------------|-----|-------------|-----------------|
| John Isabel            | 1   | 9r          | 1390            |
| John Lamb              | 1   | 91r         | 1396            |
| Marion Fedyrstan       | 2   | 4r          | 1397            |
| Ralph de Bethom        | 3   | 101r - 101v | 1403            |
| William de Scardeburgh | 3   | 217v        | 1404            |
| Robert Burton          | 2   | 559r        | 1429            |
| John Clifford          | 3   | 347r        | 1432            |
| John Sclaterer         | 3   | 397r        | 1434            |
| John del Hall          | 3   | 394r        | 1434            |
| Matilda Gardener       | 3   | 435r        | 1435            |
| Thomas Roucliff        | 3   | 515r        | 1437            |
| Agnes Roucliffe        | 3   | 547r - 547v | 1438            |
| John Shawe             | 2   | 171r        | 1448            |
| John Carr              | 2   | 183v        | 1448            |
| John Chawmer           | 2   | 264v        | 1453            |
| John Marshall          | 2   | 268r - 268v | 1453            |
| Robert Brereton        | 2   | 341v        | 1457            |
| Agnes Skelton          | 4   | 50r         | 1467            |
| Lawrence Damysell      | 4   | 56r         | 1468            |
| Robert Pottow          | 4   | 56v         | 1468            |

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**Butchers**

| Name                | Vol | Fol        | Date of Probate |
|---------------------|-----|------------|-----------------|
| Alice de Barneby    | 1   | 23r        | 1390            |
| John de Bickerton   | 1   | 30v, 35v   | 1391            |
| William de Cawod    | 1   | 19v        | 1391            |
| Roger Tankerlay     | 1   | 60r        | 1393            |
| Joan de Westby      | 1   | 60r        | 1393            |
| Henry Doghty        | 1   | 67r        | 1394            |
| John de Rudstane    | 1   | 94v-95r    | 1396            |
| Alice de Cawod      | 2   | 5r         | 1397            |
| Hugh de Wakefeld    | 3   | 32r        | 1400            |
| Peter Teesdale      | 3   | 66r        | 1401            |
| Margaret Park       | 3   | 70v        | 1402            |
| Margaret Tankersley | 3   | 91v        | 1403            |
| John de Layton      | 3   | 218r-v     | 1404            |
| Stephan Lytster     | 3   | 214v-215r  | 1404            |
| Thomas Brame        | 2   | 579v, 582r | 1408            |
| William Lilyng      | 2   | 519r-v     | 1427            |
| Thomas Lindsay      | 2   | 509r-v     | 1427            |
| Joan Gervase        | 2   | 563v       | 1429            |
| John Robynson       | 2   | 569v       | 1429            |
| John Sheriff        | 2   | 561v-562r  | 1429            |
| Robert Truss        | 2   | 569v       | 1429            |
| Thomas Welton       | 2   | 625r       | 1430            |
| John Chaffre        | 2   | 622r-v     | 1432            |
| John Hovingham      | 3   | 3600v      | 1433            |
| William Brandesby   | 3   | 409r       | 1435            |
| John Newton         | 3   | 433v       | 1435            |
| Matilda Bothe       | 3   | 522v       | 1438            |
| Richard Towton      | 3   | 519v       | 1438            |
| William Hovingham   | 3   | 591r-v     | 1439            |
| Robert Brewer       | 2   | 18v-19r    | 1441            |
| Robert Towton       | 2   | 29v-30r    | 1441            |
| John Lamley         | 2   | 37r-v      | 1442            |
| John Kingsley       | 2   | 64v-65r    | 1443            |
| John Brocket        | 2   | 212v-213r  | 1444            |
| John Pierson        | 2   | 109r-v     | 1445            |
| Patrick Bradley     | 2   | 130v-131r  | 1446            |
| John Gell           | 2   | 152r       | 1447            |
| John Prince         | 2   | 177r-v     | 1448            |
| Richard Carlisle    | 2   | 284v       | 1453            |
| John Hapton         | 2   | 278r       | 1453            |
| John Gervas         | 2   | 405v       | 1459            |
| Nicholas White      | 2   | 405v       | 1459            |
| John Duffeld        | 2   | 429v       | 1460            |
| Robert Seaton       | 2   | 437v       | 1461            |
| Walter Marshall     | 2   | 483v       | 1463            |

## Appendix A

### **Butchers (cont.)**

| Name              | Vol | Fol       | Date of<br>Probate |
|-------------------|-----|-----------|--------------------|
| William Towthorpe | 2   | 485r-v    | 1463               |
| William North     | 4   | 253v-254r | 1466               |
| Robert Shaw       | 4   | 261r      | 1466               |
| William Bradlay   | 4   | 231r      | 1467               |
| John Body         | 4   | 134r      | 1469               |
| John Rudd         | 4   | 131v      | 1469               |
| Richard Snowball  | 4   | 156v      | 1471               |
| Thomas Spurrell   | 4   | 167v      | 1471               |
| John Towthorpe    | 4   | 162v      | 1471               |
| Thomas White      | 4   | 30v       | 1471               |
| Thomas Wright     | 4   | 33v       | 1471               |
| William Hart      | 5   | 11r       | 1477               |
| Thomas Taylor     | 5   | 191r      | 1477               |
| John Towthorpe    | 5   | 50r-v     | 1481               |
| Richard Bulmer    | 5   | 260r      | 1485               |
| John Welton       | 5   | 313v      | 1487               |
| William Garton    | 5   | 334v      | 1488               |
| Thomas Snowball   | 5   | 447v      | 1494               |
| Richard Robynson  | 5   | 510r-v    | 1497               |
| John Norby        | 3   | 310r-v    | 1499               |



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**Saucemakers**

| Name           | Vol | Fol       | Date of Probate |
|----------------|-----|-----------|-----------------|
| John Catour    | 3   | 232v-233r | 1405            |
| Joan Romandby  | 2   | 584r      | 1408            |
| John Rumby     | 2   | 513r      | 1427            |
| John Fyshlake  | 2   | 538r      | 1428            |
| William Rukeby | 3   | 542r      | 1438            |
| John Heselden  | 3   | 587r      | 1439            |
| John Lenge     | 3   | 560v-561r | 1439            |
| John Whitgifte | 2   | 23r       | 1441            |
| Richard Rumby  | 2   | 125v-126r | 1446            |

**Vintners**

| Name             | Vol | Fol       | Date of Probate |
|------------------|-----|-----------|-----------------|
| John Spaldyng    | 1   | 67r-v     | 1394            |
| Robert Merston   | 3   | 56v       | 1398            |
| John Peticlerk   | 2   | 494r-v    | 1426            |
| William Banester | 2   | 662v-663r | 1429            |
| William Howedan  | 2   | 639v      | 1430            |
| John Langthorn   | 2   | 641v      | 1431            |
| William Wrawby   | 3   | 344r      | 1432            |
| Richard Russell  | 3   | 465v-466r | 1436            |
| William Smith    | 3   | 454r      | 1436            |
| Richard Stow     | 3   | 447r      | 1436            |
| John Ruston      | 2   | 149r-v    | 1446            |
| Thomas Yong      | 2   | 205r-v    | 1448            |
| Thomas Brereton  | 2   | 437v      | 1461            |
| William Skinner  | 4   | 214v      | 1474            |
| John Betson      | 4   | 107r      | 1475            |
| Nicholas Bewick  | 5   | 182r      | 1479            |
| Thomas Craven    | 5   | 149v-150r | 1479            |
| Thomas Carter    | 5   | 96r       | 1481            |
| John Jakson      | 5   | 96v       | 1481            |
| Thomas Bone      | 5   | 38r       | 1483            |
| Richard Wetherby | 5   | 294v-295r | 1486            |

## Appendix A

### Bakers

| Name                | Vol | Fol         | Date of Probate |
|---------------------|-----|-------------|-----------------|
| John de Flassby     | 3   | 37v         | 1400            |
| Walter de Easton    | 3   | 66-r-v, 74v | 1401            |
| William Marykin     | 3   | 111r        | 1404            |
| John Bolton         | 3   | 253r        | 1406            |
| William Sallay      | 3   | 264v        | 1407            |
| William Herell      | 3   | 281r        | 1408            |
| John Ottelay        | 2   | 577v        | 1408            |
| Richard Claxton     | 2   | 536v        | 1426            |
| John Queldrik       | 2   | 635r-v      | 1430            |
| Robert Maddeson     | 2   | 656v        | 1431            |
| Richard Rikhall     | 2   | 643r-v      | 1431            |
| John Haslin         | 2   | 609v        | 1432            |
| William Brydlyngton | 2   | 615v        | 1432            |
| William Miton       | 3   | 3554-v      | 1433            |
| Richard Ash         | 3   | 399v-400r   | 1434            |
| Nicholas Friston    | 3   | 451r-v      | 1436            |
| William Deighton    | 2   | 78v-79r     | 1443            |
| William Sancton     | 2   | 66v         | 1443            |
| Richard Scorton     | 2   | 101v        | 1445            |
| William Cotes       | 2   | 163r        | 1447            |
| William Levenyng    | 2   | 219v        | 1451            |
| John Haddon         | 2   | 250v-251r   | 1452            |
| William Bridnall    | 2   | 238v        | 1453            |
| John Dunsford       | 2   | 274r        | 1453            |
| Robert Hotoft       | 2   | 325r        | 1455            |
| John Penrethe       | 2   | 312r        | 1455            |
| William Saltmersh   | 2   | 411r        | 1459            |
| Robert Gascard      | 2   | 458v        | 1461            |
| Thomas Cuke         | 4   | 250v        | 1466            |
| John Hert           | 4   | 254r        | 1466            |
| William Otblak      | 4   | 262v        | 1466            |
| Robert Walker       | 4   | 250r-v      | 1466            |
| Robert Lytildale    | 4   | 30v         | 1471            |
| William Hynde       | 4   | 27r-v       | 1471            |
| William Towee       | 4   | 30v         | 1471            |
| John Biller         | 4   | 185r        | 1472            |
| John Ranald         | 4   | 4v          | 1473            |
| Richard Mannell     | 4   | 120r        | 1475            |
| John Norton         | 5   | 21v-22r     | 1476            |
| Richard Claybruke   | 5   | 159r        | 1479            |
| Robert Welburn      | 5   | 181r        | 1480            |
| William Aleyn       | 5   | 229r        | 1484            |
| Andrew Lamb         | 5   | 256v        | 1485            |

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**Bakers (cont.)**

| Name             | Vol | Fol    | Date of<br>Probate |
|------------------|-----|--------|--------------------|
| John Langlandis  | 5   | 299r   | 1487               |
| Ingram Johnson   | 5   | 348v   | 1488               |
| Robert Spoford   | 5   | 355r   | 1489               |
| Richard Eastwood | 5   | 358v   | 1489               |
| John Blakell     | 5   | 454r   | 1494               |
| Robert Jakson    | 5   | 482r-v | 1495               |

## Appendix B

### Appendix B

Entries from the *Register of the Freemen of the City of York*.<sup>341</sup>

Entries are in the form "Name (Regnal Year of Enrolment)" using the abbreviation for regnal year as given in the Register.

#### Bakers

Willelmus Marekyn (14 RIC. II.), Willelmus de Sauneby (15 RIC. II.), Ricardus de Foliffayt (15 RIC. II.), Thomas Claybrok (16 RIC. II.), Johannes Clementesson (16 RIC. II.), Johannes de Gyllyng (16 RIC. II.), Johannes Hunt (16 RIC. II.), Willelmus de Welburn (16 RIC. II.), Thomas de Welburn (17 RIC. II.), Johannes Wright (18 RIC. II.), Thomas del Brewhouse (18 RIC. II.), Willelmus Bulmer (19 RIC. II.), Henricus Sleaford (19 RIC. II.), Willelmus Bossall (19 RIC. II.), Willelmus de Fryston (20 RIC. II.), Robertus de Kent (20 RIC. II.), Ricardus de Rykhall (20 RIC. II.), Henricus de Catrik (20 RIC. II.), Willelmus de Fryston (20 RIC. II.), Johannes de Melburn (20 RIC. II.), Willelmus de Sallay (21 RIC. II.), Willelmus de Aton (21 RIC. II.), Robertus Symesson (21 RIC. II.), Willelmus Gudewyn (21 RIC. II.), Joh. Dyconesson (22 RIC. II.), Willelmus de Dyghton (22 RIC. II.), Thomas de Esshe (1 HEN. IV.), Joh. de Pountffrayt (2 HEN. IV.), Robertus Mady (2 HEN. IV.), Willelmus de Bridlyngton (2 HEN. IV.), Thomas de Pykall (2 HEN. IV.), Willelmus de Kesewyk (2 HEN. IV.), Johannes de Bolton (2 HEN. IV.), Johannes Dyk (3 HEN. IV.), Johannes de Durem (3 HEN. IV.), Ricardus del Bruhous (3 HEN. IV.), Johannes Hagas (3 HEN. IV.), Robertus del Bruhous (3 HEN. IV.), Ricardus Claybroke (3 HEN. IV.), Johannes de Ottelay (4 HEN. IV.), Willelmus de Eston (4 HEN. IV.), Johannes Claybruke (5 HEN. IV.), Johannes de Croxton (6 HEN. IV.), Willelmus Redehed (10 HEN. IV.), Johannes Kydd (10 HEN. IV.), Willelmus Rose (12 HEN. IV.), Johannes Qweldrik (12 HEN. IV.), Johannes Barbour (13 HEN. IV.), Willelmus Miton (13 HEN. IV.), Ricardus Hayton (13 HEN. IV.), Willelmus Santon (13 HEN. IV.), Johannes Coukour (14 HEN. IV.), Johannes del Pole (1 HEN. V.), Willelmus Lovell (1 HEN. V.), Henricus Inchebald (1 HEN. V.), Nicholaus Cambe (1 HEN. V.), Johannes Craven (1 HEN. V.), Johannes Tesard (2 HEN. V.), Egidius Holm (2 HEN. V.), Johannes Fenton (2 HEN. V.), Ricardus de Burton (2 HEN. V.), Ricardus Marras (3 HEN. V.), Willelmus Wryght (4 HEN. V.), Willelmus Meger (4 HEN. V.), Johannes Hawselyn (4 HEN. V.), Thomas Cuke (5 HEN. V.), Johannes Durant (5 HEN. V.), Johannes Bendebowe (5 HEN. V.), Johannes Mynskippe (6 HEN. V.), Ricardus Michell (6 HEN. V.), Stephanus Lyndesay (6 HEN. V.), Thomas Sedgefild (6 HEN. V.), Thomas Handesworth (7 HEN. V.), Willelmus Naburn (7 HEN. V.), Robertus Hutofte (8 HEN. V.), Willelmus Lece (8 HEN. V.), Robertus Vere (9 HEN. V.), Johannes Claxton (9 HEN. V.), Johannes Whitwell (9 HEN. V.), Robertus Jonson (9 HEN. V.), Thomas Kelfeld (1 HEN. VI.), Joh. Whitwell (1 HEN. VI.), Ricardus Manaste (1 HEN. VI.), Johannes Harrescawe (2 HEN. VI.), Thomas Oredieu (2 HEN. VI.), Johannes Bridlyngton (2 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Forester (3 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Gouke (3 HEN. VI.), Thomas Hewet (3 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Dwale (3 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Bosevill (4 HEN. VI.), Johannes Ledys (4 HEN. VI.),

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<sup>341</sup> Francis Collins, ed., *Register of the Freemen of the City of York: Vol. I: 1272-1558*, (Durham: Surtees Society, 1897).

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Robertus Ecop (4 HEN. VI.), Thomas Madyson (4 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Jall (5 HEN. VI.), Johannes Richardson (5 HEN. VI.), Alanus Buntynge (6 HEN. VI.), Petrus de la Water (6 HEN. VI.), Nicholaus Lelylow (6 HEN. VI.), Johannes Elmesall (6 HEN. VI.), Ricardus Lemyng (6 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Rykall (7 HEN. VI.), Thomas Sharp (7 HEN. VI.), Thomas Shalcok (8 HEN. VI.), Radulphus Hunter (8 HEN. VI.), Johannes Penreth (9 HEN. VI.), Johannes Braythwayt (9 HEN. VI.), Robertus Boleron (9 HEN. VI.), Thomas Ottelay (10 HEN. VI.), Johannes Ayclif (10 HEN. VI.), Ricardus Croxton (11 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Barcotes (11 HEN. VI.), Robertus Jonson (11 HEN. VI.), Johannes Harwod (11 HEN. VI.), Ricardus del Howe (11 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Levenyng (12 HEN. VI.), Johannes Penreth (13 HEN. VI.), Johannes Hoton (13 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Skelton (13 HEN. VI.), Thomas Levenyng (14 HEN. VI.), Johannes Helme (14 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Tailliour (14 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Brydnell (15 HEN. VI.), Johannes Body (16 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Lereva (16 HEN. VI.), Robertus Thornton (16 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Lyon (16 HEN. VI.), Ricardus Claybruke (16 HEN. VI.), Johannes Bek (17 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Wetelay (17 HEN. VI.), Johannes Haxby (17 HEN. VI.), Ricardus Terell (17 HEN. VI.), Thomas Clyff (17 HEN. VI.), Robertus Neuton (18 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Colynson (18 HEN. VI.), Johannes Bromehede (18 HEN. VI.), Robertus Clerk (19 HEN. VI.), Johannes Snell (19 HEN. VI.), Robertus Welburn (19 HEN. VI.), Robertus del Howe (21 HEN. VI.), Johannes Busby (21 HEN. VI.), Ricardus Stopford (22 HEN. VI.), Johannes Teb (23 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Man (23 HEN. VI.), Thomas Warde (23 HEN. VI.), Nicholaus Pittes (24 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Richardson (24 HEN. VI.), Robertus Warde (25 HEN. VI.), Thomas Alan (25 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Southworth (26 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Tifferd (26 HEN. VI.), Johannes Haddon (26 HEN. VI.), Johannes Multon (26 HEN. VI.), Johannes Kirkeby (27 HEN. VI.), Robertus Jakson (28 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Chatburn (28 HEN. VI.), Johannes Watson (28 HEN. VI.), Johannes Broun (29 HEN. VI.), Simon Cokay (29 HEN. VI.), Robertus Walker (29 HEN. VI.), Johannes Lerevay (29 HEN. VI.), Thomas Johnson (29 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Hyne (30 HEN. VI.), Johannes Sisson (30 HEN. VI.), Henricus Tefferd (30 HEN. VI.), Ricardus Estwod (31 HEN. VI.), Thomas Cuke (31 HEN. VI.), Ricardus Bridenell (32 HEN. VI.), Xpoforus Alan (32 HEN. VI.), Johannes Burton (32 HEN. VI.), Johannes Lokeryng (33 HEN. VI.), Johannes Raynald (33 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Touse (34 HEN. VI.), Ricardus Menware (34 HEN. VI.), Johannes Henrison (35 HEN. VI.), Johannes Berage (35 HEN. VI.), Johannes Tesedale (35 HEN. VI.), Johannes Brande (35 HEN. VI.), Robertus Gayscarth (36 HEN. VI.), Robertus Dykonson (36 HEN. VI.), Rogerus Palmer (36 HEN. VI.), Petrus Perot (37 HEN. VI.), Johannes Langlandes (37 HEN. VI.), Robertus Spofford (37 HEN. VI.), Johannes Blakell (38 HEN. VI.), Thomas Lereva (38 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Hetblak (39 HEN. VI.), Ricardus Walker (39 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Alan (39 HEN. VI.), Alexander Johnson (1 EDW. IV.), Thomas Johnson (1 EDW. IV.), Willelmus Weste (1 EDW. IV.), Ingare (sic) Johnson (1 EDW. IV.), Johannes Turnour (1 EDW. IV.), Johannes Custance (1 EDW. IV.), Johannes Robynson (1 EDW. IV.), Thomas Sautre (2 EDW. IV.), Johannes Hert (2 EDW. IV.), Willelmus Warter (2 EDW. IV.), Joh. Berage (2 EDW. IV.), Thomas Rosyn (3 EDW. IV.), Rogerus Asshdale (3 EDW. IV.), Willelmus Barker (4 EDW. IV.), Robertus Tubman (4 EDW. IV.), Willelmus Alger (5 EDW. IV.), Thomas Crosseby (5 EDW. IV.), Johannes Glewe (5 EDW. IV.), Robertus Whittyngham (6 EDW. IV.), Thomas Wright (6 EDW. IV.), Johannes Archer (7 EDW. IV.), Andreas Lam (7 EDW. IV.), Thomas Banes (9 EDW. IV.), Johannes Thomson (9 EDW. IV.), Egidius Postilthwayte (9 EDW. IV.), Johannes Dayvell (9 EDW. IV.),

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Johannes Kettellwell (10 EDW. IV.), Johannes Norton (10 EDW. IV.), Thomas Robynson (11 EDW. IV.), Johannes Pierson (11 EDW. IV.), Johannes Thomson (11 EDW. IV.), Thomas Stokdale (16 EDW. IV.), Johannes Leper (16 EDW. IV.), Willelmus Dokweray (16 EDW. IV.), Johannes Brounberd (16 EDW. IV.), Johannes Hugh (17 EDW. IV.), Robertus Wren (17 EDW. IV.), Georgius Sutton (19 EDW. IV.), Thomas Slothman (21 EDW. IV.), Ricardus Wilkynson (21 EDW. IV.), Johannes Dayll (21 EDW. IV.), Thomas Hall (22 EDW. IV.), Thomas Selibarn (22 EDW. IV.), Willelmus Helme (22 EDW. IV.), Thomas Brade (22 EDW. IV.), Thomas Tyfferd (22 EDW. IV.), Johannes Alan (1 RIC. III.), Johannes Aleyne (1 RIC. III.), Robertus Herryson (1 RIC. III.), Robertus Fowbrig (2 RIC. III.), Adam Symson (2 RIC. III.), Anthonius Welburne (2 RIC. III.), Thomas Walton (2 RIC. III.), Thomas Brakke (2 RIC. III.), Willelmus Sutton (2 HEN. VII.), Johannes Willous (2 HEN. VII.), Thomas Rawson (2 HEN. VII.), Willelmus Hill (3 HEN. VII.), Ricardus Thomson (3 HEN. VII.), Johannes Roger (3 HEN. VII.), Jacobus Richerdson (4 HEN. VII.), Johannes Russell (4 HEN. VII.), Gilbertus Note (4 HEN. VII.), Johannes Bryntskale (7 HEN. VII.), Thomas Grethede (7 HEN. VII.), Johannes Robson (8 HEN. VII.), Georgius Willouse (8 HEN. VII.), Yngramus Chester (9 HEN. VII.), Jacobus Hill (9 HEN. VII.), Willelmus Moise (10 HEN. VII.), Rollandus del Rigge (11 HEN. VII.), Willelmus Shat (12 HEN. VII.), Robertus Thomson (12 HEN. VII.), Thomas Mason (13 HEN. VII.), Hugo Dobynson (14 HEN. VII.), Hugo Rygge (16 HEN. VII.), Johannes Grethede (16 HEN. VII.), Willelmus Elsay (16 HEN. VII.)

### **Butchers**

Thomas de Durem (14 RIC. II.), Will. de Munkehagh (15 RIC. II.), Elyas de Bruges (16 RIC. II.), Robertus de Brandesby (17 RIC. II.), Willelmus de Lillyng (18 RIC. II.), Thomas de Lyndesay (18 RIC. II.), Ricardus Rudd (19 RIC. II.), Johannes de Hovyngham (19 RIC. II.), Thomas de Kirkeby (20 RIC. II.), Will. de Brandesby (20 RIC. II.), Robertus de Wenteslay (20 RIC. II.), Willelmus Russhe (20 RIC. II.), Will. de Blyburgh (21 RIC. II.), Johannes Palee (21 RIC. II.), Johannes Riffan (22 RIC. II.), Thomas de Gretham (22 RIC. II.), Robertus Vaux (22 RIC. II.), Henricus de Conygeston (1 HEN. IV.), Willelmus de Dyghton (2 HEN. IV.), Nicholaus Todde (2 HEN. IV.), Ricardus de Carliolo (2 HEN. IV.), Adam de Richemund (2 HEN. IV.), Johannes Dovere (2 HEN. IV.), Thomas Hovyngham (3 HEN. IV.), Robertus de Hirtilpole (3 HEN. IV.), Johannes Thomesson (3 HEN. IV.), Johannes de West (3 HEN. IV.), Johannes Barker (3 HEN. IV.), Will. de Esyngwald (3 HEN. IV.), Johannes Carter (4 HEN. IV.), Thomas de Leddeston (4 HEN. IV.), Ricardus de Towton (5 HEN. IV.), Thomas Danyell (6 HEN. IV.), Willelmus Rudd (8 HEN. IV.), Simon Grymeston (9 HEN. IV.), Willelmus Iklay (9 HEN. IV.), Thomas Boynton (10 HEN. IV.), Johannes Peresson (10 HEN. IV.), Johannes Totty (10 HEN. IV.), Johannes Fernedill (11 HEN. IV.), Simon Wright (12 HEN. IV.), Johannes Bothe (12 HEN. IV.), Willelmus Cheldra (12 HEN. IV.), Johannes Bekyngham (13 HEN. IV.), Johannes Freman (13 HEN. IV.), Johannes Broket (13 HEN. IV.), Johannes Neuton (13 HEN. IV.), Thomas Tankerslay (14 HEN. IV.), Willelmus Dawson (14 HEN. IV.), Thomas Perfay (sic) (1 HEN. V.), Johannes Hapton (1 HEN. V.), Robertus Towton (1 HEN. V.), Johannes Thompson (1 HEN. V.), Rogerus Wilson (1 HEN. V.), Thomas Buthe (1 HEN. V.), Willelmus Muskham (1 HEN. V.), Willelmus Forester (1 HEN. V.), Willelmus Touthorp (2 HEN. V.), Willelmus Wylton (2 HEN. V.), Patricius Bradley (2 HEN. V.), Johannes Edmundson (2 HEN. V.), Willelmus Jonson (2 HEN. V.), Johannes White (3 HEN. V.),

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Rogerus Forester (3 HEN. V.), Thomas Welton (6 HEN. V.), Willelmus Toueton (7 HEN. V.), Willelmus Selby (7 HEN. V.), Johannes Ryffau (7 HEN. V.), Johannes Lamlay (7 HEN. V.), Ricardus Westeby (7 HEN. V.), Thomas Rygecok (9 HEN. V.), Thomas Ripon (9 HEN. V.), Willelmus Watson (1 HEN. VI.), Johannes Hambald (1 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Duffeld (1 HEN. VI.), Johannes Gervaux (1 HEN. VI.), Johannes Shirref (1 HEN. VI.), Robertus Brewer (2 HEN. VI.), Ric. Emson (3 HEN. VI.), Robertus Trusse (3 HEN. VI.), Johannes Mardolf (3 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Strykland (4 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Cuke (4 HEN. VI.), Robertus Waldyng (5 HEN. VI.), Thomas Brynand (6 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Knayton (6 HEN. VI.), Joh. Barker (6 HEN. VI.), Thomas Jakson (7 HEN. VI.), Robertus Brandesby (7 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Gybson (8 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Lede (9 HEN. VI.), Johannes Kyngeslay (10 HEN. VI.), Willelmus North (11 HEN. VI.), Robertus Seton (11 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Ryston (11 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Jonson (11 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Strensall (11 HEN. VI.), Robertus Wilson (11 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Wath (12 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Warde (12 HEN. VI.), Walterus Marsshall (12 HEN. VI.), Thomas Arthur (12 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Revell (12 HEN. VI.), Thomas Jakson (12 HEN. VI.), Johannes Prynce (13 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Bradley (13 HEN. VI.), Robertus Holtby (14 HEN. VI.), Johannes Broune (14 HEN. VI.), Johannes Cotes (14 HEN. VI.), Ricardus Boynton (14 HEN. VI.), Ricardus Gervas (15 HEN. VI.), Johannes Waynman (15 HEN. VI.), Johannes Davy (15 HEN. VI.), Johannes Stokes (15 HEN. VI.), Adam Thomson (16 HEN. VI.), Johannes Gudeale (16 HEN. VI.), Johannes Touthorp (16 HEN. VI.), Ed. Michelson (17 HEN. VI.), Johannes Clerk (17 HEN. VI.), Ricardus York (17 HEN. VI.), Johannes Tice (17 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Fidiller (18 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Fell (18 HEN. VI.), Johannes Henrison (18 HEN. VI.), Johannes Webster (18 HEN. VI.), Johannes Rud (18 HEN. VI.), Thomas Wade (19 HEN. VI.), Johannes Hewet (19 HEN. VI.), Johannes Duffeld (19 HEN. VI.), Johannes Lethelay (19 HEN. VI.), Walterus Outyng (19 HEN. VI.), Thomas Carlele (19 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Freman (19 HEN. VI.), Johannes Gell (20 HEN. VI.), Adam Whitehede (20 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Claxton (20 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Lumberd (20 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Broun (20 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Sawyer (21 HEN. VI.), Thomas Helpreby (22 HEN. VI.), Thomas Bysshop (23 HEN. VI.), Johannes Hubberd (23 HEN. VI.), Thomas Pereson (23 HEN. VI.), Robertus Hode (24 HEN. VI.), Thomas Tailliour (25 HEN. VI.), Robertus Cuke (25 HEN. VI.), Thomas Sharpearowe (25 HEN. VI.), Henricus Walker (25 HEN. VI.), Johannes Burdon (25 HEN. VI.), Johannes Welton (25 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Yonge (26 HEN. VI.), Robertus Gudale (26 HEN. VI.), Nicholaus Midilton (26 HEN. VI.), Johannes Hudson (27 HEN. VI.), Johannes Northeby (27 HEN. VI.), Robertus Laurence (28 HEN. VI.), Thomas Lethelay (28 HEN. VI.), Thomas Watson (28 HEN. VI.), Thomas Bedale (28 HEN. VI.), Johannes Bisshop (29 HEN. VI.), Nicholaus Whyte (30 HEN. VI.), Robertus Shawe (30 HEN. VI.), Thomas Garmondway (30 HEN. VI.), Johannes Body (30 HEN. VI.), Willelmus del Londe (34 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Tailliour (34 HEN. VI.), Ed. Pynder (34 HEN. VI.), Walterus Robynson (34 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Otwyn (34 HEN. VI.), Johannes Cundale (34 HEN. VI.), Robertus Hambald (34 HEN. VI.), Ricardus Bukshawe (35 HEN. VI.), Adam Holme (35 HEN. VI.), Thomas Wright (35 HEN. VI.), Johannes Trewe (36 HEN. VI.), Robertus Gelles (37 HEN. VI.), Thomas Spuret (37 HEN. VI.), Adam Fisser (37 HEN. VI.), Robertus North (1 EDW. IV.), Johannes Stevenson (1 EDW. IV.), Willelmus Arlothorp (1 EDW. IV.), Ricardus Wright (1 EDW. IV.), Johannes Knayton (1 EDW. IV.), Ricardus Kirkeby (2 EDW. IV.), Willelmus Tailliour (2 EDW. IV.), Johannes Mirehous (2 EDW.

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IV.), Willelmus Sharparrowe (3 EDW. IV.), Johannes Swanne (4 EDW. IV.), Thomas Caletton (4 EDW. IV.), Johannes Gylmyn (5 EDW. IV.), Thomas White (5 EDW. IV.), Willelmus Aukelande (6 EDW. IV.), Willelmus West (6 EDW. IV.), Willelmus Pullay (7 EDW. IV.), Ricardus Snaweball (7 EDW. IV.), Thomas Wright (8 EDW. IV.), Robertus Flaxton (8 EDW. IV.), Robertus Pullay (8 EDW. IV.), Willelmus Coniston (9 EDW. IV.), Willelmus Hert (9 EDW. IV.), Johannes Towthorp (9 EDW. IV.), Johannes Barton (10 EDW. IV.), Ricardus Hakford (11 EDW. IV.), Johannes Robynson (11 EDW. IV.), Willelmus Garton (11 EDW. IV.), Ricardus Robynson (11 EDW. IV.), Johannes Fiddeller (11 EDW. IV.), Johannes Raysbek (12 EDW. IV.), Willelmus Marsshall (12 EDW. IV.), Willelmus Redworth (12 EDW. IV.), Ed. George (14 EDW. IV.), Thomas Lile (14 EDW. IV.), Ricardus Bowman (14 EDW. IV.), Robertus Busseby (14 EDW. IV.), Johannes Clerk (15 EDW. IV.), Ricardus Tebbe (15 EDW. IV.), Johannes Smyth (15 EDW. IV.), Thomas Snawball (17 EDW. IV.), Ricardus Mawer (18 EDW. IV.), Willelmus Wright (18 EDW. IV.), Johannes Baron (18 EDW. IV.), Johannes Clerke (18 EDW. IV.), Rolandus Brise (19 EDW. IV.), Johannes Robynson (20 EDW. IV.), Henricus PULLOW (21 EDW. IV.), Thomas Larom (21 EDW. IV.), Johannes Pynder (21 EDW. IV.), Thomas Hadilsay (1 RIC. III.), Xpoforus Laystok (1 RIC. III.), Johannes Puderson (2 RIC. III.), Georgius Stabill (2 HEN. VII.), Henricus Browne (2 HEN. VII.), Johannes Woddall (2 HEN. VII.), Johannes Becham (3 HEN. VII.), Johannes Dykman (5 HEN. VII.), Johannes Fiddeler (5 HEN. VII.), Henricus Benyt (5 HEN. VII.), Ed. Northend (6 HEN. VII.), Will. Knokyn (7 HEN. VII.), Johannes Chamberleyn (7 HEN. VII.), Robertus Milner (7 HEN. VII.), Johannes Patanson (8 HEN. VII.), Johannes Roke (9 HEN. VII.), Rogerus Dobson (10 HEN. VII.), Ricardus Huchonson (10 HEN. VII.), Willelmus Northerby (10 HEN. VII.), Georgius Williamson als. Person (11 HEN. VII.), Rogerus Garton (11 HEN. VII.), Thomas Bailey (12 HEN. VII.), Ricardus Spicer (15 HEN. VII.), Johannes Patrik (15 HEN. VII.), Xpoferus Johnson (16 HEN. VII.)

### **Cooks**

Thomas de Stodelay (15 RIC. II.), Robertus de Laghton (15 RIC. II.), Gilbertus de Kereham (16 RIC. II.), Johannes Haukyn (17 RIC. II.), Ricardus de Salesbiry (17 RIC. II.), Johannes Cokirham (18 RIC. II.), Johannes de Clifford (19 RIC. II.), Willelmus Spencer (19 RIC. II.), Willelmus de Breerton (19 RIC. II.), Robertus Frankysh (20 RIC. II.), Tho. de Sutton (21 RIC. II.), Johannes de la Hall (22 RIC. II.), Gilbertus de Esshewra (22 RIC. II.), Joh. de Breerton (2 HEN. IV.), Johannes de Otryngham (3 HEN. IV.), Willelmus de Burgh (3 HEN. IV.), Willelmus Walleriche (4 HEN. IV.), Ricardus Froyse (5 HEN. IV.), Johannes Stele (11 HEN. IV.), Petrus Wystede (13 HEN. IV.), Walterus Parkour (13 HEN. IV.), Johannes Berden (14 HEN. IV.), Johannes Benett (14 HEN. IV.), Thomas Rouclyff (1 HEN. V.), Johannes Shall (1 HEN. V.), Johannes Rypon (2 HEN. V.), Johannes Steven (3 HEN. V.), Johannes Marshall (3 HEN. V.), Johannes Hake (3 HEN. V.), Johannes Royston (4 HEN. V.), Ricardus Lyot (5 HEN. V.), Johannes Cuke (6 HEN. V.), Robertus Pothowe (6 HEN. V.), Johannes Marsshall (6 HEN. V.), Robertus Walker (6 HEN. V.), Robertus Kyrkeby (6 HEN. V.), Robertus Burton (1 HEN. VI.), Johannes Chambre (2 HEN. VI.), Johannes Pay (2 HEN. VI.), Johannes Philippot (3 HEN. VI.), Thomas Gauke (3 HEN. VI.), Ricardus Mathewe (4 HEN. VI.), Thomas Bosevill (4 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Frereman (6 HEN. VI.), Johannes Hull (7 HEN. VI.), Thomas Garard (8 HEN. VI.), Robertus Breerton (8 HEN. VI.), Thomas Magh (10 HEN. VI.), Thomas Marton (11 HEN. VI.), Gilbertus Chapman (12



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HEN. VI.), Willelmus Bridehill (16 HEN. VI.), Ricardus Houton (16 HEN. VI.), Thomas Burgh (16 HEN. VI.), Thomas Arden (19 HEN. VI.), Ricardus Digby (19 HEN. VI.), Johannes Gaunton (19 HEN. VI.), Johannes Lawton (19 HEN. VI.), Radulphus Sauvage (20 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Belasys (20 HEN. VI.), Johannes Walas (21 HEN. VI.), Nicholaus Henrison (21 HEN. VI.), Ricardus Wasdale (21 HEN. VI.), Johannes Clayburke (22 HEN. VI.), Walterus Dover (22 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Cadeby (23 HEN. VI.), Thomas Calferde (24 HEN. VI.), Laurencius Damysell (24 HEN. VI.), Thomas Day (24 HEN. VI.), Johannes Clerke (26 HEN. VI.), Thomas Johnson (27 HEN. VI.), Robertus Toureson (28 HEN. VI.), Ricardus Parr (29 HEN. VI.), Johannes Cananby (32 HEN. VI.), Petrus Butler (33 HEN. VI.), Ricardus del Wra (34 HEN. VI.), Ricardus Nicholson (35 HEN. VI.), Johannes Huton (35 HEN. VI.), Johannes Sherp (38 HEN. VI.), Johannes Lam (1 EDW. IV.), Johannes Kendell (1 EDW. IV.), Johannes Bridnele (2 EDW. IV.), Henricus Meverhouse (4 EDW. IV.), Robertus Levenyng (4 EDW. IV.), Radulphus Harlesay (6 EDW. IV.), Johannes Cundall (7 EDW. IV.), Johannes Wartre (9 EDW. IV.), Johannes Rysom (9 EDW. IV.), Thomas Smyth (9 EDW. IV.), Thomas Day (10 EDW. IV.), Willelmus Maundevell (11 EDW. IV.), Johannes Baker (12 EDW. IV.), Johannes Hoggeson (15 EDW. IV.), Willelmus Asseby (15 EDW. IV.), Willelmus Ramsey (16 EDW. IV.), Johannes Thomas (17 EDW. IV.), Michael Coke (17 EDW. IV.), Ricardus Cooke (19 EDW. IV.), Ricardus Symson (21 EDW. IV.), Willelmus Smyth (22 EDW. IV.), Willelmus Hede (2 RIC. III.), Robertus Ayseday (1 HEN. VII.), Robertus Turnour (1 HEN. VII.), Robertus Balan (2 HEN. VII.), Simon Gare (2 HEN. VII.), Willelmus Baildon (3 HEN. VII.), Thomas Barteley (4 HEN. VII.), Georgius Wright (4 HEN. VII.), Hugo Deconson (6 HEN. VII.), Robertus Alayn (7 HEN. VII.), Johannes Hayton (7 HEN. VII.), Thomas Baxster (9 HEN. VII.), Xpoferus Patrik (10 HEN. VII.), Thomas Matt (11 HEN. VII.), Thomas Sandwath (12 HEN. VII.), Johannes Bullok (14 HEN. VII.)

### **Saucemakers**

Johannes Heselden (19 RIC. II.), Johannes de Newsom (19 RIC. II.), Johannes Haithorn (22 RIC. II.), Hen. de Aldeburgh (2 HEN. IV.), Johannes de Rumby (4 HEN. IV.), Johannes Ychewyk (13 HEN. IV.), Willelmus Rukeby (4 HEN. V.), Rob. Saunderson (3 HEN. VI.), Johannes Dale (4 HEN. VI.), Ricardus Rumby (5 HEN. VI.), Johannes Leyng (8 HEN. VI.), Johannes Burn (10 HEN. VI.), Thomas Judson (17 HEN. VI.), Johannes Walton (18 HEN. VI.), Johannes Kylburn (19 HEN. VI.), Ricardus Broun (19 HEN. VI.), Johannes Tesdale (24 HEN. VI.), Johannes Scalby (34 HEN. VI.)

### **Vintners**

Robertus Hode (14 RIC. II.), Robertus de Bolton (17 RIC. II.), Robertus de la Barer (21 RIC. II.), Ricardus de Newerk (22 RIC. II.), Johannes de Langthorn (2 HEN. IV.), Thomas de Appilby (2 HEN. IV.), Adam de Glenton (2 HEN. IV.), Willelmus Chace (6 HEN. IV.), Johannes Gardener (11 HEN. IV.), Willelmus Pekeryng (12 HEN. IV.), Willelmus Wraweby (12 HEN. IV.), Robertus Fournays (1 HEN. V.), Johannes Crosseby (1 HEN. V.), Johannes Day (1 HEN. V.), Paulus Fresshe (2 HEN. V.), Patricius Walterson (3 HEN. V.), Johannes Cotom (4 HEN. V.), Robertus Middilton (4 HEN. V.), Johanna Caldcotes (4 HEN. V.), Ricardus Coupeland (6 HEN. V.), Robertus Burton (7 HEN. V.), Willelmus Dyghton (7 HEN. V.), Stephanus Bonagard (7 HEN. V.), Ricardus Hathenesse (9 HEN. V.), Robertus Hoton (9 HEN. V.), Johannes Kyrk (3 HEN. VI.), Alanus del Hill (5 HEN. VI.), Bertramus Usayn (7 HEN. VI.), Willelmus

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Smyth (11 HEN. VI.), Johannes Forman (14 HEN. VI.), Johannes Maltster (18 HEN. VI.), Thomas Raulynson (18 HEN. VI.), Johannes Ben (20 HEN. VI.), Johannes de Mounser (23 HEN. VI.), Eliotus Uget (23 HEN. VI.), Galfridus Bolton (24 HEN. VI.), Johannes Merflete (25 HEN. VI.), Ricardus de Were (26 HEN. VI.), Johannes Umby (26 HEN. VI.), Johannes Bradley (28 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Welles (31 HEN. VI.), Henricus Skynner (33 HEN. VI.), Johannes Betson (36 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Ayreton (39 HEN. VI.), Willelmus Wedderby (5 EDW. IV.), Johannes Otlay (6 EDW. IV.), Johannes Pavy (8 EDW. IV.), Nicholaus Bewyk (9 EDW. IV.), Thomas West (11 EDW. IV.), Thomas Abbey (17 EDW. IV.), Thomas Warde (17 EDW. IV.), Thomas Cok (20 EDW. IV.), Johannes Twyvell (2 HEN. VII.), Willelmus Stutfeld (2 HEN. VII.), Thomas Bellamy (2 HEN. VII.), Henricus Bloder (4 HEN. VII.), Robertus Walton (13 HEN. VII.)

**Abbreviations**

|      |                                  |
|------|----------------------------------|
| BIA  | Borthwick Institute for Archives |
| EEBO | Early English Books Online       |
| EETS | Early English Text Society       |
| NBCR | Nottingham Borough Court Rolls   |

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