The Rise of the Middle Class:
Inherited Bynames in 14th Century London

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International Medieval Congress
14 July 2011, Leeds, England
Types of bynames

- Patronymic.
- Locative.
- Occupational.
- Other descriptives.
What can bynames tell us about class?

- Ownership of land.
- Occupation: literal occupationals, working class.
- “Rich enough” — to be taxed, to be taken to court, etc.
The rise of inherited bynames

- Inheritance of bynames began in urban settings, moved to rural.
- Developed first amongst the higher classes, moves to the lower classes.
- Used to indicate inheritance of land; marriage; apprenticeship.
- A few examples of shared bynames in 1066, 1086 Domesday.
- Inheritance or coincidence?
Source material


Focus on 1319 subsidy roll (largest data set), with comparisons to 1292 and 1332.
Locative & toponymic bynames (1)

Focus on bynames indicating location.

- **Locative:** Based on the proper name of a city/street/region/river/country.
- **Toponymic:** Based on a generic descriptive, e.g., ‘field’, ‘cliff’, ‘valley’, etc.
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**Contra**

*In the London Subsidy Rolls for 1292 and 1319, where about half those assessed have local surnames, the preposition is always retained. In 1332 there are 23 without a preposition. [Reaney & Wilson, p. xvii]*
Population of London

- 1292: 12 wards, 810 entries (including ones struck out)
- 1319: 24 wards, 1855 entries (including ones struck out)
- 1332: 25 wards, 1632 entries (including ones struck out)

Population:
11,000 (c. 1100) to 45,000 (c. 1400) [Gray, appendix 1].

London was at least comparable with Brussels or Ghent, which were around the 30,000-40,000 mark in the early fourteenth century [Williams, 315]. By 1300 there were probably between 60,000 and 100,000 inhabitants [Sheppard, 92].

People who owned enough land and had enough money to fall within the bounds of a subsidy taxation: anywhere between 1% and 17%.
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1319: Data by ward

The 1855 people were distributed into the words as follows:

Aldersgate 43 entries
Aldgate 25 entries
Bassishaw 36 entries
Billingsgate 57 entries
Bishopsgate 66 entries
Bread Street 90 entries
Bridge 82 entries
Broad Street 74 entries
Candlewick 68 entries
Castle Baynard 60 entries
Cheap 173 entries
Coleman Street 58 entries
Cordwainer 74 entries
Cornhill 60 entries
Cripplegate 111 entries (within),
80 entries (without)
Dowgate 57 entries
Farringdon Within 173 entries
Farringdon Without 108 entries
Langbourn 75 entries
Lime Street 11 entries
Portsoken 42 entries
Queenhithe 81 entries
Tower 75 entries
Walbrook 76 entries
Locative & toponymic bynames

- Marked toponymic bynames: 67
- Unmarked toponymic bynames: 12
- Marked locative bynames: 480
  - France (18); Cornwall (1); Scotland (2); Italy (1); Wales (1);
- Unmarked locative bynames: 23
  - France (10), Wales (1)

Total: 582 (31.3%)
Comparison with 1292 subsidy roll

- **Bassishaw**: 14 entries (-61%)
- **Billingsgate**: 65 entries (+14%)
- **Bishopsgate**: 19 entries (within), 18 entries (without) (-44%)
- **Bridge**: 100 entries (+18%)
- **Broad Street**: 65 entries (-12%)
- **Cordwainer**: 70 entries (-5%)
- **Cripplegate**: 85 entries (within), 45 (without) (-32%)
- **Dowgate**: 85 entries (+49%)
- **Portsooken**: 23 entries (-45%)
- **Queenhithe**: 68 entries (-16%)
- **Vintry**: 62 entries (*no entries in 1319*)
- **Walbrook**: 90 entries (+18%)
Locative & toponymic bynames in the 1292 subsidy roll

Locative & toponymic bynames found in 1292 but not 1319:

- Marked toponymic bynames: 18
- Unmarked toponymic bynames: 1
- Marked locative bynames: 105
  - France (9), Wales (1)
- Unmarked locative bynames: 16
  - France (9), Flanders (1), Italy (1), Hungary (1)

Total: 140.
Comparison with 1332 subsidy roll

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>1332 Entries</th>
<th>1319 Entries</th>
<th>1332-1319 Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aldersgate</td>
<td>43 entries</td>
<td>43 entries</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aldgate</td>
<td>21 entries</td>
<td>21 entries</td>
<td>-16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bassishaw</td>
<td>18 entries</td>
<td>18 entries</td>
<td>-50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billingsgate</td>
<td>49 entries</td>
<td>49 entries</td>
<td>-14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishopsgate</td>
<td>47 entries</td>
<td>47 entries</td>
<td>-29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bread Street</td>
<td>78 entries</td>
<td>78 entries</td>
<td>-13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridge</td>
<td>71 entries</td>
<td>71 entries</td>
<td>-13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broad Street</td>
<td>74 entries</td>
<td>74 entries</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candlewick</td>
<td>45 entries</td>
<td>45 entries</td>
<td>-34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castle Baynard</td>
<td>46 entries</td>
<td>46 entries</td>
<td>-23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheap</td>
<td>127 entries</td>
<td>127 entries</td>
<td>-27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coleman Street</td>
<td>58 entries</td>
<td>58 entries</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cordwainer</td>
<td>73 entries</td>
<td>73 entries</td>
<td>-1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornhill</td>
<td>42 entries</td>
<td>42 entries</td>
<td>-30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cripplegate</td>
<td>75 entries</td>
<td>75 entries</td>
<td>-32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dowgate</td>
<td>85 entries</td>
<td>85 entries</td>
<td>+49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farringdon Within</td>
<td>130 entries</td>
<td>130 entries</td>
<td>-25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farringdon Without</td>
<td>97 entries</td>
<td>97 entries</td>
<td>-10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langbourn</td>
<td>77 entries</td>
<td>77 entries</td>
<td>+3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lime Street</td>
<td>18 entries</td>
<td>18 entries</td>
<td>+36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portsoken</td>
<td>23 entries</td>
<td>23 entries</td>
<td>-45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queenhithe</td>
<td>74 entries</td>
<td>74 entries</td>
<td>-9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower</td>
<td>71 entries</td>
<td>71 entries</td>
<td>-5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vintry</td>
<td>40 entries</td>
<td>40 entries</td>
<td>no entries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walbrook</td>
<td>107 entries</td>
<td>107 entries</td>
<td>+41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Locative & toponymic bynames in the 1332 subsidy

Locative & toponymic bynames found in 1332 but not 1319:

- Marked toponymic bynames: 31
- Unmarked toponymic bynames: 4
- Marked locative bynames: 240
  - France (9), Flanders (2), Scotland (1), Wales (1)
- Unmarked locative bynames: 12
  - France (6)

Total: 287
Summary

Bynames based on non-English (mostly French) places.

- 1292: 9.5% (marked), 75% (unmarked).
- 1319: 4.8% (marked), 47.8% (unmarked).
- 1332: 5.4% (marked), 50% (unmarked).

The absence of the preposition in early forms of local surnames . . . has been regarded as a sign that the surname had become hereditary. Such a supposition cannot be upheld. [Reaney & Wilson, p. xvii]
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Bibliography


