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Loose, idle and disorderly: vagrant removal in late eighteenth-century Middlesex

On 22 December 1785, nineteen-year-old Rebecca Gough and her friend Mary Brown were arrested in London by John Atkinson, the beadle of St Martin-in-the-Fields, ‘wandering abroad in a loose and idle ... manner’. Rebecca was initially taken to St Martin’s workhouse, where she spent a couple of days in the ‘Shed’ – the casual women’s ward – before being examined by justice Thomas Bullard some time on Christmas Eve. Bullard determined that Rebecca fell within the ill-defined boundaries of the 1744 Vagrancy Act and should be punished and removed to her parish of settlement. From the workhouse she was sent to Tothill Fields house of correction in Westminster, probably for two to three days’ hard labour, before being passed into the hands of Henry Adams, the vagrant contractor for Middlesex.¹ Riding in the back of Adams’s covered cart, she was then delivered directly from the house of correction to the vagrant contractor

*This article forms one of the outcomes of a larger collaborative project between the three authors, *Vagrant Lives: An Analysis of Late Eighteenth Century London’s Vagrant Poor*. For this article, Hitchcock was primarily responsible for drafting the text and contextualizing the discussion; Crymble analysed and regularized the data, including visualization and quantitative analysis; and Falcini cleaned the underlying dataset, generated the geo-referencing and wrote and researched elements reflecting the workings of the Middlesex branch.

¹For Rebecca Gough see *London Lives, 1690–1800*, St Martin’s Workhouse Registers: Workhouse Admissions and Discharge Registers, 22 December 1785–24 December 1785 (smdswhr_604_60454), www.londonlives.org, version 1.1, 28 April 2013; London Metropolitan Archives (hereafter

LMA); *LL*, St Martin’s Settlement Exams: St Martin in the Fields Pauper Examinations, 1725–1793, 24 December 1785 (smdsset_7_795): LMA; *LL*, Middlesex Sessions: Sessions Papers – Justices’ Working Documents, January 1786 (LMSMPS508060091): LMA. Some counties, such as Berkshire, simply issued ‘walking passes’, directing vagrants along a standard route. See Mark Neuman, *The Speenhamland County: Poverty and the Poor Laws in Berkshire, 1782–1834* (Ann Arbor, 1982), 112–13. On the basis of a detailed survey of seven counties, Audrey Eccles has concluded that most used a system of contractors by the second half of the eighteenth century. Audrey Eccles, ‘The eighteenth-century vagrant contractor’, *Local Population Studies*, 85 (2010), 46–63. See also Eccles, *Vagrancy in Law and Practice under the Old Poor Law* (Farnham, 2012).

46 for Buckinghamshire at his house at Denham, just on the far side of the Middlesex/
47 Buckinghamshire border, prior to being sent on to Chalfont St Giles, Rebecca's parish of
48 settlement.

49 Rebecca's name, the date of her arrest and punishment, the cost of her care, details of
50 her parish of settlement and the first leg of her journey home were all recorded in Henry
51 Adams's clear hand, as part of his regular bill to the Middlesex bench. In total, details of
52 14,789 vagrant removals administered by Adams between 1776 and 1786 have survived.²
53 This article uses Henry Adams's bills to explore the character of the system of removal
54 and punishment as it was experienced by vagrants. First, the characteristics of vagrants
55 removed from Middlesex, and from the City of London through Middlesex, are used to
56 evidence how JPs and the Lord Mayor selectively implemented the system in response to
57 local conditions and challenges. And second, by tracing a subset of vagrants from the
58 criminal justice system into the poor law records of St Martin-in-the-Fields, it suggests
59 that the two systems – of vagrancy and poor relief – should be understood as part of a
60 single complex landscape of relief and authority.

61 In a period characterized by discretionary justice, the ill-defined 'crime' of vagrancy
62 gave almost unlimited scope to justices of the peace to treat anyone who could not give a
63 'good account of themselves' as criminals. Following Acts of Parliament in 1700, 1714
64 and 1744, the administration of vagrant removal was first vested in the county, and then
65 defined against an ever shaggier list of the undesirable, including:

66 Patent gatherers

67 Collectors for prisons, gaols or hospitals

68 Fencers and bearwards

69 Common players of interludes

70 All minstrels, jugglers

71 All persons pretending to be Gypsies, or wandering in the habit or form of
72 Egyptians...³

73
74
75
76 From 1744 a two-shilling reward was available to any constable willing to arrest a
77 vagrant, whose punishment could include hard labour and a public whipping, followed
78 by removal to their parish of settlement at county expense. Rewards of five and ten
79 shillings were available for the apprehension of repeat offenders and 'incorrigible rogues',
80

81
82 ²The geo-referenced contents of all Adams's
83 lists between these dates can be downloaded at:
84 ??????. All subsequent figures and tables are
85 based on this dataset. Only 193 repeat removals
86 can be securely identified in these lists, in
87 addition to a further 111 who may have been
88 subject to multiple removals. This represents a
89 recidivism rate of between 1 and 2 per cent
90 across all 14,789 entries.

³*A Bill Intituled, An Act to amend and make more
effectual the Laws relating to Rogues, Vagabonds,*

*and other idle and disorderly Persons and to Houses
of Correction* (1744), 17 George II. c.5, pp. 2–3.
This same list was then reproduced in every
edition of the justicing manuals, found in every
study of the justice of the peace up to and
beyond the end of the century. See, for
example, Richard Burn, *The Justice of the
Peace and Parish Officer*, 18th edn (London,
1797), vol. 4, 410–11.

[A02]

[A01]

91 who could be sentenced to up to seven years' transportation.⁴ Although implementation
 92 was patchy, by the early 1770s Middlesex was spending approximately £150 per annum
 93 catching vagrants, £250 on 'passing' them, and a further £600 to £800 per annum on
 94 punishing and imprisoning them.⁵ Rebecca Gough was just one of more than 1100
 95 removed in 1785.

96 Our understanding of this system is fragmentary, and divided between discrete
 97 literatures on crime, migration and poor relief. In the work of Robert Shoemaker and
 98 Faramerz Dabhoiwala, for Middlesex, but also John Beattie, Peter King and Joanna Innes,
 99 the ability to arrest beggars and prostitutes and imprison them in a house of correction
 100 forms an important outpost of a JP-led system of criminal justice.⁶ In this instance,
 101 vagrancy is used as part of a wider story about the evolution of the local state. But this
 102 literature is largely uninterested in what happens to vagrants once they are loaded into
 103 Adams's cart. What happened to them after they had been removed and arrived home is
 104 best understood through the history of poor relief. In recent years, this field has become
 105 increasingly concerned with 'pauper agency' and narrative, and this article extends that
 106 interest from parish pensioners to the more mobile and difficult individuals who tended
 107 to find themselves under arrest and forcibly removed.⁷ This article directly focuses on
 108 vagrancy removal in order to rearticulate the relationship between the local state in its
 109 role as a regulatory agency (arrest and punishment), and pauper tactics in navigating
 110 between the systems of criminal justice and poor relief.⁸

111 THE SYSTEM

114 Henry Adams, and his father James Sturges Adams before him, were responsible for
 115 managing the removal of vagrants on behalf of the county.⁹ Each week, Adams's cart
 116 went from lock-up to prison, to house of correction, to either his own 'House' at
 117

118
 119 ⁴In total, twenty-six Acts relating to vagrancy were passed between 1700 and 1824, but the
 120 underlying legislative framework remained remarkably consistent. See Eccles, *Vagrancy in*
 121 *Law and Practice*, *op. cit.*

122
 123 ⁵Parliamentary papers, 'Report from the
 124 Committee Appointed to Make Enquiries
 125 Relating to the Employment, Relief, and
 126 Maintenance of the Poor; The Apprehending
 127 and Passing of Vagrants; Regulating Houses of
 128 Correction' (1776).

129
 130 ⁶Robert B. Shoemaker, *Prosecution and*
 131 *Punishment: Petty Crime and the Law in London*
 132 *and Rural Middlesex, c. 1660–1725* (Cambridge,
 133 1991) and *The London Mob: Violence and*
 134 *Disorder in Eighteenth-century England* (London,
 135 2004); Faramerz Dabhoiwala, 'Summary
 justice in early modern London', *English*
Historical Review, CXXI, 492 (6 January 2006),
 796–822 and *Prostitution and Police in London,*
c. 1660–c. 1760 (Oxford, 1995); J. M. Beattie,

Policing and Punishment in London, 1660–1750: Urban Crime and the Limits of Terror (Oxford, 2001).

136
 137 ⁷Thomas Sokoll (ed.), *Essex Pauper Letters, 1731–1837* (Oxford, 2001); Steven King and Alannah Tomkins (eds), *The Poor in England, 1700–1850: An Economy of Makeshifts* (Manchester, 2003); Alys Levene (general ed.), *Narratives of the Poor in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, vol. 2: *Voices from the Street* (London, 2006); Tim Hitchcock, Peter King and Pamela Sharpe (eds), *Chronicling Poverty: The Voices and Strategies of the English Poor, 1640–1840* (London, 1997).

138
 139 ⁸For 'tactics' see Michel de Certeau, *The Practise of Everyday Life* (Berkeley, 1988).

140
 141 ⁹Audrey Eccles, 'The Adams father and son, vagrant contractors to Middlesex, 1757–94', *Transactions of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society*, 57 (2006), 83–91.

136 Islington, or directly to pre-determined passing sites on the county boundaries. Rebecca
 137 was one of three hundred vagrants transported by Adams between 8 December 1785 and
 138 5 January 1786; 105 were taken directly to the county border and passed into the hands of
 139 Adams's equivalent figure in the adjoining county, and a further 195 were housed for
 140 between one and three nights in one of Adams's own vagrant stations at a cost of 3d per
 141 night, before they too were passed on to the next county.¹⁰ Adams was bound by the
 142 terms of the original contract agreed between the Middlesex bench and his father, in
 143 which he was charged to secure horses and a covered cart

144 and clear the Bridewells of all such Vagabonds whose Passes are there lodged, as
 145 well as those other Vagrants whose Destination is through this County ...
 146 twice every Week; that is to say, those whose Destination is to the North, on
 147 one Day every Week; and those to the South and West, on some other Day
 148 every Week.¹¹
 149

150 To deliver on this obligation, Adams needed a substantial infrastructure of his own
 151 which had at its heart Adams's depot, termed in the lists as the 'House', at Islington, a mile
 152 or so north of Clerkenwell and the built-up area of Greater London. In 1791 a committee
 153 of inspection described the accommodation as:

154 a small Room of about 12 Feet by 9, about 4 feet underground, and part of [a]
 155 Loft over his Stable at the bottom of a Yard about 50 Yards from his House. ...
 156 There is a Platform raised a few Inches from the Ground on one side of the
 157 Room covered with Straw which will with great difficulty contain 8 or 9
 158 Persons ... Men and their Wives ... lay together and that other Females lay
 159 there with them.¹²
 160

161 In addition, Adams also maintained three further holding locations, and collected
 162 vagrants from an additional four depots maintained by the adjoining counties. Adams's
 163 Middlesex depots were at Enfield to the north-east, at South Mimms to the north, on the
 164 border of Hertfordshire, and at Staines to the south-west on the Berkshire border (see
 165 [Figure 1](#)). Vagrants were delivered by the contractor for the surrounding counties, or by
 166 the constables, and Adams collected them on his rounds for delivery either to their
 167 settlement in Middlesex, or onwards to the next jurisdiction. Once in his charge, Adams
 168 took them to the City holding stations, or directly to an adjoining county – Surrey,
 169 Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire and Essex. He then delivered the vagrants
 170 either from the City, having been held overnight at the 'House', or from one of the
 171 Middlesex houses of correction, to his counterparts' depots at Stratford in Essex,
 172 Cheshunt or Ridge in Hertfordshire, Denham or Colnbrook in Buckinghamshire, or
 173
 174

175 ¹⁰These figures were calculated by comparing
 176 Adams's bill for maintaining vagrants against
 177 his list of vagrants removed. See *LL*, Middlesex
 178 Sessions: Sessions Papers – Justices' Working
 179 Documents, January 1786 (LMSMPS50806
 180 0088) and (LMSMPS508060097): LMA.

¹¹*LL*, Middlesex Sessions: Sessions Papers –
 Justices' Working Documents, July 1757
 (LMSMPS504630012): LMA.

¹²*LL*, Middlesex Sessions: General Orders of
 the Court, 28 October 1789–5 December 1795
 (LMSMGO55610GO556100108) and
 (LMSMGO55610GO556100109): LMA.

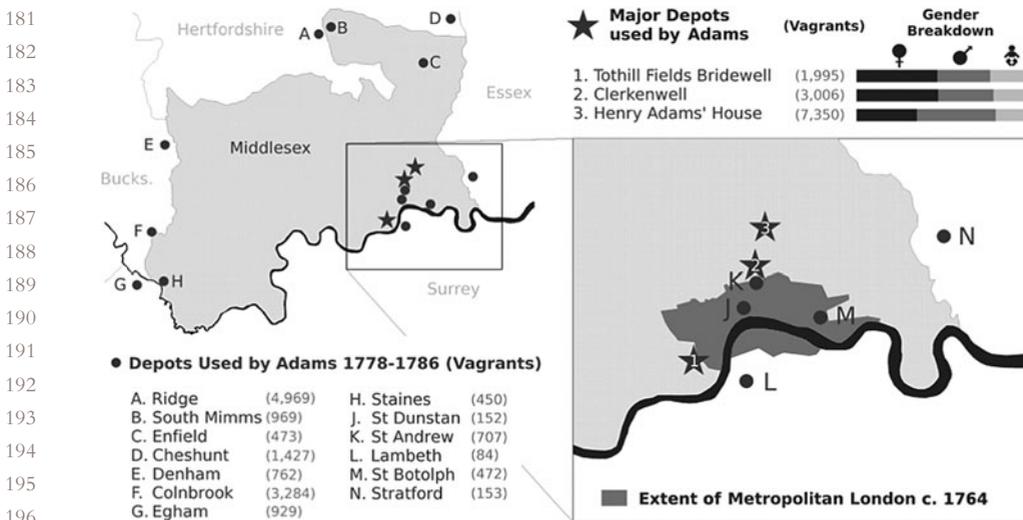


Figure 1. Map of Middlesex county and depots used by Henry Adams to remove vagrants to other counties and bring them into Middlesex from elsewhere.

Egham in Surrey and Lambeth across the river to the south.¹³ Additionally, there were at least three depots in the City, on its western border at St Andrew Holborn and St Dunstan in the West, and to the east at St Botolph Aldgate, where Adams dropped vagrants who were normally heading across the river to the south.¹⁴

Like Adams's 'House' at Islington, these vagrant depots provided squalid and insecure accommodation and there was only limited pretence of securing them overnight. Vagrants were probably 'locked in' for the evening but not otherwise confined.¹⁵ The figure of 404 vagrants (2.7 per cent) recorded as having 'Ran' from one of the depots, or the cart itself, suggests both that escape was relatively easy and that most vagrants were content to stay in custody – at least until they were delivered to the edge of the county and disappear from our records.¹⁶ Each depot sat on one of the major routes into and out

¹³Colnbrook has since been transferred from Buckinghamshire to Berkshire; and in the eighteenth century Egham straddled the border between Surrey and Berkshire.

¹⁴The precise organization of City vagrant removal remains opaque. The compters (Wood Street, Ludgate and Poultry) all held vagrants, and charged the City accounts for their upkeep. Likewise, Bridewell had dedicated 'pass' rooms for vagrants, and also punished beggars and prostitutes in the City. But there is little overlap between vagrants punished in Bridewell and those removed by Adams; and it is not clear who was responsible for accepting vagrants delivered to the City depots, and where precisely they were then taken.

¹⁵Eccles, *Vagrancy in Law*, *op. cit.*, 43.

¹⁶Some escapes were more problematic than others. In September 1786 Bryan Cassidy, a repeat offender legally defined as a 'rogue', ran off from the vagrant cart at Barnet, while the driver was otherwise engaged in a ten-minute dispute with a local parish officer. This led to an enquiry by the bench, but between nine and ten other vagrants were in the cart at the time, on their way to South Mimms, and none of them took the opportunity to run. *LL*, Middlesex Sessions: Sessions Papers – Justices' Working Documents, December 1786 (LMSMPS50816PS50 8160004): LMA.

226 of London, and paired depots, in particular at South Mimms and Ridge to the north, and
 227 Staines and Egham to the west, provided an infrastructure for the exchange with a
 228 modicum of humanity that facilitated pauper travel and migration. Not all counties
 229 maintained a comprehensive system of contracted removal, with its 'covered cart' and
 230 system of depots. Berkshire, for example, did not employ a vagrant contractor, and from
 231 Egham, except for the ill and disabled, most vagrants were expected to make their own
 232 way homewards with a 'walking pass'.¹⁷

233 As part of this same contract, Adams was also obliged to deliver a list of the names of
 234 every vagabond in his charge on the County Day of every Middlesex Session.¹⁸ For
 235 almost four decades, between July 1756 and January 1795, first James Sturges Adams and
 236 then, from April 1774, his son, Henry, submitted this list. These documents survive in a
 237 relatively coherent series, including forty-two out of a possible sixty-five items submitted
 238 in the nine years between January 1778 and April 1786. A measure of the relative
 239 completeness of this series can be found in a report to the Middlesex bench submitted by
 240 Adams in the autumn of 1785. In this he claimed to have processed 11,183 vagrants in the
 241 preceding three years, while the surviving lists for the same period contain details of
 242 8365.¹⁹ Each list is also associated with a bill for the costs incurred. For the vagrants
 243 removed with Rebecca Gough in the winter of 1785/6, for instance, Adams charged
 244 expenses to a total of £12 1s 3d, including ten shillings for coals, ten more for straw, and
 245 five shillings for 'cleaning and laying out the bodies of Robert Kelvington and Robert
 246 Johnson'. There were costs for medical care, and for 'Blank Certificates and filling up', a
 247 total of 134, at 2d per form (£1 2s 4d).²⁰ The lists submitted by Henry Adams are unique,
 248 but they are not perfect. As well as gaps reflecting the happenstance of historical survival,
 249 they also evidence a distinct subset of all vagrants arrested and removed in the county or
 250 passed through it.²¹ In Middlesex, vagrants with a nearby settlement might be returned
 251 directly to their parish, and as a result would not appear on Adams's lists, while in the
 252 City no commercial contractor was involved, and local vagrants were probably escorted
 253 to their parish of settlement by the arresting constable or beadle, following punishment in
 254 Bridewell or the City compters.²² Of the 5001 vagrants processed through the Middlesex
 255 houses of correction at Clerkenwell and Tothill Fields, only 668 are listed as having a
 256

257 ¹⁷See Neuman, *Spenshamland County*, *op. cit.*,
 258 11–13. Justices could also specify carriage,
 259 either in a cart or on horseback, if the vagrant's
 260 circumstances demanded it.

261 ¹⁸LL, Middlesex Sessions: Sessions Papers –
 262 Justices' Working Documents, April 1786
 263 (LMSMPS508090272): LMA.

264 ¹⁹In terms of dates covered, this same period
 265 saw a survival rate of only 66.6 per cent,
 266 compared with the 75 per cent of listed
 267 vagrants included. This reflects the extent to
 268 which longer lists involving more costs were
 269 disproportionately likely to have survived. For
 270 Adams's report see LL, Middlesex Sessions:
 Sessions Papers, April 1786
 (LMSMPS508090268): LMA.

²⁰*ibid.*, January 1786 (LMSMPS508060102):
 LMA.

²¹The records that survive are spread unequally
 across the year and across the decade and, for
 example, provide much more consistent detail
 of removals in October than in May or August.

²²There is no full study of vagrant removal
 from the City of London or of policing and
 punishment, but see Andrew Harris, *Policing the
 City: Crime and Legal Authority in London,
 1780–1840* (Columbus, 2004), chaps 1 and 2;
 and Drew D. Gray, *Crime, Prosecution and
 Social Relations: The Summary Courts of the City
 of London in the Late Eighteenth Century*
 (Basingstoke, 2009), 148–56. See also
 Dabhoiwala, 'Summary justice', *op. cit.*, 796–
 822.

271 settlement in Middlesex, and of these, the majority were from the rural parishes outside
 272 the metropolis. Similarly, vagrants removed from Westminster or the East End towards
 273 East Anglia or the counties to the south and east of London could be passed directly from
 274 the houses of correction to either the City of London and from there to Surrey or Kent,
 275 or else eastward to Essex. Some vagrants appear on Adams's lists as passed on to the City's
 276 vagrant depots in St Andrew Holborn, St Dunstan in the West and St Botolph Aldgate,
 277 but not enough to suggest that this route was the one taken by most vagrants passed
 278 through the City of London. As a result, vagrants passed to the south and east and East
 279 Anglia were under-represented in the lists. At the same time, and for the same reason, the
 280 lists tend consistently to record the vagrants from the south-west and Ireland. Both main
 281 routes from London to Ireland, for instance, required removal to the north and west, and
 282 hence removal through the hands of Henry Adams. Nevertheless, and with these caveats,
 283 the lists include the vast majority of vagrants who passed through the greater
 284 metropolitan area, including those either arrested to the south or east of London and
 285 passed north or west, and those arrested to the north and west, and passed to the south and
 286 east.²³ On average, over the course of the decade covered by the lists, Adams processed
 287 just under eight vagrants per day.²⁴

MANAGING DISORDERLY COMMUNITIES

290
 291 Separating out vagrants committed by specific JPs, and processed through individual
 292 houses of correction, or passed through the City and accommodated in Adams's 'House'
 293 allows us to identify distinctive patterns of social disorder and policing: how the
 294 governors of the wider metropolis used the vagrancy removal system either to police
 295 gendered disorder, or to manage migration.

296 The house of correction at Clerkenwell sat on the northern edge of urban Middlesex,
 297 roughly thirty minutes' walk north of St Paul's Cathedral. It was part of a group of
 298 judicial institutions, which included the 'New Prison' next door, and the Middlesex
 299 Sessions House, rebuilt and reopened in July 1782, a few hundred yards south on
 300 Clerkenwell Green.²⁵ Clerkenwell is listed as the point of origin for 3006 vagrants who
 301 were primarily committed for offences in the heavily populated and disorderly parishes

303 ²³The lists record a slightly different population
 304 of vagrants from that reflected in the removal
 305 orders and surviving vagrancy examinations of
 306 the sort used by Nicholas Rogers for his 1991
 307 study. While surviving removal orders and
 308 examinations were likely to privilege local
 309 vagrants, and to include those returned directly
 310 to their parish of settlement following arrest or
 311 punishment, Adams's lists more fully
 312 documented long-distance vagrancy. See
 313 N. Rogers, 'Policing the poor in eighteenth-
 314 century London: the vagrancy laws and their
 315 administration', *Histoire Sociale/Social History*,
 xxiv, 47 (May 1991), 127–47.

²⁴The lists were submitted eight times a year,
 but each list covered a slightly different period

and number of days. The figure given here is
 calculated according to the total number of
 days covered by all surviving lists. By
 comparison, in 1784 the large urban parish
 of St Martin-in-the-Fields (population
 approximately 25,000) passed or removed just
 38 individuals as poor law paupers during the
 course of the year. See *LL*, St Martin's
 Workhouse Registers: Workhouse
 Admissions and Discharge Registers, 1
 January 1784–31 December 1784
 (smdswhr_730): WAC.

²⁵See Tim Hitchcock, *Down and Out in
 Eighteenth-Century London*, 2nd edn (London,
 2007), 151–80.

316 that circled the old City. Vagrants arrested in St Giles-in-the-Fields, St Andrew Holborn
 317 and St Botolph Aldgate were likely to find themselves here. In total, 194 different JPs
 318 committed vagrants to Clerkenwell, but most vagrants who spent time there had passed
 319 through the courts of only a small handful of magistrates justices.

320 The JP David Walker, whose house in Hyde Street was located just on the limits of
 321 respectability in St George Bloomsbury, was responsible for 864 vagrant committals –
 322 nearly 6 per cent of all vagrants in this study.²⁶ To the north of his house were the new
 323 and expanding terraces of the Southampton estate, with a large, ever-changing female
 324 servant population, and to the south the poor neighbourhoods of St Giles and St Andrew
 325 Holborn. The parishes of St Giles and St George were united for both poor law and night
 326 watch purposes and it is here that Walker found a great deal of his work, regulating those
 327 individuals brought in by the watch or admitted to the workhouse. Philip Dyot, one of
 328 the longest serving justices in Middlesex, and working from Dyot Street at the heart of
 329 the poorest corner of St Giles-in-the-Fields, was responsible for 251 vagrant committals.²⁷
 330 Seven other magistrates each sent in over 100 vagrants. Middlesex justices were
 331 notoriously territorial and keen to protect their own judicial business. It was considered
 332 ‘unacceptable’ to intervene in another magistrate’s business and on several occasions this
 333 so-called ‘interference’ merited intervention by the Middlesex bench.²⁸ Hence, the
 334 gender balance of vagrants a justice committed to an institution was likely to reflect the
 335 economy and gender make-up of the neighbourhood he served.

336 Tothill Fields Bridewell at the southern edge of Westminster was the point of origin
 337 for a smaller number of vagrants (1995, or 13.5 per cent of the total). The top seven
 338 magistrates committing vagrants to Tothill Fields are responsible for 40 per cent of all
 339 commitments to the prison. Edward Bindloss, for example, committed all of the 71
 340 vagrants processed at his house in Smith Street, in St Margaret Westminster a few
 341 hundred yards away, to Tothill Fields. These were vagrants committed by a gradually
 342 narrowing subset of urban magistrates.²⁹

343 Most of the more active magistrates sent the majority of the vagrants they processed to
 344 one or the other of the houses of correction. David Walker, working from St-Giles-in-
 345 the-Fields and St Andrew Holborn in the north-west of urban Middlesex committed 853
 346 people to Clerkenwell. Among them were 195 men and 521 women (23 per cent and 61
 347 per cent respectively). In contrast, John Staples who worked from Whitechapel to the east
 348
 349

350 ²⁶For a list of Middlesex justices organized by
 351 precinct, see *LL, Middlesex Sessions: Sessions
 352 Papers – Justices’ Working Documents, June
 353 1780 (LMSMPS 507260085): LMA*. For David
 354 Walker’s Hyde Street residence see *LL,
 355 Middlesex Sessions: Sessions Papers – Justices’
 356 Working Documents, June 1781
 357 (LMSMPS507410004): LMA*.

358 ²⁷*General Evening Post* (London), 17–20
 359 November 1792, issue 9229. Dyot Street was
 360 named after Philip Dyot’s grandfather, who
 developed the area in the late seventeenth
 century.

²⁸For the regulation of Middlesex magistrates
 see Norma Landau, ‘The trading justice’s trade’
 in Landau (ed.), *Law, Crime and English Society*
 (Cambridge, 2002), 46–70.

²⁹It is worth noting that the magistrates’ court
 at Bow Street was little involved in the system
 of removal, with the three stipendiary
 magistrates responsible during the period
 covered by Adams’s lists (John Fielding,
 Sampson Wright and William Addington)
 being responsible for only 92 removals – 7, 59
 and 26 respectively.

Table 1. *Vagrants passed from Clerkenwell and Tothill Fields houses of correction, 1777–86.*

Year	Male	Female	Child	% Male	% Female	% Child	Total
1777	18	45	15	23.1	57.7	19.2	78
1778	109	355	181	16.9	55.0	28.1	645
1779	15	20	5	37.5	50.0	12.5	40
1780	78	157	64	26.1	52.5	21.4	299
1781	125	302	110	23.3	56.2	20.5	537
1782	143	279	112	26.8	52.2	21.0	534
1783	195	269	145	32.0	44.2	23.8	609
1784	314	367	144	38.1	44.5	17.4	825
1785	405	562	165	35.8	49.6	14.6	1132
1786	111	140	40	38.1	48.1	13.8	291
Total	1513	2496	981	30.3	50.0	19.7	4990

of the City until spring 1786 committed 100 men and 60 women (52 per cent and 31 per cent respectively).

Collectively, vagrants removed from the houses of correction at Clerkenwell and Tothill Fields conform closely to the broad patterns identified by Nicholas Rogers on the basis of a sample of vagrancy examinations for Middlesex, and that experienced by Jacob Ilive in 1757.³⁰ Both houses of correction were dominated by women; of the 5001 vagrants in these institutions, just over half were women and 30 per cent were men. An additional 20 per cent were children, the vast majority of whom were accompanying their mother. The dominance of women in this vagrant population remains consistent throughout the decade (see Table 1).³¹

A further distinctive characteristic of the vagrant population removed from the houses of correction is the relatively small number of family groups involved. The majority of the 5001 house of correction vagrants were travelling alone. In total, 64.6 per cent (3230) listed were solo men and women. A relatively small number were designated as groups, or families, within which women with dependants predominate, appearing 448 times. Family units including a man as a group leader, wife and children appear 98 times. Men with their wives and no children are uncommon, appearing only 54 times. Likewise, men with children but no wife are vanishingly rare, with only 38 cases. Just over 70 per cent of all groups originating in the houses of correction were led by women.

The predominance of women and the pattern of short-distance migration that characterizes their experience, discussed below, suggest that many were drawn by London's relatively high wages in domestic service and casual employment; and in turn reflects the insecurity experienced by women in domestic service. For the most part, they were arrested on the streets of urban Middlesex and Westminster, then brought before a magistrate who committed them and directed their subsequent removal – usually preceded by two or three days of hard labour, and possibly a private whipping

³⁰Rogers, 'Policing the poor', *op. cit.*, 127–47.

³¹Eleven vagrants of indeterminate gender who passed through the houses of correction are not included in these figures.

406 in prison.³² These were vagrants of the sort Jacob Ilive describes as imprisoned at the
407 House of Correction at Clerkenwell a couple of decades earlier:

408 a great number of dirty young wenches, intermixed with some men; . . . sitting
409 on the ground against a wall, sunning and lousing themselves; others lying
410 round asleep; some sleeping or lying with their faces in men's laps, and some
411 men doing the same by the women. I found on enquiry that these wenches,
412 most of them were sent hither by justices as loose and disorderly persons.³³
413

414 ★

415 Vagrants passed through Adams's 'House' were of a rather different stamp. Almost half
416 of all vagrants included in Adams's lists passed through this depot – 7350 individuals. The
417 vast majority either came through the City on their way north and west with a pass issued
418 by the Lord Mayor, or more uncommonly via the City Bridewell. In 1791 the committee
419 of the Middlesex bench interviewed five vagrants being held at Islington:

420 being asked of the manner of their having obtained Passes Three of them the
421 only ones from the City (who appeared in good health) declared respective
422 homes [and] were advised to go to the Lord Mayor for Passes which they did
423 and had them of course.³⁴
424

425 The extent to which the 'House' provided travelling accommodation for those
426 moving through the City is reflected in the role of the Lord Mayor sitting as a magistrate.
427 Richard Clark, for instance, was Lord Mayor from October 1784 to October of the
428 following year. In this period, Adams's lists record him as having signed passes for 976
429 vagrants, of which all but ten were recorded as passing through his 'House'. During his
430 mayoralty Clark claimed to spend between three and four hours every day working at
431 'petty sessions' business, including issuing passes to vagrants.³⁵ Of the 1492 people who
432 stayed at Adams's 'House' in this period, 65 per cent did so on the basis of a pass signed by
433 the Lord Mayor sitting in regular session as a magistrate at London's Mansion House. The
434 vast majority of the remainder were there on a pass signed by active justices involved in
435 City government and the passes were probably issued at the Guildhall Justice Room. The
436 courts at both the Mansion House and the Guildhall Justice Room sat six days a week,
437 ensuring that a pass could be obtained any day but Sunday.
438

439
440 ³²According to statute, they should have been
441 committed to the house of correction for a
442 week's hard labour and a whipping. But a
443 typical accommodation bill for vagrants at the
444 house of correction at Clerkenwell for autumn
445 1781 lists 109 vagrants (106 of whom were
446 passed directly on to Henry Adams and appear
447 in his lists). Of these, 7 were passed on the same
448 day they were committed, 9 on the next day,
449 56 after two days and 37 after three days.
450 No one was held for as long as a week. *LL*,
Middlesex Sessions: Sessions Papers – Justices'
Working Documents, October 1781 (LMSM
PS50745PS507450079): LMA.

³³[J. Ilive], *Reasons offered for the Reformation of the House of Correction in Clerkenwell* (London, 1757), 10.

³⁴*LL*, Middlesex Sessions: General Orders of the Court, 28 October 1789–5 December 1795 (LMSMGO55610GO556100109): LMA.

³⁵Harris, *Policing the City*, *op. cit.*, 28; citing LMA, MS 3385, 'Lord Mayor Clark's Diary, &c. 1784–1785'. Clark's diary also suggests he was very conscientious in ensuring that another justice was on hand to conduct petty sessions business when he could not attend.

451 By the 1780s the system of policing and punishing vagrants in the City was changing
 452 and growing increasingly complex. Bridewell, Wood Street Compter, Poultry Compter
 453 and Ludgate Prison all accommodated and, at times, punished vagrants. In the spring of
 454 1781 the keeper of Wood Street Compter, for instance, submitted a bill for supporting
 455 vagrants in his care. In 1780 he claimed recompense for 165 vagrants, mainly boys and
 456 women.³⁶ At Bridewell, the City's largest house of correction, almost 10,000 men and
 457 women were committed during the period covered by Adams's lists, most for idle and
 458 disorderly behaviour and other forms of 'vagrancy',³⁷ and yet none of the people listed
 459 by Kirby and only a handful of those punished in Bridewell can be identified as having
 460 subsequently been removed as vagrants via the Middlesex vagrant contractor.

461 The 1780s, in particular, witnessed a crisis in punishment in the City, driven in part by
 462 the destruction of much of the infrastructure of incarceration during the Gordon Riots.
 463 There was also a substantial transition in the policy of issuing passes to vagrants that came
 464 into effect in early 1783. Though no explicit policy statement survives, this transition led
 465 to an ongoing dispute between the City and Middlesex, with Henry Adams in the centre.
 466 The character and chronology of this transition has been detailed elsewhere, but for the
 467 purpose of this discussion the important observation is that the vast majority of City
 468 vagrants removed from London through Henry Adams's 'House' at Islington did so on
 469 the basis of a pass from the Lord Mayor, or aldermen sitting in petty sessions at the
 470 Mansion House and Guildhall, and that such passes were largely available on demand.³⁸
 471 From 1783, the outcome was to turn the vagrancy removal system into an accessible way
 472 of both legitimating long-distance migration, and gaining subsidized accommodation
 473 and transport along the way.

474 The impact of the City's change in policy can be seen in the transition in the gender
 475 make-up of City vagrants removed through the 'House' before and after the beginning of
 476 1783. The list for the period 20 February to 24 April 1783 suggests that 146 vagrants
 477 whose gender can be identified were passed from the City. Among them men
 478 substantially outnumbered women for the first time, with 59 per cent men (87) to 40 per
 479 cent women (59).³⁹ In the five years until the end of 1782, the proportion of men and
 480 women being removed conformed closely to the pattern observed among house of
 481 correction vagrants, with an average of twice as many women as men, and a similar

482
 483
 484 ³⁶CLRO, Misc Mss/288/8, 'Mr Kirby's bill for
 485 subsistence money &c for poor vagrants &c
 486 went to Wood Street compter by the Lord
 487 Mary & Aldermen. £109 2s 7d.' Kirby also
 488 claims to have sent many of the boys to the
 489 'Marine Society', but again, detailed searches in
 490 Marine Society Records, undertaken by
 491 Dianne Payne, has not revealed any
 492 connections. When in October 1780 Kirby
 493 was confronted by four widows of men who
 494 had recently died in the American War, and
 495 their children, he spent £1.5 on a wagon to take
 one family to Bristol, and a further £4 4s on a
 further wagon journey to Liverpool. See
 Dianne Payne, 'Rhetoric, reality and the

Marine Society', *London Journal*, xxx, 2
 (October 2005), 66–84.

³⁷Dabhoiwala, 'Summary justice', *op. cit.*,
 Appendix (committals).

³⁸Tim Hitchcock, 'The London vagrancy crisis
 of the 1780s', *Rural History*, xxi, 1 (April 2013),
 59–72 and 'Re-negotiating the bloody code:
 the Gordon riots and the transformation of
 popular attitudes to the criminal justice system'
 in Ian Heywood and John Seed (eds), *The
 Gordon Riots* (Cambridge, 2012), 185–203.

³⁹Men also slightly outnumber women (98
 men to 90 women) in the list covering the
 period 9 July to 10 September 1781.

Table 2. *Demographic breakdown of vagrants passed from the 'House' by year, 1777–86.*

Year	Male	Female	Child	% Male	% Female	% Child	Total
1777	6	20	3	20.7	69.0	10.3	29
1778	65	257	151	13.8	54.3	31.9	473
1779	4	26	11	9.8	63.4	26.8	41
1780	171	344	179	24.6	49.6	25.8	694
1781	287	352	171	35.4	43.5	21.1	810
1782	72	168	124	19.8	46.1	34.1	364
1783	299	249	133	43.9	36.6	19.5	681
1784	969	411	242	59.8	25.3	14.9	1622
1785	1,227	646	315	56.1	29.5	14.4	2188
1786	199	165	84	44.4	36.8	18.8	448
Total	3299	2638	1413	44.9	35.9	19.2	7350

Table 3. *Demographic breakdown of vagrants passed from the 'House', 1777–86, split into two periods: 1777–82 and 1783–6.*

Period	Male	Female	Child	% Male	% Female	% Child	Total
1777–82	605	1167	639	25.1	48.4	26.5	2411
1783–6	2694	1471	774	54.5	29.8	15.7	4939
Change	+2089	+304	+135	+29.4	-18.6	-10.8	+2528

proportion of women to children (see Tables 2 and 3). City vagrants in this early period were significantly more likely to be part of a group than those passing through the houses of correction – 25.2 per cent versus 16.5 per cent – but as with house of correction vagrants these groups were overwhelmingly led by women (78 per cent).

In the post-war years between February 1783 and 1786 a distinct and different pattern is apparent. The proportion of adult men removed as vagrants doubled to 54 per cent, compared with only 30 per cent adult women and 16 per cent children. At the same time, the overall number of male vagrants travelling alone grew dramatically from 21 per cent of all City vagrants prior to 1783 to 48 per cent in subsequent years.

In part this transition reflects the impact of demobilization following the American War. Douglas Hay estimates that some 130,000 soldiers and sailors were discharged in 1783, most of whom were dumped in either London or Portsmouth and told to go on their way.⁴⁰ And while the resulting influx of young men has traditionally been deployed as part of a carefully demarcated discussion of patterns of criminal prosecution – primarily for theft – demobilization also undoubtedly increased the number of young single men on the roads of Britain in 1783 and in subsequent years. Finding legitimate

⁴⁰Douglas Hay, 'War, dearth and theft in the eighteenth century: the record of the English courts', *Past and Present*, xcv, 1 (1982), 139. For a detailed discussion of the relationship between crime and demobilization see also John Beattie, *Crime and the Courts in England, 1660–1800* (Princeton, 1986), chap. 5. The countrywide

character of this phenomenon is suggested by the bulge in expenditure on vagrant removal recorded in the West Riding of Yorkshire in these same years (1782: £729; 1783: £921; 1784: £1478; 1785: £1123; 1786: £877). Our thanks to Joanna Innes for these figures.

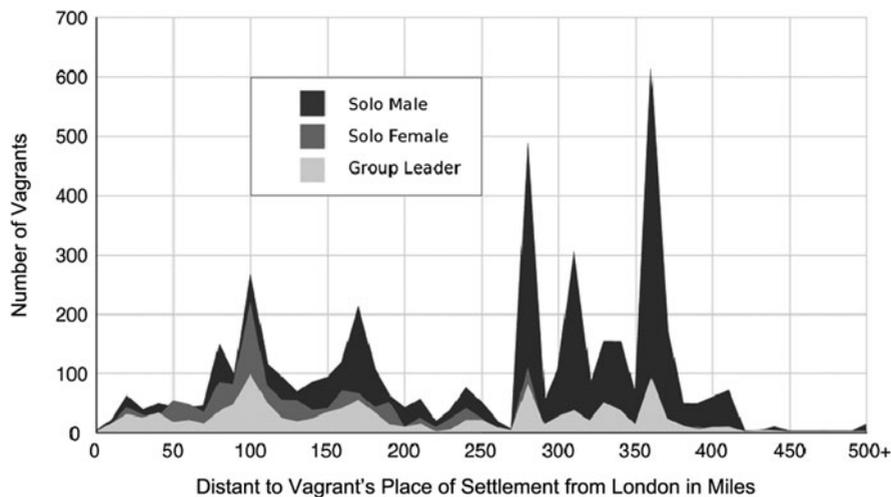


Figure 2. Distance travelled by vagrants in miles, measured from the Old Bailey courthouse, City vagrants only, 1783–6.

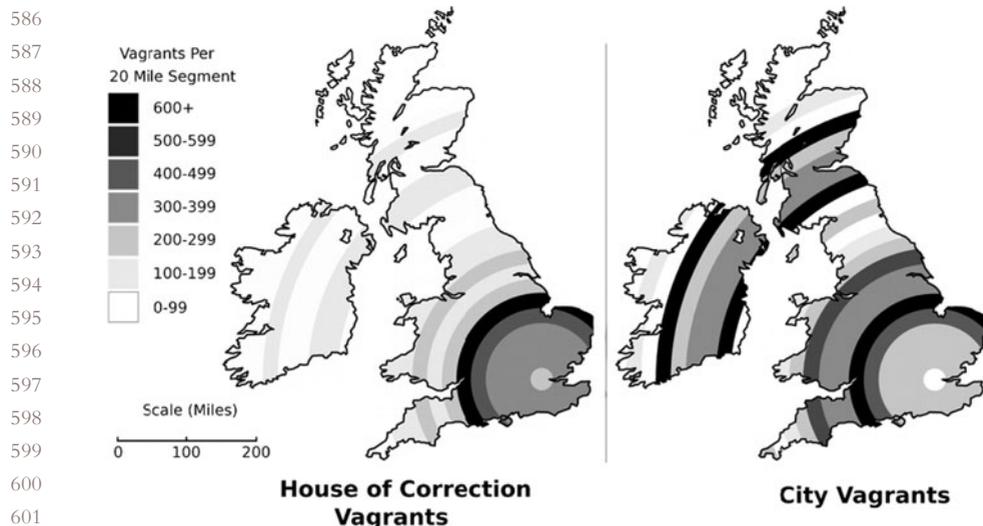
employment in London for these tens of thousands of men was unrealistic. As one of two primary disembarkation points for the army and navy in the country, London drew a disproportionate number of these men, and without recourse to even its traditional, pre-Gordon Riots set of jails and prisons, it is perhaps unsurprising that the City authorities decided to use the system of vagrant removal to speed them on their way.⁴¹ The vagrancy system had the advantage of speed. Vagrants were shifted out of the county within the week, whereas criminals had to be housed until the next session of the court at the expense of the ratepayers. At the same time, the continued dominance of male vagrants travelling alone among these City vagrants suggests that this transition was quickly regularized among the poor seeking a pass from the Mansion House.⁴²

Perhaps the most compelling evidence for the distinctive character of post-1783 removal through the City can be found in measuring the distance travelled by these men (see Figure 2). While women removed from Middlesex overwhelmingly travelled under

⁴¹Rogers suggests that in 1779 'London provided 31.5 per cent of all new recruits to the navy'; after demobilization a significant number of men in the metropolis would have displaced itinerants and less experienced labour in the port. He also suggests that in the summer of 1779 the need was so great that statutory exemptions were ignored and 'just about every seaman or riverside worker from the quayside' was pressed into the navy, again suggesting that established and skilled workers were likely to return to their place of work. See Nicholas Rogers, *The Press Gang: Naval Impressment and*

Its Opponents in Georgian Britain (London, 2007), 56 and 'Impressment and the law in eighteenth-century Britain' in Landau (ed.), *Law, Crime and English Society, op. cit.*, 92.

⁴²Thirty years later, a parliamentary committee heard that as a matter of policy the City freed itself of unwanted paupers by 'passing them as vagrants, knowing that there is no appeal against a vagrants pass, they pass them on the most vague examinations'. Parliamentary papers, 'Report from the Committee on the State of Mendicity in the Metropolis', 1814–15 (473), 69.



603 Figure 3. Number of vagrants by distance travelled to parish of home settlement, shown in segments of
604 twenty miles, measured from the Old Bailey courthouse, 1778–86 and separated by houses of correction
605 and City vagrants.

606 two hundred miles to their place of settlement, the men removed from the City after 1783
607 were aiming much further afield, with significant groups giving Dublin and Cork as their
608 final destination.

609 In contrast with vagrants passed via the Middlesex houses of correction, those coming
610 from the City, or across the county from north to south or east to west (see Figure 3), were
611 not put to hard labour or whipped, and do not seem to have been sent to either the City's
612 house of correction at Bridewell or the compters.⁴³ Like James Dawson Burn a couple of
613 decades later, most appear to have simply applied to the Lord Mayor for a pass as a kind of
614 licence to travel. In around 1810 Burn accompanied his mother to the Mansion House:

616 My mother took the whole of the children into her charge, and made
617 application at the Mansion House for a pass to Hexham, in Northumberland
618 ... which she had no difficulty in obtaining; with this pass we visited nearly all
619 the towns and villages on the east coast of England between London and
620 Newcastle-upon-Tyne. As my mother preferred taking the journey at her ease,
621 and her own time, she frequently had the benefit of the cash that the overseers
622 would have had to pay for sending us forward in a conveyance, and at the same

625 ⁴³Only a small number of the vagrants held in
626 City institutions appear to have been sent
627 onwards through Henry Adams's hands.
628 When, for instance, in 1781, the keeper of
629 Wood Street Compter was confronted by 'five
630 soldiers, widows whose husbands were killed in
America & ... 5 young children', with

settlements in Dublin, Cork and Scotland, he
was simply, 'ordered to get them there in the
best manner ... [he] could & provide them in
the meantime'. None of their names (Mary
Dodson, Ann Jarvis, Susan Holdsworth, Peggy
Came and Judith Howard) appear on Adams's
lists.

631 time she had the advantage of the intermediate relieving officers, who were
632 often glad to get clear of us at the expense of a shilling or two.⁴⁴

633 If those passed through Adams's 'House' were vagrants in the sense of the law, their crime
634 was committed either in some distant community, or else comprised that common fault
635 of being poor and far from home.
636

637 VAGRANTS TURNED PAUPERS

638
639 Whether a lone woman processed through one of the Middlesex houses of correction or a
640 demobilized soldier passed from the City, the precise route of a vagrant's journey is
641 normally impossible to reconstruct. One exception is the journey of Lever Maxey and his
642 family, detailed on the back of his removal order and preserved among the overseers'
643 papers of his parish of settlement, Wallingford in Oxfordshire.⁴⁵ Arrested in St Giles-in-
644 the-Fields as a 'rogue and vagabond' on 17 February 1784, and examined by local justice,
645 David Walker, Maxey, his wife and their child were initially committed to the
646 Clerkenwell house of correction, for one or two days, before being passed into the hands
647 of Henry Adams. From Clerkenwell, Adams brought them to Colnbrook in
648 Buckinghamshire, where they were given over to the constable, who endorsed the
649 back of the removal order, before escorting them onwards some eighteen miles to
650 Maidenhead, where justice Cambell took responsibility for them. The next day, on 20
651 February, Lever Maxey and his family went on a further twelve miles to Henley on
652 Thames, where the mayor, Thomas Divas, signed their pass. Their next stop was Bix, just
653 a mile or so down the road, from whence the constable took them the final ten miles to
654 Wallingford.⁴⁶ On arrival, Maxey and his family were handed into the care of the local
655 overseer of the poor, who essentially had no choice but to accept their right to relief from
656 the parish.

657 From at least 1777, parishes were legally obliged to accept vagrants removed under the
658 order of a single magistrate following only a cursory examination. Unlike a settlement
659 removal under the poor law, a vagrant order could not be subject to an appeal.⁴⁷ As a
660 result, removal via a vagrancy pass effectively established an incontrovertible settlement
661 in whichever parish was named on the pass. And while there is no evidence to
662 demonstrate that the poor substantially manipulated this system to circumvent the old
663 poor law and system of settlement, the City of London's post-1783 policy of issuing a pass
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667 ⁴⁴James Dawson Burn, *The Autobiography of a*
668 *Beggar Boy*, ed. David Vincent (London, 1978),
669 58.

670 ⁴⁵Prior to 1974 Wallingford was in Berkshire.

671 ⁴⁶*Berkshire Overseers Papers* (Berkshire Family
672 History Society, CD, 2005), vol. 9,
673 Wallingford St Mary, 'Lever Maxey'.

674 ⁴⁷There is some confusion about when and if
675 appeals to vagrancy orders could be taken to
676 quarter sessions, but according to Audrey
677 Eccles such appeals were legally impossible

following the judgement in *Rex v. Ringwould*
in 1777. See Eccles, *Vagrancy in Law, op. cit.*, 56
(citing M. Nolan, *A Treatise of the Laws for the*
Relief and Settlement of the Poor, 4th edn
(London, 1825), vol. 2, 238–40). Other
historians have concluded that, as such
removal orders formed an order by a justice
in a different jurisdiction, they could not be
overturned at any point following 1744. See
Peter King, *Crime and the Law in England, 1750–*
1840 (Cambridge, 2006), 31.

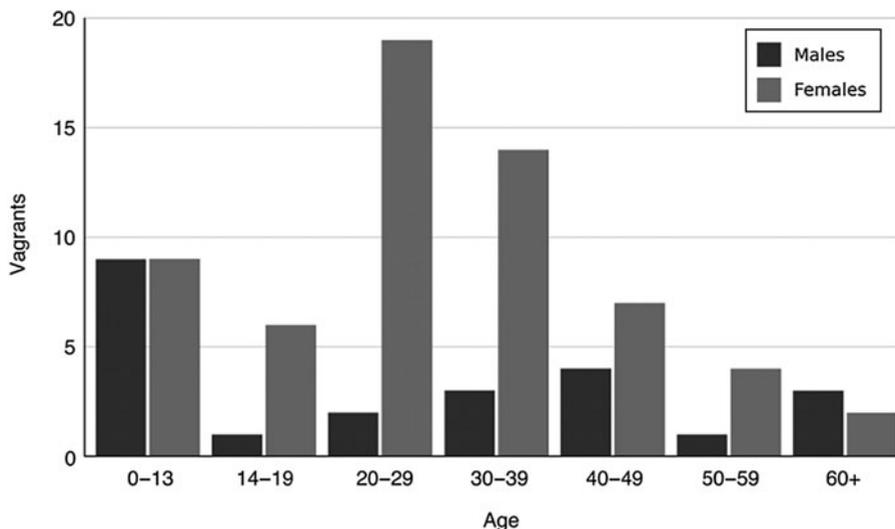


Figure 4. Age and gender distribution of 85 vagrants removed to St Martin-in-the-Fields workhouse, appearing in both Adams's lists and in the parish workhouse register.

on demand essentially undermined the ability of local JPs to manage in-migration. Within a decade of Adam Smith's characterization of the system of settlement as an unnatural imposition on the movement of labour, it had ceased to function effectively.⁴⁸

The complex relationship between the system of vagrant removal and the workings of the old poor law can be tested by examining the experience of the subset of vagrants passed through Adams's hands and returned to the Westminster parish of St Martin-in-the-Fields. Building on the work of Leonard Schwarz and Jeremy Boulton and the digitization of the workhouse registers and settlement examinations of St Martin's, it is possible to trace the subsequent experience of two-thirds of the vagrants included on Adams's lists and removed to St Martin's. In total, 131 individuals were ascribed a settlement in St Martin's, of whom 85 can be identified in the St Martin's workhouse registers. This subset includes fifteen family groups, eleven of which were composed of a mother and her children. Overall, vagrants removed to St Martin's and admitted to the workhouse were dominated by adult women between the ages of twenty and forty, many of whom had children with them, and who carried the burden of a complex history of interactions with both the parish and the system of vagrant removal (see Figure 4). In most respects this age and gender distribution looks remarkably similar to the population of workhouses as explored by historians such as Alysa Levene, Jeremy Boulton and Alannah Tomkins, who have argued that the pattern of admissions to

⁴⁸Adam Smith, *An Enquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776; Everyman edn, London, 1910), i, 128. For a wider ranging and comparative recent analysis see Anne Winter and Thijs Lambrecht, 'Migration,

poor relief and local autonomy: settlement policies in England and the southern Low Countries in the eighteenth century', *Past and Present*, CCXVIII, 1 (2013), 91–126.

workhouses reflects an ‘economy of makeshift’ in which the workhouse forms part of a more complex equation.⁴⁹

Representative, if not typical, was Ann Crossland (née Healey). She first came to the attention of the parish authorities, aged forty, when she was admitted to the workhouse on 20 June 1780, with two children, Edward, aged four, and Benjamin, aged two, ‘passed as a vagrant from the parish of Dorking in the County of Surry’ (sic). Her examination and life history make it abundantly clear that her legal settlement was actually in Huddersfield rather than St Martin’s. She was probably born in Rochdale and married James Crossland in Manchester in 1759.⁵⁰ Two decades later James Crossland was serving in the Sussex militia, but had been apprenticed to a stay-maker in Huddersfield for seven years. Ann clearly tried to make a case for a London settlement, claiming her husband had worked for three weeks in the parish as a journeyman, but this was legally untenable and the examination was never completed or signed. Nevertheless, Ann and her two children were allowed to remain in the workhouse for just under a year. The parish had no choice in the matter and could not lodge an appeal against the removal order because it was a vagrancy rather than poor law removal.

Three months after being discharged from the St Martin’s workhouse, Ann was once again arrested as a vagrant – on this occasion in the City of London. Under an order from Henry Kitchner, an alderman, this time she was removed to Huddersfield, spending a couple of nights in Adams’s ‘House’ in Islington en route through the vagrant depot at Ridge. By December of the same year she was back at St Martin’s – the parish apparently unaware that she had been removed to Yorkshire – and was readmitted with her children. She stayed for seven months, during which time Benjamin died, and Ann was separated from her older son, Edward. There is no evidence he ever saw his mother again.

In the next ten years Ann entered the workhouse on nine further occasions, and was usually either ‘discharged’ in the spring, or else simply ‘Absented’ herself. She then normally re-entered the house in the late autumn. She died in April 1797 aged fifty-seven.⁵¹ Ann Crossland and her family were expensive, but the parish had no real choice

⁴⁹Alysa Levene, ‘Children, childhood and the workhouse: St Marylebone, 1769–81’, *London Journal*, xxxiii, 1 (2008), 37–55; Jeremy Boulton and John Black, ‘Paupers and their experience of a Georgian workhouse: St Martin in the Fields, Westminster, 1725–1830’ in J. Hamlett, L. Hoskins and R. Preston (eds), *Residential Institutions in Britain, 1725–1950: Inmates and Environments* (London, 2013); and King and Tomkins, *The Poor in England*, *op. cit.*

⁵⁰IGI, ‘Ann Healey’ was christened at St Chad, Rochdale on 22 October 1739, and is recorded as having married James Crossland at the ‘Cathedral’, Manchester on 10 February 1759.

⁵¹Ann Crossland appears twice in Adams’s lists: *LL*, Middlesex Sessions: Sessions Papers – Justices’ Working Documents, September 1781 (LMSMPS507440009): LMA and *LL*, Middlesex Sessions: Sessions Papers – Justices’

Working Documents, April 1786 (LMSMPS508090217): LMA. For her encounters with St Martin’s, see *LL*, St Martin’s Workhouse Registers: Workhouse Admissions and Discharge Registers (smdswhr_554_55445, smdswhr_555_55550, smdswhr_555_55555, smdswhr_595_59570, smdswhr_736_73684, smdswhr_738_73885, smdswhr_756_75653, smdswhr_768_76901, smdswhr_771_77139, smdswhr_773_77378, smdswhr_774_77425, smdswhr_775_77545, smdswhr_776_77641, smdswhr_776_77662 and smdswhr_869_86945): WAC. For her examination see *LL*, St Martin’s Settlement Exams: St Martin in the Fields Pauper Examinations, 1725–1793, 20 June 1780 (smdsset_42_51628): WAC. For her stay at the ‘House’ see *LL*, Middlesex Sessions: Sessions

766 but to assent to her repeated admission to the workhouse. They were legally obliged to
 767 accept the settlement specified in the removal order and had no right of appeal. At the
 768 same time, they simply could not know about orders made elsewhere. Ironically Ann
 769 Crossland could have presented herself in either St Martin's or Huddersfield, with an
 770 equally watertight claim to parish relief. If Adams's lists suggest the existence of a
 771 complex pattern of short- and long-distance migration, they also reflect the extent to
 772 which poor law settlement under the old poor law could be and frequently was
 773 subverted, with paupers like Ann Crossland able to exercise a substantial element of
 774 choice in the process.

775 776 CONCLUSION 777

778 In an article published in 1992, Nicholas Rogers characterized London's vagrant
 779 population as predominantly young and female on the basis of a small sample of vagrancy
 780 examinations and removal orders found among the records of the Middlesex bench. This
 781 article has suggested that while this is true, it forms only a partial account of a complex
 782 system. A comprehensive analysis of removals listed by Henry Adams suggests three
 783 substantial revisions to Rogers's conclusions. First, different parts of London and different
 784 magistrates used the system of vagrant removal in ways that reflected their specific
 785 interests. The relatively large number of men removed from Whitechapel by John
 786 Staples, for instance, reflected the nature of the parish. Whitechapel was home to many of
 787 the maritime trades servicing vessels on the Thames, and there was a thriving
 788 manufactory for tin glazed wares together with sugar refining – all drawing in a
 789 workforce dominated by men.⁵² In contrast, the much higher proportion of women
 790 removed as vagrants in Westminster reflects the very different economy of the area, with
 791 its large number of domestic servants.

792 Second, the overwhelming dominance of men travelling alone among City
 793 vagrants, particularly after 1783, reflects the extent to which the City came to rely on
 794 vagrant removal, and to administer it in a new way. In effect, the City shifted the cost
 795 and burden of moving long-distance migrants such as demobilized Irish servicemen
 796 and seasonal labourers through the capital to the ratepayers of Middlesex, and the
 797 counties en route to Bristol and Liverpool where ships would take them across the
 798 Irish Sea.

799 Third, and finally, the lists help to reveal the complex relationship between vagrant
 800 removal and parish poor relief. By vesting a largely unchallengeable authority for
 801 assigning a settlement by a justice with no stake in preserving the interests of the parish of
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806 Papers – Justices' Working Documents, September 1781 (LMSMPS507440080): LMA.

807 ⁵²Breweries and distilleries were common in the immediate area, as were slaughterhouses
 808 and associated leather- and glue-making. The
 809 parish, however, was dominated by the
 810

Whitechapel Road, the major east–west thoroughfare linking the City with the eastern counties. See John Marriott, *Beyond the Tower: A History of East London* (New Haven and London, 2011), 48–56.

811 settlement, vagrant removal essentially undermined the ability of the settlement system
812 effectively to police migration.⁵³

813
814 *Sussex University, King's College, London and Reading University*

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847 ⁵³There is an extensive literature on the role of
848 settlement and removal in managing
849 migration, including an extended debate
850 between K. D. M. Snell and Norma Landau.
851 See Snell, 'Pauper settlement and the right to
852 poor relief in England and Wales', *Continuity
853 and Change*, 6 (1991) 375–415 and Landau's
854 reply in the same volume, 417–39; see also
855 Landau, 'The laws of settlement and the
surveillance of immigration in eighteenth-
century Kent', *Continuity and Change*, 3

(1988), 391–420 and 'The regulation of
immigration, economic structures and
definitions of the poor in eighteenth-century
England', *Historical Journal*, 33 (1990), 541–72.
For a more recent overview, see Snell, *Parish
and Belonging: Identity and Welfare in England
and Wales, 1700–1950* (Cambridge, 2006). See
also David Feldman, 'Migrants, immigrants
and welfare from the old poor law to the
welfare state', *Transactions of the Royal Historical
Society*, 13 (1 January 2003), 79–104.