

and the maximum forty-five. Many charitable organisations attempted to set up 'model' lodging houses, whose regulations were usually the reverse of common lodging house traditions – inmates had to register, they were provided with food, and sleeping accommodation was segregated.

There was a complex relationship between lodging houses in market towns and those in the East End of London. The capital could be perceived as 'the Mecca of the dissolute, the lazy, the mendicant, the rough and the spendthrift'. Charles Booth recorded in 1889 that there were precisely a thousand common lodging houses registered in the Metropolitan area and the City, with a nominal capacity of 31,651 inmates, but that many lodging houses were not registered.⁵ Henry Mayhew observed in the 1850s that many vagrants spent the winter in London, where charitable support was generous, but perambulated the provinces between April and the end of October, and this practice was still prevalent 40 years later.⁶

Lodging houses can be set in a chronological context. Institutions like common lodging houses first became an object of concern in London during plagues in the 1720s. Peter Clark has suggested that in the eighteenth century private householders were deterred from taking in lodgers by the law of settlement, but that travellers were readily accommodated in alehouses.⁷ By the early nineteenth century there was a growing prejudice against travellers amongst alehouse keepers, and the common lodging house, while it served many who were not itinerant, came to be the overnight stopping place for those who journeyed on foot utilising the network of turnpike roads created between 1750 and 1830. Like country carriers, such travellers continued to use such roads long after stage coaches and long-distance wagon services had succumbed to railway competition. The numbers of lodging houses increased markedly in the 1840s. While, as indicated above, census totals are unreliable, the rise in the number of lodging house keepers in England and Wales from

⁵ C. Booth, ed., *Life and Labour of the People in London* (1892), London: Macmillan, pp.205-19.

⁶ H. Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor* (1864), London: Charles Griffin, vol. I, pp.258-61, 310-11, vol. III, 88, 373; G. Stedman-Jones, *Outcast London: a study in the relationships between classes in Victorian Society* (1971), Oxford: Clarendon Press, p.89.

⁷ P. Clark, *The English Alehouse: a social history 1200-1830* (1983), London: Longman, pp.311-14.