

Finally, amongst these legatees, there is Paul Sabin (1700), apprenticed to the Turners. He is clearly established, as his father Paul refers to him as 'Paul Sabin the younger, of London', leaving his wife a 'suit of mourning' (or perhaps wherewithal to acquire this), and £10 each to their children Sarah and David. Paul and his brother Thomas (who inherited the house in Calthorpe) were residuary legatees and joint executors.

These wills identify some of those who at least survived, some with a degree of success: Nathaniel Gulliver, Nathaniel Goodwyn and Paul Sabin. Others' success is shown by their subsequent appearance as masters of their own apprentices. Martin Wheatly, indentured to a chandler in 1702, as master took on Thomas Greenall (1718) to whom Daniel Stepto (1726) was in turn bound. Richard Kening (1668) was probably another such. We can surely add Ambrose Horsman (b.1665) of the Blacksmiths Company, to whom John Collins (1690) was apprenticed. Ambrose Horsman senior was able to buy his Freedom in Banbury in 1660, so is likely to have been able to indenture his son to a City of London livery company, even though the record has not been identified. One suspects this was the case with many others.

They are, I understand from Alan Crossley, who is preparing the city of Oxford sixteenth century register of apprentices for publication, typical of country boys who, once established in the big city, would offer the same opportunities to those from their home town. In Oxford there were regular freshly indentured arrivals from areas to the north and west. Because of the colleges and their countrywide estates, this may have been a special case, exerting the same lure in Lancashire and Wales as London did to those in the home counties.

The cost of upbringing and apprenticing an orphan

What was actually involved in bringing up and placing a boy as an apprentice? A poignant case is revealed by the accounts attached to the 1611 will and inventory of the fletcher Rowland Hughes (no. 116), whose widow died the following year. His orphan son John was only six at the time, but there were funds available, as he had been left his father's house.

The initial account of his upbringing shows the cost of '2 coates for John Hewes his son, twoe shirts, a payre of shoes and for the makinge of the shirtes and for 2 bandes, 15s.2d. Paid to Thomas Williams for his hose and shoes and for his dyett and schoolinge 3 quarters of a yeare, £1.19s.8d.; for 2 pare of hose and shoes and for his dyett and schoolinge for one quarter of a yeare being since midsomer last, £1.10s.' Later: 'A coute, 12s.; For skouleing, 3s.6d.; His diet, £1.10s.; a pear of shoues, 1s.8d.; 2 baunds, 6d.'