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Notes

ORIGINAL SPELLING has been retained in quotations, apart from the rationalisation of the use of i and j, and u and v. Contractions have been expanded and capitalisation has been inserted. In the text the spelling of place-names has been modernised, as has the spelling of forenames. The spelling of surnames has been made uniform where clearly the same individual and/or family was intended.

Units of money are retained in their original form as pounds, shillings and pence: 12 pence (*d.*) to the shilling (*s.*) and 20 shillings to the pound (£).

Dates conform to the Old Style (Julian) calendar, except that the year has been taken to begin on 1 January.

References to counties are to the pre-1974 boundaries.



Abbreviations

<i>APC</i>	<i>Acts of the Privy Council of England</i> , J. R. Dasent (ed.), 32 vols (London 1890–1907)
BL	British Library, London
<i>Econ HR</i>	<i>Economic History Review</i>
HMC	Historical Manuscripts Commission
Lancs RO	Lancashire Record Office, Preston
Liv RO	Liverpool City Record Office
<i>LTB I</i>	<i>Liverpool Town Books</i> , J. A. Twemlow (ed.), vol. I, 1550–1571 (Liverpool, 1918)
<i>LTB II</i>	<i>Liverpool Town Books</i> , J. A. Twemlow (ed.), vol. II, 1571–1603 (Liverpool, 1935)
NA	The National Archives, Kew, London
RSLC	Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire
<i>TLCAS</i>	<i>Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society</i>
<i>THSLC</i>	<i>Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Historic Society</i>



Preface

LIVERPOOL during the Tudor period was a small place, its population probably never exceeding one thousand inhabitants. In the north-west of England the towns of Chester, Manchester and Preston were certainly all considerably larger and of greater consequence at this time. Nevertheless, Liverpool's size was on a par with many Tudor towns, and its urban experience must have been typical of many small communities. Tudor Liverpool shared the characteristics and concerns of other small towns and for that alone it deserves study.

Since its thirteenth-century creation Liverpool had been a port located beside a small natural anchorage near the mouth of the River Mersey. The distinctiveness and particular development of Liverpool lay in trade and the potential of the port. The consequences of its location and the prelude to future greatness as a port therefore deserve an explanation. Having said that, the context of Liverpool's hinterland also has great relevance in Tudor times. A small town, of necessity, retained an intimate relationship with its rural environs. Many years ago J. A. Twemlow observed in the introduction to the first volume of his transcription of the Liverpool town books that the study of any town becomes unreal when that place is treated as solitary, self-contained and self-sufficient. The hope is to overcome his anxiety by examining the small town of Liverpool within the wider circumstances of national demographic growth, new and sustained price inflation, economic diversification, religious change, and development in royal authority at central and local levels.

Much has been written of Liverpool's rise as a port from the seventeenth century onwards and of its activities during its maritime heyday in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Much, indeed, was written at that time of greatness or soon after with the perspective of inexorable rise to prosperity: for instance, by Thomas Baines, Edward Baines, Ramsay Muir, James Picton, Ronald Stewart-Brown and James Touzeau. Material is now accessible in the National Archives, in the Cheshire and Lancashire county record offices and in the Liverpool

city record office that was unavailable when they wrote. Most valuable of all are the transcriptions of the town books, the municipal records which survive from 1550. This immense labour was commenced by J.A. Twemlow, and resulted in the publication of two volumes (in 1918 and 1935) of Liverpool's Tudor records. Without his efforts this book would not exist, yet port books, probate records, family deeds and papers now add immeasurably to the picture.

Apart from the availability of many further archives, many historical perspectives have changed since the work of Liverpool's earlier historians. A great deal of study has been done on the Tudor economy and trade and, as well, on the development and nature of towns. The early modern urban experience and degrees of distinctiveness of towns both large and small has been much debated and considered by, among others, Jonathan Barry, Richard Britnell, John Chartres, Peter Clark, Alexander Cowan, Alan Dyer, Sybil Jack, Jennifer Kermode, David Palliser, Charles Phythian-Adams and Paul Slack. Social constraints of place and space, order and responsibility have been considered as well as economic opportunity and potential. In the light of all this new historical material and sources, it is now appropriate that the history of Tudor Liverpool should be re-visited afresh.

During the course of producing this volume I have incurred debts of both positive assistance and indefinable encouragement. For references, comment, ideas and hope I thank particularly Alan Crosby, Janet Gnosspelius, David Hey, Jenny Kermode, Terry Phillips, Fiona Pogson, the late Michael Power and Judy Smith.

About the author

Dr Janet Hollinshead originates from north Staffordshire, but has lived and worked in Liverpool since the early 1970s. Local studies and early modern periods of English and European history were all significant elements of her teaching career. Janet recently retired as head of history at Liverpool Hope University. For a number of years she has researched Liverpool's Tudor history using archives in Liverpool, Manchester, Lancashire, Cheshire and London. Recently she has contributed to *Liverpool 800: Culture, Character and History* (ed. J. Belchem), and has written a number of articles in various journals such as *Northern History*, *The Mariner's Mirror*, *Recusant History* and the *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*. Since coming to Liverpool Janet has been a member and has held almost all offices on the Council of the Historic Society and Lancashire and Cheshire.

CHAPTER ONE



The town and its population

LIVERPOOL IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY was a little place. Relatively few towns at this time were of any great size, and it has been the regional capitals and county towns – the large and the well documented – which have received the lion's share of attention and research. Yet there were about 650 market towns in England and Wales by Tudor times, the vast majority of which were small locations with populations of fewer than 2,000 inhabitants, and some even as small as 800–1,000 people. Indeed, many may have seemed scarcely like towns at all. To date little has been written of these smaller urban communities which nevertheless made up a large proportion of the early modern urban experience. These small towns had an intimate relationship with their surrounding countryside, serving as local marketing and administrative centres, and probably having no particular urban specialisation of commodity or distribution. The sphere of influence of a small Tudor town may have been only three to six miles.¹ Economic viability and stability must have been potentially precarious factors at this scale of operation. Competition with neighbours was fierce and not all towns prospered or responded to local challenges and opportunities.

Liverpool had arrived late on the English urban scene. In 1207 King John's letters patent had authorised the establishment of a new borough, with a Saturday market and an annual fair to be sited beside the natural anchorage on the north bank of the Mersey estuary. The king's interest lay in the possibilities for the transport of men and materials to Ireland. A new charter of 1229 defined more clearly the borough's administrative and financial position, but there was to be no rapid economic advance. Contact with Ireland remained limited and only modest urban development occurred. By the early fourteenth century there were just seven streets with a population of not more than 1,000. The fifteenth century saw stagnation and possible contraction. The local gentry acquired increasing interests and influence in the town; overseas trade failed to develop; the town remained commercially isolated with a restricted hinterland; and Chester took potential competition from a local rival seriously.² By the