THOMAS NEALE AND
THE DEVELOPMENT OF SEVEN DIALS'

James Thomas

Post-Restoration London was the scene of feverish building activity. New materials were used to reduce fire risks, and attempts made to lay out residential areas with graceful, sweeping lines. The 1666 conflagration cleared away many narrow streets of jumbled masses of houses, built in such close proximity to one another that both light and air were strictly at a premium. In their place rose comfortable and passably handsome houses, creating so good an impression that even those who had not suffered wished to rebuild. As a result, London underwent a residential transformation-

... one by one the great houses of the nobility disappeared, to be replaced by squares and terraces bearing the names of their former owners ... And since, while the town was rebuilding, the dispossessed shopkeepers opened their booths on Moorfields and other public open spaces outside the city, these latter also tended to disappear and grow into streets and squares; ... 2

The speed of rebuilding and the substitution of stone and brick for timber drew favourable comment. Contemporaries were awe-struck:

The Dwelling Houses raised since the Fire be generally very fair, and built much more convenient and uniform than heretofore. Before the Fire, they were most Timber Houses, built with little regard to Uniformity; but since the Fire, Building of Bricks has been the general Way, and that with much Art and Skill in Architecture.... 3

Developers from various social groups participated in this urban regeneration. There were aristocrats. The Earl of Bedford laid out Russell and Woburn Squares; Lord Treasurer Southampton Bloomsbury Square; the Earl of St. Albans fashionable St. James's Square. The intensity of enthusiasm for that particular Square may be gauged from its inclusion, with its pervading genteel air, as a 'must' for early London sightseers.' But there were other, non-noble, developers as well. The speculative builder made his first appearance with his many leases, patchwork of small building plots, quick turnover and large profits. Sir Thomas Clarges developed Piccadilly. Sir Thomas Bond, Richard Frith and Dr. Nicholas Barbon were responsible for Bond Street, Frith Street and Essex Street respectively. Included in this group was Thomas Neale, courtier, Member of Parliament, office holder and projector par excellence. 4

Born in Hampshire in 1641, Neale was reputed by the early 1670s to be 'a person of a Vast Estate and of great Interest as well at Court as in the City and Country having a considerable Estate of his owne ...'. During the course of a hectic and colourful career he held four offices of note. Early in February
1678 he was appointed Groom Porter for life.'A few months later, in July, he became Master of the Royal Mint.' Late in November 1679 he entered the intimate world of the Royal Bedchamber, becoming a groom. After this spate of office acquisition there was then a long break until May 1694 when he was appointed Master of the newly-created Transfer Office. Each office required something different from him, and each gave him power and influence in complementary and contrasting worlds. In the case of the two groomeries, for example, he moved in the strange, all-powerful world of the late-Stuart Court, a mysterious organism abiding by its own set of laws, reminiscent, in many ways, of medieval England such were some of the barbaric punishments prescribed for offences.' As Master of the Mint, Neale bestrode both the world of Westminster, being responsible for the efficient working of an important state department, and the world of business, having dealings with many of London's merchant princes. The same could be said of his control of the Transfer Office, launched to administer revenues from all-important salt duties. The benefits derived by Neale from his offices help to explain his increasing power. Beyond the obvious ones of fresh sources of income, official accommodation and various perquisites, there was the important, if intangible, benefit of contact. His position in three differing, but interlocking, worlds, gave Neale access to all layers of society, from the monarch downwards. As a member of the Royal Household he was efficient, effective and ruthless. Within the confines of the Household he formulated associations which would help in the furtherance of his career; at least seven relating to the promotion of his post.1888 projects were built up in this fashion. As already noted, his activities at the Mint help explain involvement of leading businessmen in his projects. The London Gazette regularly carried details of where business men could be found, so that Neale could either go in person or send one of his many agents to search them out. Furthermore, the safety of his Court positions meant that his credit was good and that, in turn, he could afford to speculate. To lesser mortals, men anxious to gain an entre at Court, preferment in their career or simply more money, Neale appeared as somebody to be accommodated. Men would be prepared to go out of their way to meet his needs, not least because there was the hope that he might be able to secure concessions for them. There is no clearer proof of this in his career than the apparent ease with which he was able to raise seemingly interminable loans. It also meant, of course, that he was kept very well informed of when grants of offices, profits, land, and concessions were likely to become available. It is against this background that his various property development schemes become understandable. In the 1670s he developed Shadwell on the lower Thames to cater for London's ever-expanding population. In the 1680s he participated in the development of fashionable Tunbridge Wells. These two projects were followed in the 1690s by the development of Seven Dials in London. But although Neale's development of the Dials was both enterprising and exciting, he was to be accorded only belated recognition of his efforts. (14) To examine the development it is proposed to consider the houses built, the financial aspects, the builders, and finally the social and aesthetic considerations.

Known originally as Marshland Close, the area to be developed as the Dials lay in the parish of St. Giles in the Fields. In 1650 it was largely
undeveloped, except for a conduit supplying water to the Exchequer Office, a few tenements and a lay stall. A Privy Council proclamation of 1671 partially controlled building development there." In January 1690 Neale petitioned for a lease of the Close, attracted by the fact that the land had originally been leased with building permission. More than two years of wrangling followed, halted only by William III's personal intervention and his announcement that he wished Neale to have the lease. Although Neale did not actually gain the Close until June 1692, it had already been making preparatory moves. A plan of the projected layout had been drawn in 1691 (see plan) and in March 1692 he had agreed that he or his assigns would, within two years, build 'So many good substantial) Brick houses according to a certain Scheme or Modell'. As a result at least two hundred neat new houses were built," and what was to become a temporarily fashionable area was laid out. The very design attracted curiosity and attention, as well as provoking frustration. Whereas St. Albans had utilised the concept of a fashionable piazza onto which luminaries' houses would look, Neale worked with the idea of a number of streets meeting at one central point. After a visit in early October 1694 Evelyn noted:

I went also to see the building beginning near St. Giles where seaven streetes make a starr from a Doric Pillar plac'd in the middle of a Circular Area.

The streets were to be named Great and Little Earl Streets, Great and Little White Lion Streets, Great and Little St. Andrew's Streets and Queen Street. The pillar was to be capped by sundials, one facing each street. Fascinating though it was that a development should have a central meeting point, it was not totally novel. In all probability Neale hoped that public memory was short, for both Wren's and Evelyn's plans for rebuilding London in 1666 had involved developing a central piazza in Fleet Street, into which eight streets would feed and meet. Was, therefore, the Dials project totally novel, or was Neale merely trying to give substance to the dreams of others? After all, Neale knew both Wren and Evelyn, as well as the masterful Hooke one of the three Surveyors appointed in the aftermath of the Fire. What more natural, therefore, than to borrow freely, adapt here, adjust there, and then promote the idea as his own? Indeed, it may well have been more than innate curiosity that drew Evelyn to the Dials in 1694.

To develop his scheme Neale divided the land neatly into plots and then let them. Houses facing White Lion Street on the south-western side of the development were built on rectangular plots each measuring 37 feet from east to west and approximately 15 feet from north to south. All the tenants agreed to erect brick houses with tiled roofs and proper glazing. Elsewhere in the scheme, there were great variations of plot size. George Dorrell agreed to build one or more houses on a plot measuring 65 feet by 70 feet, whereas Ralph Swaine built on one 17 feet by 14 feet facing Monmouth Street. Morgan Pierce built on the corner of King and Queen Streets, on a plot 17 feet by 30 feet, again to be occupied by one house. Two and three-storied houses, each with a cellar and sub-divided attics were built as part of the development (23), along with stables and yards. The standards laid down for post-1666 building would have produced a two-storied house at
about 18 feet high and a three-storied at about 29 feet with, in each case, allowance added for roof height. The rows of houses were to be pierced by streets 40 feet wide. Ground rents paid by builders at Seven Dials varied. Neale envisaged the construction of sufficient houses to raise a ground rent of £1,200, calculated on the basis of 5s. to 8s. a foot frontage, save for those houses fronting King Street, Monmouth Street, St. Andrew Street and Earl Street, where the range was to be between 8s. and 12s. There were also variations in rents paid, between 2s. and C7, all plots being let out for a standard 61-year term. Rent was to be paid quarterly, and as landlord Neale was protected by two distress clauses for non-payment, one for a 15-day lapse the other for 21 days. The device was designed not only as protection but also as a disincentive to would-be lax tenants.

Financing the development was made possible by a £16,000 loan over three years, with Marshland as security. Should the principal remain unpaid over this period then the lenders could subsequently sell the premises to anybody and with the money that would come from the sale satisfy themselves of the sum and the interest, paying any surplus to Neale. Four men put up the money – James Ward and Edward Herry, both merchants, Thomas Lathwell, gentleman, and William Morris, Master Apothecary. Ward, an Assistant of the Royal African Company between 1679 and 1680, and an investor in the East India Company, traded from at least two London locations in the 1670s. Herry, an Edmonton merchant, had served as Assistant to the Company of Merchant Adventurers trading to the North West part of America. Lathwell remains the enigma of the consortium. Twice-married, he is known to have been living in the parish of St. Antholin, London, in 1695. Morris, born c. 1655, had seen service as Master Apothecary in the recent campaigns in Ireland and Flanders. As agent they employed John Adams, a scrivener from Budge Row, London, who was subsequently to be involved with Ward in at least one other property transaction. Having spent the bulk of the loan provided by this consortium, Neale found it to be

"farr insufficient to compleat the said Intended Buildings and having contracted and agreed with divers Builders and others to allow amongst them the farther Sume of Five Thousand Pounds in order to furnish the said Intended Buildings"

raised this additional sum from Richard Spencer of London, a Levant merchant." In return Spencer was to receive all 'the estate, right, title, interest and benefit of Thomas Neale in and unto all that close called Marshland and the premises erected thereon'. (34)

During his career as projector Neale built up a distinct retinue of agents – bailiffs, rent collectors, political agents, brokers, bankers, lawyers and property agents, men upon whose services he could confidently rely. It is all the more surprising, therefore, to find that for this particular speculative venture he called upon an untried agent, Godfrey Woodward, whom he nominated to receive the property for him and who is tersely described as 'gentleman'. As with so many of Neale's agents, Woodward had connections with the law, being a member of the Middle Temple. A scrivener would also have been required, and here Neale may have retained
At least 14 men were involved in actually building the houses. Three were bricklayers – Dorrell and Robert Geary, both of St. Giles in the Fields, and Ambrose Searles of St. Martins in the Fields who took on four adjoining plots facing White Lion Street. Ralph Swaine (jun.), carpenter, and James Sellway, joiner, came from St. Andrews Holborn. Two were non-builders. William Buckland, scrivener, rented at least two plots facing White Lion Street, with two smaller ones adjoining to the west; Morgan Pierce was a baker from St. Clement Danes. Of the other seven – Edward Rathband, Bartholomew Rowland, John Syrett, Sampson Strode, Alexander Williams, John Stephens,” and Mr. Broadhurst – little has so far come to light, except for the fact that Broadhurst and Sellway were accounted the ‘principal builders’. The builders were certainly not remiss in their efforts. Between July 1693 and October 1694 houses were built in Monmouth and Little Earl Streets; four were erected in Great St. Andrew Street between September 1693 and August 1694 and subsequently sold by the builder, Sellway, to John Brewer of Grays Inn. Some builders made their permanent homes in the Dials; Rathband and Dorrell were still living there in 1701, Buckland as late as 1708.

At the time of securing initial agreement with Neale each builder was subjected to a set of regulations. All the new houses were to be kept in good repair, windows, pavements and gutters kept clean. Additionally, the builders were each to contribute equally towards ‘the repaireacon emptying and of amending the comon sewer there intended to be made.’ Biennial or more frequent inspection visits would be carried out by Neale, his associates and workmen. The builders were also to abide by a second set of regulations covering the social development of the Dials, agreeing not to lease their houses ‘to any person or persons whatsoever who shall exercise therein … the trades or misteries of a Comon Brewer Butcher Melter of tallow Soapboyler or a tobacco pipe maker …’ without first obtaining written approval from Neale and his associates. Clearly the intention was twofold – to minimise fire risks and noxious odours, and to make the area primarily residential but with inhabitants of an ‘acceptable’ nature.

The subsequent social composition of Seven Dials must be examined if the success of these regulations is to be evaluated. Dickens penned evocative sketches of later dwellers in the ‘maze of streets, courts, lanes, and alleys’, the brick-dust-spotted bricklayer’s labourers who could be seen on Sunday mornings in their ‘drab or light corduroy trousers, Blucher boots, blue coats, and great yellow waistcoats’, or the shabby-genteel man from the back attic and the carpet-beater who ‘extends his professional pursuits to his wife’. But was there a half-way stage between these and the people whom Neale had originally hoped to attract to the Dials, or were his stipulations so much chaff before the wind? Most famous of the early residents was as yet an unknown young Scot, John Law, who lived there in
his early twenties until his ill-fated duel with the high-living Beau Wilson in April 1694. Thomas Matthew, merchant, formerly of St. Martins in the Fields, found the new development sufficiently attractive to move there with his second wife, where they resided in Queen Street. Their immediate neighbours included Roger Reeve, gentleman, who lived there briefly before his death in 1696, a Captain John Cannon and Edward Kingston, gentleman. Residents of Monmouth Street included Giles Riddle, grocer, William Phillips, distiller, and Richard Edds, victualler. In King Street lived George Cox, victualler, and William Wheatley, carpenter. William Wells of St. Mary le Bone, gentleman, owned two houses on the north side of St. Andrews Street in June 1697. Other residents included Thomas Thompson, a St. Sepulchres timber merchant with two houses, and two people who clearly bought with investment in mind. In March 1700 Robert Winter, a wax chandler from St. Martins in the Fields, owned five in the street, some of which he let out. In May John Brewer insured a block of nine on the north side. Winter owned another five on the west side of King Street; during 1700 John Taylor, gentleman from St. Clement Danes, insured three on the west side of the same street, two in Queen Street and another two in Earl Street. Houseowners in that street from summer 1699 onwards included Matthew Hopkinson of the Middle Temple, Charles Armistead, haberdasher, John Fowell, gunsmith, and George Barns, a local hatter who owned three, one of which was 'known by the signe of the Flower D' Lewis'.

Within a short time, however, the air of seeming social respectability was to change. The inhabitants of the Dials in 1701 and 1702 were rather different in character. In St. Andrews Street four houses belonged to Christopher Davenport of New Inn, one being run by Philip Phillips as the 'Goat and Golden Ball'. William Thomas, clothworker, owned a building divided and let as two tenements. Peter Holmes, a St. Giles ciderman, was an owner-occupier. Earl Street revealed a similar heterogeneity. On the south side Armistead owned four houses all rented out, one to William Snelling, merchant. Another four further west on the same side were owned by Joseph Jolly, stone merchant of St. Brides. Between these two blocks stood the 'Crown', owned by Evan Jones, gentleman of St. Giles, and run by Richard Raynalls. Charles Shelley, a London goldsmith owned three houses; Davenport owned one on either side of the street. Of the houses on the north side, one had been converted by William Buckland, the previous occupant, into the 'Rose' and was being run by his son William Buckland (jun.). At least one on this side was owned by George Bell, a local victualler. Houses on the southern side of Monmouth Street were owned by George Hunt, coachmaker, John Marriott, a St. Giles bricklayer, and John Wood, a tailor from the same parish. Richard Gates, salesman, had lived at the 'Two Cats' since at least 1698. Sarah Carbet lived in one of her three houses in the street. A near neighbour, Eleanor Barinckell, another widow, owned at least one house. On the same side lived Lodwick Leard, a St. Giles salesman, whose dwelling house was 'Known by the sign of the Three Dogs'. In King Street William Newman, a painter-stainer, owned three houses. A local paviour, John Tucker, owned three bordering Neale's Court, located between St. Andrews Street and Queen Street. Thomas Cooper, a St. Giles carpenter, owned a brick house on the south side of this court 'being Coach Houses and Stables with rooms over them' which he let to
Edward North. In Queen Street Bernard Babb, pewterer, rented out two houses to widow Crouch and Richard Heath. James White of St. Paul’s Covent Garden rented out one. John Vanderbank, a local tapestrymaker, lived in his own, more substantial, house, as did Norwich Salisbury, a harnessmaker-turned-coachmaker who had been living in the Dials since at least late 1696.55 David Jones of Sing lewell in Kent, important as the only non-London owner in the area, let out his house in the same street to widow Eleanor Harris.

Obviously the ‘genteeel’ element was being slowly outnumbered. While Neale’s aping and emulating did not attract residents comparable to those of St. James’s Square – the ambassadors, ministers, royal mistresses and peers – it did little to permanently ‘fix’ the social tone of the new development. Witness, for example, the number of men following the prescribed occupations who were nevertheless permitted to go and live in the Dials. And there were other signs of a declining social tone. In February 1702 White’s house in Queen Street was occupied by a cook; in March 1703 a London clothworker insured a ‘Brickhouse with a workhouse backward’ on the south side of Monmouth Street.56 Mrs. Cox ‘at the Blue Flower-Pot in Queen Street, near the Seven Dials’ ran a pawnbroking establishment.57 French refugees may have begun frequenting the Dials, for by July 1703 there had been constructed a ‘French Chappel’ in Tower Street, immediately to the south-east of the scheme.” In 1706 Thomas Wrenn, an apprentice, was freed from his master Edmund Juby, an Earl Street feltmaker, who with his wife ‘had so unreasonably beat him that he went in danger of his life’.59 The parish roads fell into disrepair, extra rates being applied for in April 1719 and 1721.110 Slowly the character of the Dials was changing, a transformation which might be considered complete in the report of an ugly incident there in mid-June 1732. As part of his punishment for perjury John Waller was placed in the Dials pillory. After about three minutes

... in which Time he was most furiously pelted with Colliflower-Stalks, large Stones and Pieces of Bottles, by which he was very much cut in his Face and Head; a Chimney-Sweeper jump’d up to him and pulled him down from the Pillory, and tore all his Cloaths off, leaving only his Stockings and Shoes on. After that they beat him, and jump’d upon him as he lay on the Ground till they had actually kill’d him.61

Clearly Seven Dials could no longer be considered a la mode for residential purposes.

The complete absence of Neale’s business papers for this period makes it impossible to know whether he even repaid his original loans, let alone realise a profit from developing Seven Dials. Having declined in tone, the Dials became equated not with Neale but rather with confusion and less seemly elements. Thus John Gay wrote in 1716:
Where fam'd Saint Giles's ancient Limits spread, An inrail'd Colum rears its lofty Head, Here to sev'n Streets, sev'n Dials count the Day, And from each other catch the circling Ray. Here oft the Peasant, with enquiring Face, Bewilder'd, trudges on from Place to Place; He dwells on ev'ry Sign, with stupid Gaze, Enters the narrow Alley's doubtful Maze. Try ev'ry winding Court and Street in vain, And doubles o'er his weary Steps again.

Curiously Gay does not associate the area with the gentility on horseback or in their coaches, but rather with the world-weary peasant. For some, the Dials became the medium for a flight of fancy. Thus the author of Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus subsequently gave as his hero's birth-place:

some point common to all the seven streets: which must be that on which the Column is now erected. And it is with infinite pleasure that I since find my conjecture confirmed by the following passage in the codicil to Mr. Neale's will: "I appoint my executors to engrave the following inscription on the Column in the centre of the Seven Streets which I erected: LOC, NAT, INCLYT, PHILOS, MAR. SCR." But Mr. Neale's order was never performed, because the Executors read the name of the architect was not a sufficient reason for not administering.

The truth of the matter, however, was that no such provision was ever made in Neale's will. Quite clearly attitudes towards the Dials changed. What was initially held as novel was clearly labelled as poor design. Moreover, while Neale was developing the Dials it was only too typical of his elastic brain that he also had in hand another property development project in London.

Where novelty and success marked the Dials, the reverse was the case with this other project. By 1690 Neale owned some houses on the western side of Stratton Street. Quick to see an opportunity when it presented itself, he approached Sir Thomas Clarges, former army physician, brother-in-law of Monck, fellow M.P., and himself no mean developer, about land he owned nearby, between Hyde Park and Piccadilly. Neale agreed to pay an annual rent of £100 and spend £10,000 developing the land. Rather, however, did he keep the land waste, die owing Sir Walter Clarges £800 in rent and cause him to acquire a special act of parliament to free his property from Neale's creditors. As though propelled by unseen forces Neale was, at the same time, busy extending his property interests elsewhere. He had a house near Whitehall; in June 1692 he offered £1,200 for a lease or £1,500 for the lease of the ground behind Wallingford House and a £1,000 fine for a lease of houses and ground by Hyde Park and Knightsbridge. Less than a year later he was anxious to buy Monmouth's Soho house 'at the rate it is really worth'.

While such activity would have taxed the mind of many a man stronger than Neale, he was also busy promoting other projects. As the 1690s progressed, so did Neale's projecting activities; promotion of the Dials,
though important, was merely one of many schemes, others embracing
treasure recovery, industrial processes, street lighting, postal services and
lottery development. In the case of the Dials Neale clearly used the
combined strength of his Court positions and influence, particularly his
relationship with William III, and his knowledge of and contacts with the
London business world, to know exactly when to launch his Dials project,
how to market the idea, and from whom he was likely to be able to raise any
necessary finance. But the development and growth of other more
'attractive' areas such as Piccadilly, New Bond Street and the general area to
the west of St. Martins Lane, help to explain why so ambitious a project was
so relatively short-lived. With the passing of time the reputation of the Dials
was to slip still further, until mention came to be made, in a particular comic
opera, of the 'lowly air of Seven Dials', a far cry indeed from
Thomas Neale's original intentions.

Notes
1. This is an expanded version of a paper presented to the Annual
Conference of the Urban History Group at the University of Hull, 1977. I
am indebted to the late Frank Ball, to Philip Jenkins, Barry Stapleton and
Nigel Surry who read and criticised an earlier draft of this article. Pat
Parsons kindly typed the final version.
envoy Christopher Lindenov noted in Aug. 1668: 'They are attempting
as a consequence of the fire ... where the buildings have been most
completely destroyed to make their city streets straighter than they
were before.' Lindenov to Christoffer Parsberg, 13 Aug. 1668: W.
Westergaard (ed.), The First Triple Alliance: The Letters of Christopher
See also the account of England drawn up by Pietro Mocenigo in 1671:
Calendar of State Papers Venetian 1671-2, p. 55. Mocenigo had been
proclamation encouraged brick construction work: R. Steele (ed. ), A
Bibliography of Royal Proclamations of the Tudar and Stuart
Sovereigns (1485-1714), (Bibliotheca Lindesiana, 2 vols., Oxford, 1910),
no. 3321.
4. F. Colsoni, Le Guide de Londres, (1693), ied.), W. H. Godfrey,
(Cambridge, 1951), p. 16. For the square see A. 1. Dasent, The History of
St. James's Square, (1895). Residents in spring 1698 included Count
Bonde, the new Swedish ambassador, and Count Tallard, the French
ambassador: Calendar of State Papers Domestic 1698, pp. 214,156.
5. For Neale's career see Dictionary of National Biography, XIV, pp. 147–9,
and J. H. Thomas, 'Thomas Neale, A Seventeenth-Century Projector',
6. Public Record Office, Chancery Proceedings, Six Clerks' Series, C8/232/52,
7. P.R.O. Lord Steward's Department, LS 13/197, Certificates of
Appointments 1672-85, f. 52v.
8. Copies of Neale's Mint indentures may be read in several locations:
Goldsmiths Library, MS. 51; Codrington Library, All Souls College,

10. Of the £1,800 Transfer Office funds, £1,200 went on Neale's salary. The office premises, consisting of two rooms, were located in Lombard Street: *Cal. T.B. 1693-6*, 626; *Calendar of Treasury Papers 1708-14*, p. 517.

11. Striking a man within the confines of a royal palace and drawing blood, for example, was punishable by loss of the right hand, perpetual imprisonment and a fine: Chamberlayne, (1st edn. 1669), p. 291.


18. The numbering on building plots in the development ran to at least 203:
Abstract of deeds in possession of Comyn Ching and Co., London. A xerox copy was kindly made available by A. F. Kelsall.


21. The two plans are reproduced in C. and R. Bell, *City Fathers: The Early History of Town Planning in Britain*, (1972 edn.), p. 71. The projected piazza would have been built, in both cases, on the site where Chancery Lane now enters Fleet Street.

22. H.C.L., Local Deeds Collection, documents 120, 726, 629, 43, 89, 70.

23. C. Dickens, *Sketches by Boz*, (1901 edn.), pp. 56-7. Gardens may also have been envisaged in the 1691 plan.


26. H.C.L., Local Deeds Collection, documents 89, 70.


28. K. G. Davies, *The Royal African Company* (1957), index. In Feb. 1679 Ward held £200 stock in the East India Company: *India Office Records*, B/35, East India Company Court Minutes, Apr. 1678-Apr. 1680, 154. The two trading locations were Kings Arms Yard, Coleman Street, and Oxford Court, Cannon Street: J. C. Hotten (ed.), *The Little London Directory of 1677*, (1863), n.p. An alternative, of course, is that there were two men of the same name trading at the same time.


32. H.C.L. Local Deeds Collection, document 100, assignment dated 23 Jan. 1693; *Cal. T.B. 1681-5*, 1207; *N.M. C House of Lords MSS 1692-3*, 288-90; 0. C. Williams led.), *The Minute Book of James Courthope*, *Camden Miscellany*, XX, (1953), pp. 23-5. Adams was a man of some standing. He was named as additional joint security in £500 for an East India Company factor in Feb. 1695, and was paid £101 6s. 3d. by the Company in mid-Oct. that year: *I.O.R., B/40*, East India Company Court Minutes Apr. 1690-Apr. 1695, 296b; B/41 East India Company Court Minutes Apr. 1695-Apr. 1699, 62. He may also have been a member of the Lieutenancy Commission of London in 1694: Chamberlayne, (18th edn., 1694, p. 596.

34. P.R.O., C5/614/105.


37. P.R.O., C7/245/58, Neale v. Dashwood, 1691. Foche was knighted 29 Oct. 1692, served as an excise commissioner, was something of a projector in his own right, and died 30 Apr. 1701: N. Luttrell, A Brief Historical Relation of State Affairs from September 1678 to April 1714, (6 vols., Oxford, 1857), 11, p. 603, IV, pp. 152-3, 317, 401.


41. M.R., Middlesex Deeds Registry, bundle 598, memorial no. 266, dated 5 Mar. 1734.

42. G.L., MS. 8674/2, policies 2141, 2222.


44. H.C.L., Local Deeds Collection, document 120.

45. Dickens, pp. 55-6, 57.


49. M.R., MR/FB, Freeholders Books, I, Nov. 1696-Oct. 1703, 14, 68. The books list all those freeholders qualified for jury service under the 1696 Act (7 and 8 William III, c.32). From 1692 the juror's qualification was possession of land, freehold, copyhold, or life tenure, worth £10 per annum.


indebted to Michael Harris of the Commercial Union who went to endless lengths to help locate early fire insurance records and provided lavish facilities in which to work upon the materials.

52. Except where otherwise stated, what follows is based on an analysis of Hand-in-Hand fire insurance policies taken out on premises in the Dials between 30 July 1701 and 29 July 1703, contained in G.L., MS. 8674/2.

53. In 1713 the younger Buckland was described as a brewer: M.R., Middlesex Deeds Registry, bundle 59, memorial no. 85, dated 25 Jan. 1713.


55. Ibid., 14, 68.

56. G.L., MS. 8674/2, policies 2467, 3863.

57. London Gazette, 3895, 8-11 Mar. 1702. Ibid, 3798, 2-6 Apr. 1702, carried a notice that a ring 'with three large Stones set in Gold, the middle one something like a Heart, ... was lost ... About 5 in the Morning, in Earl-street, over against the Rose and Crown near the Seven Dials.'

58. G.L., MS. 8674/2, policy 4384.


61. The London Magazine, 1 (1732), p. 150. For events leading to the incident and its aftermath see Ibid., pp. 93-4, 203.


64. The will is preserved in P.R.O. Prob. 11/465, f.120.

55 Greater London Record Office, Ref. 0/10/1 and 0/10/2.1 am indebted to Miss E. C. Mercer for this information.

66. Part of the land in question is now covered by Clarges Street.


69. Ibid., 1693-6, p. 162; Cal. T.P. 1556-1696, p. 292.

70. The words are sung by Lord Tolloller in Act I of W. S. Gilbert's Iolanthe.
Dr. James Thomas’s article sets out the detail of Neale’s development of Seven Dials and arises from his excellent doctoral thesis on Neale which should have become a book years ago. However Seven Dials was only one of many ‘Projects’ carried out by Neale whose background is set out elsewhere in this website. During a short life of only 58 years Neale’s range of ‘Projects’, positions at Court and Parliamentary work are quite mind-boggling.

His ‘Projects’ were:

June 1670  The development of Shadwell London
June 1675  Mine Drainage
March 1677  Ballast Shore at Jarrow Slake
C. 1680  Development of Tunbridge Wells – ‘The Pantiles’
September 1670  Dice to check cheating at gaming
September 1670  Wreck of Bermuda
March 1691  Recovery of silver from wrecks
July 1691  Making verdigris
August 1691  Mines in Maryland and Virginia
August 1691  Tapestry Makers of England
August 1691  Brass plates for kettles
August 1691  Steel equivalent to Corinthian steel
August 1691  Company of Royal Fishery of Ireland
September 1691  Dices and tables
September 1691  Wrecks off Ireland
October 1691  Land drainage Plymouth
January 1692  Mineral rights American colonies
May 1692  Street lights in Dublin
May 1692  Imitation Russian leather
June 1692  Seven Dials
June 1692  Wrecks in the West Indies
August 1692  Steel equivalent to Venetian Steel
September 1692  New ways of making paper
November 1692  Soldering and joining glasses
February 1693  Postal services to America
February 1693  Wreck of the Isle of Sables
June 1693  New ways of casting lead
June 1693  Wire screens and wire cloth
June 1693  Mining company in England
June 1693  Sand dredging in the Thames
May 1694  Salt Duty
February 1695  Million Lottery
October 1696  £5 million in ‘paper credit’