The Origins of English Financial Markets

The late seventeenth century was a crucial period in English financial history. A host of joint-stock companies emerged, offering the opportunity for investment in projects ranging from the manufacture of paper to the search for sunken treasure. Driven by the demands of the Nine Years’ War, the state also employed innovative tactics to attract money, its most famous scheme being the incorporation of the Bank of England. This is the first comprehensive study of the choices and actions of the investors who enthusiastically embraced London’s new financial market. It highlights the interactions between public and private finance, looks at how information circulated around the market and was used by speculators and investors, and documents the establishment of the institutions – the Bank of England, the national debt and an active secondary market in that debt – on which England’s financial system was built.

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The Origins of English Financial Markets

*Investment and Speculation before the South Sea Bubble*

Anne L. Murphy

*University of Hertfordshire*
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Dates and spelling

All dates given conform to the Julian calendar, which was in common use in England until 1752, and was until 1700 ten days, and after 1700 eleven days, behind the Gregorian calendar used in many European countries. It should also be noted that before 1752 the year began on 25 March. For the purpose of this study, however, the year is held to run from January to December. Thus, a date noted by contemporaries as being in January 1697 is transcribed here as January 1698.

Quotations in the text conform to the spelling and punctuation used in the original sources.
### Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Add. MS</td>
<td>Additional Manuscript, British Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BL</td>
<td>British Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BoE</td>
<td>Bank of England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EIC</td>
<td>East India Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESRO</td>
<td>East Sussex Record Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLL</td>
<td>Guildhall Library, London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HBC</td>
<td>Hudson’s Bay Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IOR</td>
<td>India Office Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JHC</td>
<td>Journals of the House of Commons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMA</td>
<td>London Metropolitan Archives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA, PRO</td>
<td>The National Archives, Public Record Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RAC</td>
<td>Royal African Company</td>
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