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Of *Ancient Rights & Priviledges*: demarcation disputes between the Companies of Joiners and Housecarpenters, Millwrights and Trunkmakers of Newcastle upon Tyne c. 1580–c. 1740

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Before the Elizabethan period the woodworkers in Newcastle upon Tyne had no formal organization to represent them, and very little woodwork survives from that era, but what does, for example the font cover of St. Nicholas Cathedral (c. 1500), suggests that some quality craftsmen were active in the town. Newcastle ranked third amongst the provincial towns of England in the early 16th century with a population of about 5000.¹ This must have generated enough architectural woodwork to have sustained at least a carpenters' fraternity of some sort, even though only one "wright" is listed amongst the craftsmen who challenged the authority of the merchant guilds in the historic revolt of 1515.² But carpentry and joinery could hardly have flourished.

The boom in house and shipbuilding which followed in the wake of the rapid expansion of the Newcastle coal trade from the mid-16th century onwards³ transformed the prospects for the woodworking trades. The increased demand for woodwork which the new prosperity of the town brought encouraged specialization of the different branches of the trade and laid the basis for their official separation as independent companies. The formation of the Housecarpenters and Joiners Company in July 1579 (incorporated in 1582)* was followed by that of a Joiners' Company in 1589, and finally the Shipwrights' Company in August 1636.**

* After the secession of the joiners ten years later this became the Company of Housecarpenters, Millwrights and Trunkmakers.

** The shipwrights almost certainly existed as an independent guild before then.⁴

A number of factors might have influenced this development. Firstly, the influx of craftsmen from other parts of the region which led to local demands for stricter trade controls. Like other provincial capitals of the period an expanding Newcastle developed into a regional training as well as trading centre, recruiting apprentices and other workmen from all four northern counties.⁵ This became a source of friction between the ruling oligarchy and the townspeople and eventually led to civil unrest, as in the 1633 apprentices' revolt when the case of a non-free joiner working in the town is listed as one of the grievances.⁶

Secondly, the constitutional turmoil caused by the attempts of the lesser merchants and artisans of Newcastle to break the monopoly of the town's wealthy merchant class—which reached a critical phase during the final quarter of the 16th century—allowed scope for the kind of opportunist manoeuvring at which the joiners seemed to have been particularly adept. Their successful break with the carpenters in 1589 came just months before Elizabeth I granted a new charter to the town which established a stable framework for local government. As a consequence of being an officially recognized trade under the new order the joiners were allocated an equal position with the carpenters in the body politic of Newcastle when a charter of James I in 1604 broadened the constitution of the town by giving 15 "by-trades" a share in government together with the 12 "misteries" or leading merchant companies.⁷

A third factor which could conceivably have

had a bearing on the split which occurred between the carpenters and joiners in Newcastle was the precedent set them by the formal division of the two trades in London in 1571. There is no specific evidence to link these events other than circumstantial, but the resemblance between the armorial bearings chosen by the Newcastle companies and those of their London counterparts is too close to be dismissed as mere coincidence.⁸ Moreover, due to the coal trade and the direct shipping route Newcastle was one of the few provincial centres that had close connections with the capital city and this led to similarities in other respects, notably architectural character which 17th century travellers often commented on.

However, none of these reasons in themselves adequately explain the animosity which seems to have existed between the Newcastle carpenters and joiners from the moment that we first encounter them in the records. Whereas the separation between the two trades in London seems to have come about relatively peacefully (initially, in any case),⁹ the division in Newcastle upon Tyne was an acrimonious affair from the beginning and this set the tone for relations between the two groups of craftsmen in the town for the next century and a half.

The Newcastle disputes took place in two distinct phases: an early struggle connected with the establishment of an independent guild for each respective trade towards the end of the 16th century, and an extended running battle which commences c. 1670 and lasted well over 60 years.

I

For information on the 16th century dispute we are entirely dependent on documentation related to the incorporation of the two companies. A letter from Mark Shaftoe Esq, Mayor of Newcastle, to the newly formed Housecarpenters' and Joiners' Company the same day as the Company was granted its ordinary in 1579 (Appendix A) spells out the terms of the future demarcation of work be-

tween the Housecarpenters and Joiners in the town, and expresses the hope that henceforth "p[er]petual quietness shall remaine betwixte the s[ai]d Fellowshipp". This not only suggests previous quarrels, but the order also demonstrates a tacit acceptance on the part of the authorities of the housecarpenters and joiners as fully independent trades being amalgamated principally to avoid further strife. The appointment of separate wardens, two carpenters and one joiner, for the new company further endorsed this status.

This "marriage of convenience" did not last long. After a petition from the joiners, acknowledging that the previous arrangement was the cause of "great Debates Quarrellings Malice and Strife To the greater Perell of some of the Parties and to the daily Trouble of the Magistrates of this Towne", the council granted the joiners a new ordinary in 1589 which established them as a company separate from the carpenters (Appendix B). It is doubtful whether this solution would have satisfied all parties concerned, but the surviving documentation gives no indication of further trouble between the two trades for the next 80 years.

Despite some favourable comments from visitors like Sir William Brereton about the aspect of the town¹⁰ very little is known about architectural development in Newcastle during the first half of the 17th century, and even less about the conditions faced by the building and associated crafts. The extension of municipal franchise in 1604 to include some of the lesser guilds made very little practical impact on the government of the town, which remained firmly in the hands of the rich merchants, and it was not until 1617 that the first members of the Joiners' Company gained the freedom of the town. From then until the Civil War disrupted civic administration 36 joiners registered, 23 of these in the first four years. By comparison 97 shipwrights became freemen between 1614 and 1643. The Housecarpenters' Company had to wait until 1636 for the honour when 36 members registered as freemen in one year. By 1643 their number had risen to 54.¹¹

The post-Civil War era brought renewed

building activity to Newcastle. The coal trade had ensured steady economic progress despite the political troubles, and new export industries like glass manufacture had been developed¹² which further stimulated local growth. Several important new buildings were erected, notably Trollope's Guildhall and Exchange buildings of 1655–8 and many opulent merchants' houses, some of which still survive in the Sand Hill area. The rising demand for architectural woodwork, however, also increased the scope for strife amongst carpenters and joiners, especially when the carpenters came under threat from the London-inspired trend towards building in brick and stone rather than wood. Celia Fiennes, who visited Newcastle in 1698, thought that "... it most resembles London of any place in England, its buildings lofty and large of brick mostly or stone; the streets are very broad and handsome".¹³

II

It is highly likely that the local carpenters and joiners were aware of the disputes between the London Carpenters' and Joiners' Companies—which were then drawing to a close after 50 years of intense, albeit intermittent strife¹⁴—even though no reference is made to this in the documentation. The first recorded evidence of a resumption of the struggle between the two trades concerns a routine matter. In May 1669 a house-carpenter by the name of Joseph Potts was charged by the Joiners' Company with making a bedstead and selling it to a farmer contrary to the agreed division of work.¹⁵ A reference in the records of the Housecarpenters' Company to an "Inrollment of Carpenters & Joiners work in Comon . . . dated 1669", however, suggests that the battlelines were already being drawn for a much more serious confrontation.¹⁶

This came two years later when the Newcastle Common Council, following a complaint by the Joiners' Company, charged Alderman Thomas Davison, a former mayor, to investigate the matter. Upon his recommendation

"windows moulder work", the principal bone of contention, was designated as belonging solely to the joiners. This ruling—which apparently took place without consultation of the carpenters (see Appendix D)—sparked off the first of a series of clashes between the Newcastle Housecarpenters' and Joiners' Companies which continued well into the 18th century.

The carpenters responded to the Davison report with a petition of their own which drew attention to the agreement of 1579 which divided such work evenly between the two crafts (Appendix C), whereupon Ralph Grey, the presiding mayor, concluded that a special legal trial would be needed to sort the affair out. Not satisfied to wait for this, "Tryall by Law", the carpenters decided to take matters in their own hands. A special meeting of the Joiners' Company, held on the 17th of January 1673, heard a complaint about one of their members who, having overheard a housecarpenter boasting of, "an order made among the Carpenters about takeing all the windowes & dores in buildings or else they would not build the house", informed both the magistrate of the town and the Joiners' Company thereof, but since then had retracted his evidence in public when the guilty party was "taxed by the Carpenters for revealing the secrets of their Company". It subsequently transpired that the informant was put up to this withdrawal by a relative of the chastised carpenter, who also happened to be a member of the Joiners' Company!¹⁷

The trial, when it eventually took place in 1673,¹⁸ did not however succeed in resolving the issue. The carpenters insisted that the verdict had gone in their favour and continued to do "moulder work" in windows—or rather, as was more often the case, to employ joiners to do this kind of work for them.

The carpenters' blatant flouting of the rules led to the wardens together with two other members of the company being disenfranchised in October 1674 for refusing to submit to the directions of the Common Council.¹⁹

Their freedom was restored three months later in January 1675,²⁰ but only after faithful

promises of future compliance with the rules, and following a lengthy petition from the company calling, amongst other things, for the reunification of the Housecarpenters' and Joiners' Companies (Appendix D). The latter request was duly ignored and, according to another petition from the carpenters later that same year, further penalties were imposed on the company as a whole in order to ensure its future cooperation (Appendix E). All, it seems to no great effect. In July 1675 delegates of the two companies were meeting for the first time of their own accord to discuss their respective grievances,²¹ but the following January we find the Joiners' Company again having to levy a cess of 12^d on its members in order to maintain its battle in the municipal courts.²²

This turned out to have been a precautionary measure rather than a battle cry for although there is a gap in the documentation for the period 1680–9, it would appear as if a lull in the hostilities followed the clashes of the 1670s, with only minor incidents in which the carpenters were by no means always the culprits.

However, matters took a turn for the worse in the mid 1690s. Again it was the Joiners' Company who took the offensive with a formal complaint to the mayor in July 1694, followed by an arrest of a carpenter in November of that year for, "exercising ye trade of a Joyner".²³ In what appears to have been a deliberate act of provocation the Joiners' Company, by a majority vote, decided in May 1695 that members should assist each other in the sawing of deals, a job traditionally claimed by the carpenters.²⁴ A year later we find the company having to support four joiners being prosecuted by the Housecarpenters' Company for the laying of floors and generally doing other kinds of "carpenters" work.²⁵ (Appendix F.) In retaliation the joiners resolved in future not to provide the carpenters with tools.²⁶ The authorities intervened in July 1696 with an attempt at arbitration, apparently without success for in December a special meeting of the Joiners' Company gave their stewards full authority to pursue the struggle with the carpenters, "according to their discretion", and in the knowledge that the Company, "will beare de-

fray and pay all such costs charges & Expenses as they shall sustaine".²⁷

In 1702 we find the Joiners' Company preparing a statement, "setting forth what is properly the work belonging to & be used by this Company of Joyners".²⁸ Evidently a more conciliatory course of action was decided on which, following another half-hearted attempt by the Common Council to intervene in the dispute in October 1703,²⁹ eventually bore fruit in December 1711 when a joint petition of the two companies led to a formal treaty being ratified as an act by the Council under the leadership of Mayor Matthew Featherstonhaugh. This document sets out in great detail exactly which jobs belonged to each craft and which could be practised jointly, and was signed by 56 housecarpenters and 37 joiners (Appendix G).

III

The 1711 agreement was a genuine attempt by all concerned to put an end to a quarrel which by then had been dragging on for 40 years—the two companies, in the words of the official report of the event, "being resolved for the future to live in perfect amity & friendship & to observe keep & be concluded by the said writeing or instrument in every matter & thing to the employment & exercise of both their trades".³⁰ And for a period of about 15 years every effort seems to have been made by both companies to keep to the bargain. There is evidence in the records of rebellious elements amongst the rank and file of the Joiners' Company being reprimanded and even expelled under the terms of the agreement,³¹ and the same was probably true for the housecarpenters although no relevant records survived for the latter company from this period (but see Appendix J). They met periodically to discuss their differences and on one occasion in July 1718, actually joined forces to defend the right to work in the neighbouring town of Gateshead.³² But the alliance was an uneasy one.

The joiners in particular remained suspicious of the intentions of the housecarpenters as is

demonstrated, for example, by the ruling they brought in when their ordinances were revised in March 1719 which forbade any member of the company to undertake what was classed as "joiners' work" for a carpenter.³³ A few years later the two companies were again embroiled in a serious dispute. Once more it concerned the making of wooden windows, or rather, an interpretation of what constituted "sash-work".

The problem was that the 1711 settlement, which allocated the making of sash-windows—then still a novelty in Newcastle³⁴—to the joiners, did not specify what exactly was understood by this concept. As a consequence each of the two crafts interpreted the ruling as it suited them, with predictable results when there was an upsurge of this kind of work during the 1720s.³⁵

Matters came to a head in 1726 when the Joiners' Company interfered with carpenters making wooden-barred windows at a new Dissenting Meeting House. A special committee appointed by the Council to investigate the ensuing quarrel between the companies concluded that, "all Windows made with Wood wherein Glass is fixed with Putty or other Such like Past[e] be made by the Company of Joyners the Same being in the Judgement of the s[ai]d Committee sash Windows". This rather dubious definition of the term, "sash-window", which was accepted by the Council on 15 December 1726,³⁶ went beyond the letter of the 1711 treaty and greatly extended the scope for the joiners at the expense of the carpenters (Appendix H).

Not surprisingly it led to a serious escalation of the dispute over the next few years and ultimately to litigation.³⁷ Another Council meeting convened in April 1729, at which, "Petitions being read and the Stewards and severall other Freemen of each of the s[ai]d Companys and their Clerks or Sollicitors heard and a model produc[e]d by each Company of the Window in dispute and the whole affair fully considered", upheld the 1726 decision in favour of the Joiners' Company.³⁸ This was the end of official intervention in the dispute, but not of the quarrel itself.

IV

The carpenters, much aggrieved by what they considered to have been an unfair decision, continued to make wooden windows and other items classed as joiners' work, and were duly prosecuted for this under the regulation until about 1736. Further meetings were held between the two companies,³⁹ and it is known that the Joiners' Company made contingency plans for the continuation of the struggle during the 1730s.⁴⁰ but the affair seems to have just petered out in the end without any more serious clashes.

The damage done to relations between the two groups of craftsmen by this long running series of demarcation disputes was, however, considerable and not so readily repaired. A mid-18th century history of the affair amongst the records of the Housecarpenters' Company (Appendix J) shows that a generation after the battles of the 1720s many carpenters were still not reconciled to their defeat. It is equally clear from the tone of the document that they saw no realistic prospect of reversing the decisions however much they felt prejudiced by it. As was the case in London the Newcastle joiners too seem consistently to have come off the better of the two trades in the dispute. Again this could not have been achieved without at least the tacit support from the authorities for in Newcastle carpenters outnumbered joiners by a significant margin throughout the period under consideration.

There are no records for the 16th century, but a ratio of roughly 2:1 in favour of the carpenters is implied by the number of wardens allocated to each when they first became incorporated as a joint guild in 1579 (see above). As we have seen a ratio of 8:5 prevailed during the first half of the 17th century and in 1711 when the two companies signed the treaty that was still the situation. In terms of overall numbers the Newcastle trades were, of course, very much smaller than their London counterparts as one would expect from the vast difference in size between the two places. In 1690, for example, there were about 3290 free joiners in London. In 1724 that figure had risen to

5360.⁴¹ During the corresponding period in Newcastle the free joiners probably never numbered more than 40 at any given point, and the carpenters about 60.⁴² The numbers of craftsmen actually practising the trade may have been considerably less in both places.⁴³

Neither of the two Newcastle companies approached even the limited degree of social prestige or influence of the London companies. But then, on the other hand, they did retain their control over the local trade for much longer. The Newcastle Joiners' Company, for instance, continued its searches at least until the last quarter of the 18th century with official backing.⁴⁴ It was one of the benefits of strong local government. Even the less important of the Newcastle guilds had considerable power in controlling entry into the craft through a practice called "stopping".⁴⁵ Apart from the occasional political use of the procedure, as for example when all the carpenters' apprentices were stopped in 1675 to force the company to comply with Common Council decisions (see Appendix E), "stopping", as a means of censure usually served a variety of administrative ends, including quality control. Several cases of joiners' apprentices being stopped and re-examined on this ground are recorded for the early 18th century.⁴⁶

However, just as the Common Council failed in its efforts to resolve the quarrel between the Newcastle Housecarpenters' and Joiners' Companies despite having the legal authority to do so, the two companies in their turn were often unable to control rebellious elements within their own ranks. The Joiners' Company in particular seems to have had difficulties in this regard. Numerous cases are recorded of its members either working for carpenters contrary to company rules, or refusing to testify against carpenters in public for trespassing in the joiners' area of work. Some were prepared to go even further. In 1676 a steward of the company was accused of having lent one of the Carpenters' stewards the keys to the Joiners' Company hall for two weeks at the height of the 1670s dispute, so that the latter could inspect their ordinary.⁴⁷ Another joiner in 1696 deliberately failed to inform his stewards of an

official summons to appear before the municipal courts at a certain time thereby almost losing them the case.⁴⁸ In 1728, when the dispute over sash-work flared up again, a joiner lent a sword to a carpenter in order to keep the wardens of the Joiners' Company from inspecting windows he was making at a house on the Newcastle Quayside.⁴⁹

An obvious explanation for this kind of behaviour could lie with the family connections which existed between members of the Newcastle Housecarpenters' and Joiners' Companies. Even the briefest of surveys of the names of craftsmen involved in these disputes shows the extent to which membership of the two guilds cut across older, and evidently stronger, bonds of kinship. A detailed analysis of the more serious incidents of the kind corroborates this view. On the other hand, it is clear from the records that many craftsmen simply resented interference of any kind with their working practices and employment opportunities and controlling them would have been hard even if it were not necessary to draw such rigid lines of demarcation between the domains of the carpenter and that of the joiner—a task which proved no easier in Newcastle than it had been in London.

V

The much smaller market for woodwork in the town naturally did not permit specialization to develop to the extent of the contemporary London trade. The Newcastle woodworkers were organized, as we have seen, in three broadly defined groups, each represented by an incorporated company: the shipwrights or ship carpenters, the housecarpenters and the joiners.

The first of these, the shipwrights had a clearly identified, easily recognizable area of work. Their cohesive organizational structure, their numbers and relative prosperity guaranteed them political security and allowed them to steer clear of the demarcation disputes which so bedevilled relations between the Housecarpenters' and Joiners' Companies.

In many ways the Newcastle carpenters of

the 17th century still resembled an older form of woodworker known, in the North of England, simply as “wrights” (a term then largely obsolete in England, but still in use in Scotland) in that they were responsible for general woodwork of diverse categories. Nominally the Housecarpenters’ Company catered for craftsmen operating as housecarpenters, millwrights, wheelwrights, trunkmakers and sawyers (or combinations of these). In practice a differentiation between the various aspects of the trade was only made from the early 18th century onwards when some company members began to style themselves, “house carpenter and millwright”.⁵⁰

In comparison with their London brethren the Newcastle joiners too had an unusually open job description, ranging from decorative house fittings to the making of loose items of “joined” furniture,⁵¹ cabinet making, turnery and ship joinery. Unlike the housecarpenters whose prospects for future development were circumscribed on the one hand by the inalienable rights of the shipwrights and on the other by the general decline in demand for structural woodwork in the building industry, the joiners’ horizon was broadening as the market for their products began to increase and diversify. The problem was that the carpenters had a traditional claim to some of the emergent new markets in the trade and were determined to exercise that right.⁵²

The division which had occurred between carpentry and joinery in Newcastle when the two companies were formed in the 16th century was in many respects an artificial one. Although formal documents were drawn up at the time outlining the respective roles which each craft was supposed to play in the future, a number of grey areas had remained where common practice and shared skills defied clear demarcation of the kind of work belonging to each trade. Not only were the rules under which the two companies operated therefore vague and open to different interpretations, a century of development since these were first formulated had rendered both the terminology and the scope of the definitions obsolete—loopholes which the Joiners’ Company in par-

ticular seems to have been able to turn to its advantage.

Window work, the single most important reason for the Newcastle disputes, is a case in point. No one in the late 16th century could possibly have foreseen the important place which the making of wooden windows would come to occupy in the trade and the discord it would cause between the carpenters and joiners.

The 1579 ruling, confirmed in 1589, allocated to the joiners the making of window casements and “trellissinge of windowes”, and to them jointly, door and window “mulder work”. It seems unlikely that the first two of these items could have been a source for disagreement at the time, because they could not have constituted a significant enough part of the craftsmen’s business. Although wooden casements (i.e. with glass set in a lead lattice) are known to have been used in this period, iron casements were the norm. Trellising—presumably the “lattice[s] . . . made either of wicker or fine rifts of oak in checkerwise”, that William Harrison mentions,⁵³ and which was used instead of glass—was common enough, but cheap and not worth arguing over.

The term “mulder”, or “moulder” work is a baffling one, but important to an understanding of the complexities of the Newcastle disputes. It could only seriously be regarded as having been the object of a quarrel between the two crafts in the 16th century if it referred to the profuse carving one typically sees on Elizabethan pannelled woodwork, yet we cannot be certain of this interpretation. Even in the late 17th century, while the records leave us in no doubt about “moulder work” being the focus of the dispute, despite—as the carpenters pointed out in one of their documents (Appendix C) it not being the most lucrative aspect of the trade—definitions seem to have gone with the particular viewpoint of the craftsmen concerned.

For instance, the evidence of surviving examples of the fashionable architecture of the period in Newcastle suggests that a logical explanation for the concept would be the elaborate classicizing detailing characteristic of

the multi-storeyed, many-windowed facades of contemporary timberframed houses such as the famous Bessie Surtees House in Sand Hill. However, a note in a document of c. 1672, preserved amongst the Housecarpenters' Company records (Appendix C), calls into question even this fairly obvious interpretation. It reads:

The principall thing in Difference is the making of Windows moulder work, which the Joyners never yett claimed solely to themselves, for their late complaint* upon their former reference was onely ag[ains]t the making of casements Friezes and mouldings which is not to be understood of windows.

It is no wonder the local officials who had to adjudicate in this dispute were in such despair!

Forty years later a fresh attempt was made to demarcate the boundaries between carpentry and joinery and the carpenters were, amongst other tasks relating to the making of windows, awarded the sole right to, "windows moulded or not moulded . . . except sash-windows" (Appendix G). Undoubtedly the company must have considered this particular clause a considerable prize to have won after so many years of fruitless struggle. Imagine therefore the carpenters' consternation in 1726 and 1729—the first occasions at which the terms of the 1711 agreement were seriously tested in public—when their interpretation of window 'moulder work' as also including the novel practice of fixing window glass in a wooden framework rather than a leaden lattice as was the custom before, was rejected in favour of the joiners' argument that the latter constituted 'sash-work'.

Once again the carpenters had been outsmarted by the politically more astute joiners. When window "moulder work" in the traditional sense was the issue during the 1670s the joiners managed to persuade the authorities on the basis of their superior skills in practice that it belonged to their craft rather than that of the carpenter, even though conventions held otherwise. When "sash-work" became the op-

erative term during the early 18th century for this category of work the skill factor rather than the correct interpretation of the terminology of the regulations was again the crucial element which seems to have won the day for the Newcastle joiners—just as it did for their London counterparts 60 years earlier.

VI

There is no written confirmation that this tactic was deliberate policy on the part of the Newcastle Joiners' Company, but plenty of other circumstantial evidence exists to suggest that the Company was fully conscious of the advantage which accrued from the joiners' greater facility in the handling of wood, and skilfully exploited the changing market situation to secure additional work opportunities for its members at the expense of the carpenters.

One of its boldest acts was to relax its regulations against the use of foreigners during the 1690s in order to attract skilled journeymen cabinet makers to Newcastle. Even though the concession was carefully circumscribed, and was revoked as soon as it had served its purpose in 1715,⁵⁴ it nonetheless reflects an unusually progressive attitude for a provincial guild. More significantly, it shows an awareness of the revolutionary changes that were taking place in the London woodworking industry at the time and a determination to keep up with these.

Another piece of evidence from the early 18th century confirms the London connection. According to the records of the London Company of Joiners and Ceilers, a certain John Gafton, a Newcastle freeman joiner of some 30 years standing, was granted the freedom to work in the London Liberties on 2 May 1702.⁵⁵ Not only is such an exchange of members between two corporate companies rare for the period, the fact that a testimonial signed by the officiating Newcastle wardens sufficed to gain this privilege without the customary "proof-piece" being required from the applicant either indicates some informal reciprocal arrange-

* Complaint investigated by Alderman Thomas Davison.

ment between the companies (of which no record survives), or, that the London Company was familiar with the Newcastle scene and satisfied with the standards of craftsmanship maintained by its registered joiners.

Nothing survives amongst the records of the Newcastle Housecarpenters' Company to suggest that they maintained similar links with developments in the trade outside the confines of the region. Indeed, everything about the Newcastle carpenters' campaigns against the joiners throughout the 160 years covered by the documentation has about it an air of stagnation—retrogression even—not an attitude conducive to advancement in times of rapid social and economic change.

VII

However, in the final analysis it was not craft considerations which proved to be the deciding factor in the Newcastle disputes. It is clear from the subsequent development of the two guilds that the Housecarpenters' Company survived a rather traumatic period of decline on the part of the name trade from the 1670s onwards without serious long-term damage to its social standing within the town. This can be partly explained by the progressive loss of the craft-base of the two rival companies—a development that ultimately rendered them into social clubs with little relevance to the practical day-to-day regulation of their respective name trades. This change formed part of a national trend which affected most trade and craft guilds in England in the course of the 18th century. As far as the Newcastle Housecarpenters' and Joiners' Companies are concerned, by the time that they formally agreed to bury the hatchet in the 1790s,⁵⁶ the process had virtually run its course.⁵⁷

Another external factor which conditioned the outcome of the Newcastle disputes concerns the nature of the local society. As Joyce Ellis has recently demonstrated, when the second and most serious of the quarrels between the Newcastle carpenters and joiners took place, Newcastle had already developed

an effective socio-political structure uniquely suited to its peculiar circumstances—a system of local government which channelled conflict, “away from spontaneous and violent eruptions in the market place . . . towards forms of industrial action that were less destructive and easier to settle by mediation”.⁵⁸

Her analysis goes a long way towards explaining the contradictory messages that one gets from reading the documentation related to this particular affair: the apparent ineffectualness of official action in the face of intense pressure on the part of the industrial contestants which nevertheless, in the end, managed to steer the quarrel in the direction which the authorities wanted it to go. It is this curious mixture of revolt tempered by respect for authority which sets the Newcastle Carpenters' and Joiners' disputes apart from those in London, and which makes them doubly valuable as alternative examples of internecine craft relations in the English building world during a period of momentous industrial and social upheaval.

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NOTES

The following abbreviations are used:
 TWAS = Tyne and Wear Archives Services
 AA = *Archaeologia Aeliana* (a superscript number denotes the series)
 JCMB = Joiners' Company Minute Book 1660–1680

JCDB = Joiners' Company Minute & Day Book 1689–1732

JCOB = Joiners' Company Order Book

NCCB = Newcastle upon Tyne Common Council Book

Housecarpenters' Company = Company of Housecarpenters, Millwrights and Trunkmakers.

The term "housecarpenter" and "carpenter" have been treated synonymously in the text. As shipcarpenters were called "shipwrights" at the time there can be no confusion. This was contemporary practice as well.

Unless stated otherwise all books were published in London.

¹For rank order W. G. Hoskins, *Local History in England* (1984) Appendix 1; for population, R. Welford (ed.), *History of Newcastle and Gateshead*, II (1885), pp. 173, 244, 292.

²F. W. Dendy, "The Struggle between the Merchant and Craft Guilds of Newcastle in 1515", *AA*³, VII (1911), p. 94.

³Between 1563 and 1685 shipment in coal from Newcastle increased nineteenfold. J. U. Nef, *The Rise of the British Coal Industry* (1932), I: 21.

⁴On this D. J. Rowe, "The Records of the Company of Shipwrights of Newcastle upon Tyne 1622–1967", *Publications of the Surtees Society*, CLXXXI (1970).

⁵On this development see P. Clark and P. Slack, *English Towns in Transition 1500–1700* (1976), Chapter 4.

⁶R. Howell, *Newcastle upon Tyne and the Puritan Revolution* (Oxford, 1967), pp. 58–9.

⁷For a chronological survey of these events with relevant documentation R. Welford, *History of Newcastle*, Vols. II and III.

⁸For the London companies see J. Bromley (ed.), *The Armorial Bearings of the Guilds of London* (1961). For Newcastle, J. Walker and M. A. Richardson, *The Armorial bearings of several incorporated companies etc.* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1824).

⁹On this see especially B. W. E. Alford and T. C. Barker, *A History of the Carpenters' Company* (1968), pp. 77–81.

¹⁰Sir William Brereton Bart, *Notes of a Journey through Durham and Northumberland in the year 1635* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1844).

¹¹Newcastle upon Tyne Records Committee, Publication III: *The Register of Freemen of Newcastle upon Tyne from the Corporation Guild and Admission Books chiefly of the Seventeenth century* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1923). These records go

back to the beginning of the 14th century, but regular entries only began after 1600. The bunching of trades together over periods suggests a rolling programme of first registration which might have had political significance.

¹²On this E. S. Godfrey, *The Development of English Glassmaking 1560–1640* (Oxford, 1975), pp. 201ff.

¹³E. Morris (ed.), *The Journeys of Celia Fiennes* (1947), p. 209.

¹⁴Alford & Barker, *ut supra*. For the principal documentation related to the London disputes see E. B. Jupp, *An Historical Account of the Worshipful Company of Carpenters of the City of London* (2nd edn. 1887).

¹⁵JCMB, Entry for 13 May 1669. TWAS Cat. No. 648/3.

¹⁶See volume of collected ordinances copied out in 1775. TWAS Cat. No. 900/9 fol. 8. The "parchment" referred to has not survived.

¹⁷JCMB.

¹⁸No specific reference to this trial could be found in the Newcastle Municipal or Court archives, only in the company records.

¹⁹NCCB 1656–1722. Entry for 5 October 1674. TWAS Cat. No. 589/6 fols. 134–5.

²⁰Ibid., Entry for 18 January 1674/5, Fols. 135 v, 136.

²¹JCMB, Entry for 19 July 1675.

²²Ibid., Entry for 12 January 1675/6.

²³JCDB, TWAS Cat. No. TWAS 648/4. Entries for 20 July, 14 August, 8 November 1694.

²⁴Ibid., Entry for 7 May 1695.

²⁵Ibid., Entries for 8 May, 18 May, 21 May 1696.

²⁶JCDB, Entry for 27 July 1696. Ordinance No. 27 of the Housecarpenters' Company was probably part of this tit-for-tat exchange between the two guilds. It stipulates that, "no Brother assist a joiner of the town in making or placing windows under penalty of five pounds". TWAS Cat. No. 903/9.

²⁷JCDB, Entry for 10 December 1696.

²⁸Ibid., Entry for 27 October 1702.

²⁹NCCB 1699–1878, TWAS Cat. No. 589/12, fol. 78. Entry for 4 October 1703.

³⁰NCCB 1656–1722, fol. 245.

³¹JCDB. Entries for March 1714, 7 May 1718, 5 July 1721.

³²Ibid., Entry for 17 July 1718. Gateshead, which fell under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Durham jealously guarded her independence from Newcastle. Carpenters and Joiners in the town were amalgamated with Dyers, Fullers, Blacksmiths, Locksmiths and Cutlers by charter in 1595 (renewed 1671). See G. N. Drinkwater "Gateshead Charters

and Companies from the Twelfth to the Seventeenth Century and later', AA⁴, XXXVI (1958), pp. 165–206.

³³ Ordinance No. 46. *JCOB*, Revised 31 March 1719. TWAS 648/6. See also above note 26.

³⁴ Sash-windows were first introduced in London c. 1670 (H. J. Louw, "The Origin of the Sash-window", *Architectural History*, 26 (1983), pp. 49–72). Celia Fiennes, who had a keen eye for this important component of the new London fashion saw none during her visit to Newcastle in 1698 (see above note 13). However, Sir William Blackett's house illustrated in J. Kip's *Nouveau Theatre de la Grande Bretagne* I (1716) had sash-windows in a new extension, and quite a few of the houses shown in Corbridge's map of Newcastle (1723) had windows of the kind.

³⁵ See list of "offences" committed by the joiners amongst the documents of the Carpenters' Company, which probably formed the basis for their 1726 petition. *House Carpenters' Company Records*, TWAS, Cat. No. 903/3, Document 33.

³⁶ *NCCB 1718–43*. TWAS Cat. No. 589/13, fols. 141–2.

³⁷ *JCDB*, Entries for 15 August, 11 October 1728; 28 March 1729; periods: St. Peter's Day 1729—St. Peter's Day 1730; 29 September 1729—2 Febr. 1729/30; 2 Febr. 1729/30—March 1730/1.

³⁸ *NCCB 1718–43*, fol. 174.

³⁹ *JCDB*, Entries for period: St. Peter's Day 1731—St. Peter's Day 1732; Jan. 1732/2—29 June 1733; 1 March 1732/3; 27 April 1736; 23 June 1736.

⁴⁰ Ordinance No. 61, dated 1736. *JCOB*.

⁴¹ From Parliamentary Returns quoted in H. L. Phillips, *Annals of the Worshipful Company of Joiners of the City of London* (1915), p. 53.

⁴² 125 Freeman joiners and 142 Freeman housecarpenters registered in Newcastle over the period 1670 to 1710 (*Newcastle Register* III), i.e. the age range indicated by the list of signatories of the 1711 treaty. Allowing for natural wastage with an average life expectancy of 30 years, figures of 40 and 60 maximum for membership of the respective companies seem reasonable. These figures are supported by the surviving quarterage rolls.

⁴³ Occupational statistics compiled by Ms Joyce Ellis from the Newcastle baptismal registers for the period (see below note 58) gives a combined total of between 40–50 active adult carpenters and joiners, i.e. less than 50% of the projected membership of the two companies. This figure seems rather low considering that the records indicate the business of the companies to have focused almost exclusively on practical craft matters throughout the period

under consideration. See also Appendix J.

⁴⁴ J. S. Robson, "Some Account of the Incorporated Company of Free Joiners of Newcastle upon Tyne" AA³, V (1909), p. 187. In London the practice was discontinued in 1748/9 (H. L. Phillips, *Annals*, p. 60).

⁴⁵ See *Newcastle Register* III, 'Introduction', for an explanation of how the procedure worked. For the organisation of the Newcastle guilds, R. J. Charleton, *Newcastle Town: An Account of its Rise and Progress etc.* (1885), Chapter 1.

⁴⁶ Newcastle upon Tyne Records Committee, Publication VI: *The Register of Freemen of Newcastle upon Tyne: Eighteenth Century* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1926), pp. 121ff.

⁴⁷ *JCMB*, Entry for 25 May 1676.

⁴⁸ *JCDB*, Entry for 29 July 1696.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, Entry for 11 October 1728.

⁵⁰ *Newcastle Register* VI, Guild book no. II: 1698–1709.

⁵¹ "Joined" work was usually made from English oak. On this see T. Crispin, "English joined stools", *Antique Collector* (Febr. 1975), pp. 18ff; A. Wells-Cole, "Oak furniture: its development in the North of England", *Antique Collector* (Sept. 1974), pp. 43–9.

⁵² For a discussion of the unequal conditions faced by carpenters and joiners nationally during this period as a result of industrial and cultural developments see my forthcoming paper, "Demarcation disputes between English carpenters and joiners from the 16th to the 18th century", in *Construction History*, V (1989).

⁵³ William Harrison, *The Description of England* (1587), (New York, 1968), p. 197.

⁵⁴ Ordinances 38, 54, 55. *JCOB*. The wording of the clause which revoked it in 1715 suggests that the concession led to widespread abuse. Nevertheless, the precedent it set was followed in 1739 when the general restrictions on the employment of foreign joiners in the town was lifted. (*Ibid.*, Ordinance No. 62, dated 26 November 1739.) This caused an influx of foreign workers which proved difficult to contain despite several orders to that effect (*Ibid.*, Orders No. 63–67).

⁵⁵ Entry in London Joiners' Company Minute Book quoted in full in *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne*, 3rd series II (1905), p. 117.

⁵⁶ On 2 February 1791, an agreement was reached between the Joiners' and Housecarpenters' Companies that, "hence forward all Buildings under Corporation Leese May be Undertakin and Executed by either Carpenter or Joiner with out

Molestation from each other Provided he be a Company Keeper in Either Company also the Men he employs to execute the work must be a Company Keeper in one or other of the two Companys" (*JCOB*, Final page).

⁵⁷Only about 10% of the members of the Joiners' Company in the late 1690s practised joinery or a related craft. Based on comparisons of occupational information from W. Hilton's *Newcastle and Gateshead Directory* (1795) with list of members entered in the Joiners' Company's Revised *Order Book* of 8 July 1799 (Twas 748/7). Conclusion supported by the formation of a Friendly Society of Joiners for Newcastle upon Tyne in the same year (articles and rules published by M. Angus 1799). Obviously the old guild no longer satisfied the practical needs of local workmen. No comparable figures available for the Housecarpenters' Company.

⁵⁸Joyce Ellis, "A dynamic society: social relations in Newcastle upon Tyne 1660-1760", in P. Clark (ed.) *The Transformation of English Provincial Towns 1600-1800* (1984), pp. 190-227.

A selection of documents related to the disputes from the records of the Joiners' and Housecarpenters' Companies in the Tyne and Wear Archives Department

APPENDIX A

The Order from Marke Shaftoe Esq. Mayor 3rd July 21 Elizabeth 1579

(Twas 903/3 Document 3.)

"And to the end that p.petuall quietness shall remaine betwixt the sd. Fellowshipps of house Carpenters & Joyn^{rs} & that none of them shall from henceforth occupie each others occupation therefore wee the sd Mayor & Aldermen & Sheriffe doe order & decree that from henceforth for ever the Joyn^{rs}. of the sd. Fellowshipps shall have & occupie severally to their owne selves and their owne occupacon, all sealing of houses within Dorments & Windowes together with making Drawtables of Frame worke & all other tables with turned posts making of all Buffett Stooles Formes with turned feet & cut sides & all other Formes runn with any plain & the workeing of all

Cupboards Ambries Presses Chaires & Sconces [sconces] being of Framed worke & the making of all casemts trellissinge of Windowes Butteries of framed Worke Framed Chy[sts] & all other Chists being pinned with Wood together with all manner of other worke belonging to the workeing onely of Joyners. And further—the sd Major Aldermen Sheriffe doe order & decree by those presents that as well the sd. housecarpetners as Joyn^{rs} of the said Fellowship & their Successors may occupie in Comon with making of these kinde of things following that is to say to make Butteries & any other kinde of Worke which sealeing Linck that is to say one board grown in another & nailed with Iron Nailes & to worke & make all manner of Chists for Dead Corps & all other Chests being not pinned with wood & removeing of all bedsteads Cupboards & Drawtables together with making of Doures & Windowes mulder Worke & whosoever being an House Carp^{tr} of the sd Fellowship that hereafter shall worke of the occupacon of Joyner aforesd contrary to the Forme above sd shall forfeit for every time of this such offence the sume of 20^s: to the use of the sd Fellowship."

APPENDIX B

Extracts from the Ordinary of the Joiners' Company Newcastle upon Tyne. 28 March 1589 (From an attested copy of 13 April 1782)

(Twas 648/1.)

"Know you that where we the said Maior Aldermen and Sheriffe have of late seen an Ordinary or Writeing granted by Mr Marke Shafto [Appendix A] then being Maior of the Towne of Newcastle upon Tine the Aldermen and Sheriffe of the same Towne unto the House Carpenters and Joyners Uniteing and Conjoyneing them into one Fellowship that they might be ruled by and under one Government which was then thought to be the great Quietness Profit and Comoditie of the foresaid Fellowshipps But Now Contrary to the Expectation of the foresaid Maior Aldermen

and Sheriffe there doeth arrive amongst them great Debates Quarrellings Malice and Strife To the greate Perell of some of the Parties and to the daily Trouble of the Magistrates of this Towne for the Time being for Redresse whereof and to avoid such Inconvenience as is thereby like to ensue in Time to come at the humble Suite and Request of the Fellowship of Joyners made unto us the said Maior Aldermen and Sheriffe that we would Vouchsafe by some Meanes to releave them thus distressed have consented upon good Advisement to sever the foresaid Fellowshipp of House Carpenters and Joyners and to give to them the said Joyners a New Ordinary Whereby they and their successors may alwaies hereafter live in Unite and more civill and better Order of Government then heretofore they and their successors have done

“and further

We the said Maior Aldermen and Sheriffe doe order and decree by those Presents That from henceforth for ever the said Wardens and Fellowship of Joyners and their successors shall have and occupie themselves as onely belonging to their Occupation of Joyner all sealeing of Houses within Dorments and Windowes together with makeing of all Draw Tables of framed Worke all other Tables with turned Posts makeing of all Buffett Stulls Formes with turned Feet and Cutt Sides and all other Formes run with any Plaine and working of all Cubbers Ammeres Pressers Chaires and Skreenes being of framed Worke and the making of all Casements Tralesing of Windowes Butteres of framed Worke framed Cheists and all other Cheists being pinned with Wood together with all other Worke belonging to the Occupation onely of Joyners

“And Further:

Wee the said Maior Aldermen and Sheriffe doe Order and decree by those presents that the said Fellowship of Joyners and their Successors as well as the Fellowship of House Carpenters and their Successors may occupie the makeing of these Kinde of Things following (that is to say) to make Butteres of any Kinde of Worke with Sealeing *hucke* (that is to say) one Bourd growne in another and nailed with

Iron Nails.* And to worke and make all Manner of Cheists for dead Corps and all other Cheists being not pinned with Wood and removeing of Bedsteads Cupboards and Draw Tables together with making of Doores and Windowes Moulder Worke”.

APPENDIX C

Draft for a Petition amongst the Records of the Newcastle Housecarpenters' Company setting forth the respective areas of work for carpenters and joiners in Newcastle, c. 1672.

(TWAS 903/3 Document 32)

“Worke belonging to ye Joyners exclusive of the House Carpinters by express words of the ancient ordinary granted when they were a joynt Company”

* * *

“Viz Sieling of houses within Dormonts & windows making of all draw tables of Framed work and all other tables with twined posts Making of all Buffet Stools

Making of Fourmes with turned Feet & Cutt Sides

All other Fourmes run with any plaine Making of all Cupboards Ameryes presses

Chaires & Sconces of framed work

Making of Casements Trellissing of Windows

Buttereyes of Frames Worke

Framed Chests & all other Chests being pinned with wood”

“They have alsoe the working & Doeing of all manner of Shippwork which is now growne more considerable and of greater profit & advantage to ye Joyners then any sort of work whatsoever belonging to the House Carpenter.

* Probably misspelling of *Lincke*, that is, “clinker-built” (a shipwright’s term); an earlier form of wainscotting by then largely obsolete in most parts of England. To my knowledge no examples of this have survived in the North East. For details see: H. Cescinsky & E. R. Gribble, *Early English Furniture & Woodwork*, I (1922), pp. 231, 243–4.

Besides all manner of moveables & Household goods of wood”.

“Work to be used in Comon by both Trades by express words of the aforesaid Ordinary”.

* * *

“Vizt making of Butteryrs or any other kynde of work with ceiling huck [linck?] (that is) one board growen in another and naild with iron nails”

“Making of all manner of Chests for dead Corps & all other Chests being not pinned with wood”.

“Removing of cupboards Bedsteads & drawtables
Making of doore & windowes moulder work”.

“As to the making of Chests for dead Corps comon called Coffins the Joyners by being Shopkeepers & exposing them to sale have wholly engrossd that part of the trade to themselves which is of farr greater concerne & profitt then the making of all sorts of windowes”.

* * *

“The principall thing in Difference is the making of windowes moulder work, which the Joyners never yett Claimed solely to themselves, for their late complaint upon their former reference was onely agt the making of Casements Friezes and mouldings which is not to be understood of windowes”.

APPENDIX D

First Petition from the House Carpenters' Company to the Common Council of Newcastle. Dated 1674 (probably Oct/Nov. 1674)

(TWAS 903/3)

“To the Right Worshipfull Thomas Jenison Esq. Maior Sir Robert Shaftoe Knt Recorder the Aldermen & Sheriffe of the Towne of

Newcastle upon Tyne in this present Guild assembled:

Petition Company House Carpenters'

“That of late yeares there hath been some difference betwixt you petition^{rs} and the Company of Joyners about the worke belonging to their respective Trades and principally about the making of windowes moulder worke.

That you pettnrs doe not onely clayme the making of such windowes by the expresse words of their ordinary granted in the maiorality of Marke Shaftoe Esq. Anno Domini 1579 but have alsoe tyme out of mynde before the granting of the said Ordinary as ever since usually wrought and made the same, and your Petnrs doe confess that the making of the said windowes doe likewise belong to the trade of a Joyner and is used in common by the Trades.”

“That the aforesaid Ordinary doth likewise determine & fully settle what manner of worke shall be used by each trade severally and what worke shall be used by both trades in common and doth give the penalty of Twenty Shillings for every offence to each of the said Companys respectively agt [against] every person that shall soe offend.

That by means of this good Order both the said Companys have over time continued using their respective trades without any great difference amongst them till of very late yeares. That about two or three yeares agoe there hath been an Order made upon the report of Worshipp¹¹ Thomas Davison Esq. Alderman wherein that ancient Right of making windowes moulder worke contrary to the express words of the said Ordinary and their frequent usage and practice is wholly taken from your Ptrs [Petitioners] and given to the Joyners, and now soe it is may it please your worshipp this said Order by report of the said Thomas Davison Esquire being made upon the Complaint of the Joyners and your Ptrs were never heard there upon or made any defence and the same proving soe prejudiciall to your petition^{rs} did frequently complayne that they were thereby very much wronged and therefore praye that the same might be voyd and

thereupon the rt [Right] worship¹ Ralph Grey Esq. maior and the Aldermen did order that a tryall at Law should be in this Court before the said maior wherein the Joyners were plaintiffes against one of your pet^{rs} that soe it might thereby appeare to whom the right of making the said windows properly belonged. And upon that tryall the verdict was for your petitioners. And your petnrs well hoped that after the said verdict the Judgement by order of the Rt Worsp¹¹ Sir Robert Shaftoe Knt Recorder, your Pet^{rs} might have freely exercissed that part of their trade [may] it further please your worshipp yr poore petnrs have been for the last yeare very severely punished by comitting their wardens to goal, distraining or and taking away of their goodes and the like, and now your petition^{rs} are told that their Wardens and two others of their Company are either actually disfranchised or their disfranchisemt fully resolved on and for noe other reason then because they cannot consent to give away their Right and a great part of their Livelyhoods, and that the rest of the companey must all suffer the like which of how sad consequence the same will prove, as the ruine of your poore pet^{rs} their Wives Children & servants your worsp^s may easily judge”

“May it therefore please yr Worsp^s to consider the premisses and to the end that all these differences may be fully for ever composed, that it may please your worsp^s to incorporate your peticon^{rs} and the Joyners in one Fellowship as formerly they have been or to grant a Rehearing of the matter in difference by such wayes and in such manner as your worspp^s shall [subm]itt, which your pett^{rs} will acknowledge for a very great favor and will for ever submit themselves to such decissions as shall be made upon such Rehearsing And as in dayly borne shall dayly pray etc.”

APPENDIX E

Second Petition from the House Carpenters' Company to the Common Council of Newcastle, undated, probably January 1674/5

(TWAS 903/3)

“To the r^t Wors¹ Thomas Jennison Esq. Maior Sir Robert Shafto Knt Recorder the rt Worshls the Aldermen, Henry Jennison Esq. Sheriffe and the rest of the Common Councill of Newcastle upon Tyne”

“The Humble Peticon of the Company and Fellow^{PP} of House Carpenters within the said Towne”

“Humbly sheweth:

“That of late yeares there hath been some differences betwixte yr pet^{rs} and the Company of Joyners about the Worke belonging to their respective Trades and principally about the making of windows moulder work. That yr pet^{rs} doe not onely clayme the making of such windows by the expresse words of their ordinary granted in the maiorality of Marke Shafto Esq Anno Döm 1579 but have alsoe tyme out of mynde as well before the granting of the aforesaid ordinary as ever since usually wrought and made the same and yr pet^{rs} doe confesse that the making of the said Windows doe likewise belong to the Trade of a Joyner and is used in Common by both Trades. That the aforesaid Ordinary doth likewise determine and fully settle what manner of worke shall be used by each trade severally and what worke shall be used by both Trades in Common, and doth give the penalty of Twenty Shillings for every offence to each of the said Companyes respectively ag^t every person that shall soe offend. That by means of this good Order both the said Companys have over tyme continued using their respective Trades without any great difference that hath arisen betweixt them till of very late years. That upon the complaint of the Joyners there hath of late been an Order made in Common Councill whereby that antient right of making windows moulder work is wholly taken from yr pet^{rs} & given to the Joyners, Yr pet^{rs} doe humbly submitt themselves and show unto your Worsp^s that the making of said windows moulder worke hath ever been the undoubted right and the frequent usage and practice of yr pets in Common with the Joiners as did clearely appeare by the late Tryall at Law in the Maiorality of the rt Worsp¹ Marke Milbanke Esq. And that the

making of those windows is a considerable part of yr pet^{rs} trade soe that if the same be taken from yr pet^{rs} and solely given to the Joyners yr petrs will be seriously ruined by being deprived of what they served for when they were bound apprentices and their Trade rendered insufficient to afford them a livelihood. And whereas yr peticon^{rs} have severall sonns & servants capable of takeing their freedom yr wor^{pps} are now pleased to stopp & hinder the sd sonns & servants being called in Guild & obtaining their Freedoms in this Corporacon.

Yr Pet^{rs} in all humility throw themselves upon yr Wor^{pps} for Wise Judgm[—] and begg of yr worps to take the plain-fes into grave and serious consideracons and to make such order therein as to yr worps shall seem expedient. That yr p^{trs} with yr Worps good favours may enjoy the benefitt of their Ordinary and their ancient rights & priviledges & may have their sonns & servants called in Guild & made free as other freemen in the like nature have And yr Pet^{rs} as in dayly bound shall pray etc. . . .”

APPENDIX F

An example of the kind of records kept by the House Carpenters' Company of infringements by individual joiners upon their trade. (Undated, probably 1695/6)

(Twas 903/3 Document 36)

“A note of work done by the Joyners which properly belongs to the House carpinters Trade”

“Richard Farneton Join^r for putting up one floore of balks in a house”

“Abilin Bradshaw and George Turpin for working in All S^{ts} Church Steeple”

“Abilin Bradshaw for Steathing [stoothing] a pticōn att Edward Colvills”

“George Stephenson for makeing & putting up a Signepost in the Sandhill”

“Tho. French for makeing & putting up another signepost in the Sandhill”

“William Watson for makeing a Cooler for Mr Davison”

“Thomas Pattison for makeing a pair of Door Cheeks and for mending old one”

“Richard Farnton for makeing Door Cheeks and Gantrees att Mrs Lemons”

“Thomas Pattison for makeing a pair of Stairs at St John's Church & laying a flower of Balks & Steathing”

“Mathew Olliver for laying groundbalks att Samuel Lawericks Shopp”

“Wm Earsden & Tho. Bilton for laying ground balks & putting up a Frame of a Shop at Wm Steels in the Groat Markett”

“Tho. Pattison for setting posts in a garden”

“Job Errington & John Dodd for laying ground balks att Mr Bensons”

“The House carpinters formerly had the p^riviledge of Sawing Deals which were used for the Towne which of late the Joyners have been taken upon them to Doe to the Losse of the Company of House carpinters”.

APPENDIX G

An “Instrument” of Peace: A Joint Declaration of the Joiners' and House Carpenters' Companies: 1 October 1711. Ratified by a full meeting of the Newcastle Common Council 12 December 1711

(Common Council Book 1656–1722.
Twas 589/6 fols. 245–7; 208 V)

12 December 1711:

“Housecarpenters and Joyners the Stewards and Society of each Company Joyntly Petitioned the Comon Councell setting forth that severall Lawsuits debates & controversies have been had & moved betwixt the said Fellowships of House carpnt^{rs} & Joyn^{rs} abt [about] the worke respectively claimed by each of the said trades & alsoe what was or ought to be previously [sic] practised by both of the said Fellowships as Worke in Comon

by such debates & controversies not only great sumes of money have been spent to the impoverishing of both Companies but alsoe the Magistrates have been put to great trouble in endeavouring to reconcile the differences between them & severall acts of Common Councell have been made for that purpose but the same had not the good effect that was intended both companies not agreeing to be concluded by such determination however both Companies at length unanimously resolved to choose five Men out of each of the Fellowships that they should meet together settle & determine what sort of work should respectively be practised by each of the said trades & alsoe what should be [as] previously practised as worke in Common & accordingly five men were chosen out of each of the said Companies for that purpose & did meet together severall times & did agree among themselves & got an Instrument of Writeing drawn up & Engrosed of such agreem^t & signed two parts thereof & presented to each of the sd Companies one part of the s^d writeing or instrument for their approbacon & both of the said writeings & instruments being mutually signed & interchanged by the members of both the said societies & both the said Fellowships being resolved for the future to live in perfect amity & friendship & to observe keep & be concluded by the said writeing or instrument in every matter & thing to the employment & exercise of both their trades. Therefore they humbly requested that the said writeing or instrument (so agreed on by both companies) might be confirmed & established by act of Common Councell wch writeing or instrument followes in these words hereafter mentioned:"

"A: A Housecarpenters Worke Trety":

- All Frames of Houses & Shopp doores & windows & all window boards where there is noe Glass.
- All Roofs of Houses.
- All Weatherboards & Easeing boards & laying of all Baulks as well ground Baulks

and sleep^{rs} as Baulks in upper storeys & flowering [floor_] the same

- Door Lintells Window Lintells Chimney Lintells & Setting of Stoothings for all partitions done with Brick or Latts.
- All Staircases steps & standards moulded or not moulded (the Ballasters excepted)
- Door Cheeks & Windows moulded or not moulded & all out Doores of Houses Stables & Gardens moulded or not moulded except frames & pannelled doores & sash windows.
- All Flapps for shoppes & shopp windows
- All Coolers for Cisterns & frames for them & All Goals Shutts & masking Tubs Water Cisterns & Cisterns & Flatts for Tann^{rs}
- All signe Posts & putting & setting up the same
- All Cribbs for Leeds & Coppers All Guantrees
- All Ranks Mangers & Close Stalls & other worke in Stables. All Houses of Office Pent Houses Wood Gutters
- All Sleds WheelBarrows & other Barrows & Ladders
- All Carts & Wains & their Carriages
- All Millworke Sawing all manner of wood & Timber & Dales with a Whip saw for Carpent^{rs} & Joyn^{rs} Splitting of all Timber for Latts.
- All cases for holding of broad Glass & other glass & Bottles
- All Chests for holding Cutt Glass
- Makeing & mending Waggonways Waggons Waggon Trunks & Wain Trunks
- Makeing & boareing all Pumps
- All Frames Yokes & Wheels for hanging of Bells
- All Posts & frames for Galleries in Churches
- Laying & Makeing all mann^e of Shopp & Stalls for Butchers & others
- All Posts & Railes fixed in the ground & Clapsed in the Walls
- All Presses Pressboards Planks & Screws for Dyers or other Trades (except small screws of two Inches Bore)
- All Bridge worke All centers for Arches all sorts of double gates for Towers or Ports All Gates with barrs or Pales
- Makeing all Carriages for Horse Litters

- All Butchers stalls & thristells & cover boards for Butchers
- All sorts of Craines
- All Capstons in Houses & Roperies & all Posts Pins & Railes for Roperies
- All Tenter Railes for Dyers
- All Coleholes All staying of Houses & other Buildings
- All Horses for drying Cloaths not morticed or Tennred

“B. Joiners Worke Trety”

- “- All Ceiling within Houses & lyneing of Doors & Windows
- All Doores within Houses (except plain Doores with crossbarrs not runn wth any moulding)
- All Posts for Staircases & all Railes & Ballasters
- All window shutts within Houses
- All sash windows shelves & dresser Tables in Kitchins & Shelves in Clossetts & Counters in Shopps & shelves with mouldings (except plain shelves in Collars Shopps & Stables)
- All Turning Twisting carveing in laying & phaneering
- All Chests of Draw^{ts} Tables Sconces Napkin presses Cupboards Chaires Casements Butteries
- All Formes wth turned feet & cutt sides & all other Formes runn wth any Plain
- All Beddsteads Close bedds Falling down bedds & other Bedds
- All Pews & Seats in Churches or Meeting Houses of Panelled or fillited work or runn wth any mouldings
- Faceing of Galleries
- All Coffins or Chests for Dead Corps (the House Carpent^{ts} to make Chests or Coffins for the Corps of a Brother or Sister of their own Trade or for their Children or Serv^{ts} or any of their own Family)
- All Frames for painting of signes
- All Shipworke usually wrought by Joyners
- All Frames for Barbers Shopps made with Dales or Wainscott
- Picture Frames of all Sorts
- All Screws & Horses made of Dales for

- covering wth cloath or drying Cloaths
- All Framed Gates wth Panelled work
- Clockcases
-

C. Worke in Comon as well for house carpenters as Joyners:

- Removeing Houshold goods & takeing down & setting upp Bedsteads & Coachworke
- All Trelassing
- All plain Formes
- All plain Chests
- All Dogg Wheels
- All plain pews & seats without any mouldings
- All outward work Summer House & Railes & Pales
- All Tents in Fairs or Marketts
- Hanging Frames or signes upon Signe Posts
- All Deale Partitions within Houses
- All False Counters in Shopps & all plain shelves Rough latts or Boardes for hangings a Dale breadth at the bottom of a Roome for naileing hangings to
- All Window boards or Window Shutts for Glass windows
- All Window soles where the Windows are not lined”.

“Whereas many disputes & controversies have happened betweene the Fellowship & Society of Housecarpenters of the one part & the Fellowship & society of Joyners of the other pt concerning the Worke done & wrought by the members of each Society within this Towne & the Liberties thereof one Fellowship alledgeing often times that such worke has belonged &ought to be wrought only by the members of their Society upon w^{ch} great and chargeable suits have happened tending very much of the impoverishing of both the said fellowships. And whereas the said Fellowships haveing considered the evill consequences of such strifes suits & controversies and desiring to live from henceforth in peace & friendship have agreed unanimously that the severall sorts of worke expressed & sett down in the first Column abovemen-oned marked A;

within this Towne & the liberties thereof is the worke Trade & Businesse of a House Carpenter & doth & shall at all times hereafter be accounted to appertaine & belong to the said Fellowship of Housecarpenters distinct and exclusive of the Fellowship of Joyners. And the severall sorts of worke expressed & sett downe in the second column abovementioned marked B within this Towne & the liberties thereof is the work Trade & Business of a Joyner & doth & shall at all times hereafter be accounted to appertain & belong to the said Fellowship of Joyners distinct & exclusive of the Company of Housecarpenters. And that the severall sorts of worke expressed and sett downe in the Third column marked C: doth belong and appertaine to both the said Companies in Common. That is to say that the memb^{ers} of either of the said Companys' which shall be employed by the owner may worke the same lawfully & freely without any lett or molestacon of the members of the other of the said fellowships. And to the intent that the said two Companies may forever hereafter live in amity & good Friendshipp it's agreed by the said Fellowships of the Housecarpenters & Joyners that if any memb^r of the said Fellowship or Company of Housecarpenters shall within this Towne of Newcastle or the liberties thereof worke or employ himselfe apprentice or servant in any worke abovementioned to belong to the said Fellowship or Company of Joyners distinct & Exclusive of the said Fellowship of Housecarpent^{ers} or if any memb^r of the said Fellowship or Company of Joyners shall within this Towne of Newcastle or liberties thereof worke or employ himselfe his apprentice or sevt in any worke abovementioned to belong to the said Fellowship or Company of Housecarpenters distinct and exclusive of the Fellowship of Joyners that then & and soe often as the same shall happen or fall out such Person or Persons shall within Eight Days after notice given of such workeing by the Stewards of one of the said Societys to the Stewards of the other of the said Societys be absolutely discharged & turned of the Fellowship of which such offender was before a member of & all priviledges & advantages therein & all the

members of such company shall be discharged from workeing with such offender or buy or sell with him in every matter & thing concerning his & their Trade & Employnt & shall soe continue till such offender shall pay & satisfie to the Stewards & Fellowship of the other of the said Company's—for the first offence Ten Shillings for the second offence Twenty Shillings for the Third Offence Thirty Shillings & for the fourth offence never to be admitted again into the Fellowship & the other Fellowship to have liberty to prosecute the such offender for workeing in that Trade & employnt he was not a member of & such offender to have noe aid Countenance or Assistance from any member of his own Company upon pain such member or members soe Assisting aiding or abetting such offender shall undergoe & be subject to the said pains and penaltys as if he or they had been the principall offender. And it is further agreed that this Parchmt & agreement shall be read over to (& subscribed by) every Person when he shall be admitted a member unto either of the said societys. And to testifie the true & sincere Intent & purpose of both the said Fellowships & every member thereof to observe & keep this agreemt the members of both the said Fellowships doe hereby severally & respectively solemnly & faithfully promise to performe the same and to two parts hereof have sett & subscribed their names the First Day of October in the Tenth Year of the Reigne of our Sovereigne Lady Ann by the Grace of God of Great Britain France & Ireland Queen Defender of the Faith Anno Dñi 1711'.

House carpenters:

Jos. Weatherburne	[1694]*
Alex Hall	[1695]
Jn ^o Todd	[1675]
Jn ^o Godfrey	[1689]
Martin Henderson	[1689]
Pars. Wilson	
Peter Thew	[1667]
Cuth. Hopper	[1672]
Tho. Robinson	
Jn ^o Watson	[1689]
Cuth Simpson	

House carpenters:

Hen. Walton	[1685]
Jn ^o Weatherburne	[1683]
Tho. Ellson	[1686]
Nicho. Lamb	[1687]
Robt. Shortridge	[1689]
Jn ^o Watson	[1698]
Jn ^o Walter	[1691]
Jn ^o Gill	
Tho. Oliver	[1692]
Tho. Longstaffe	
Geo Oliver	[1695]
Roger Watson	[1695]
Wm Elliot	[1696]
Mark Ealskor	
Cuth. Kell	
Matth. Young	[1698]
Laur. Purvis	
Tho. Bulmer	
William Gibson	[1698]
Rich ^d Chambers	
Jn ^o Watson	[1683]
Tho. Spenser	[1700]
Jn ^o Todd	
Robert Watson	[1700] [1686]
Jn ^o Green	
Geo. Nealson	
Wm Barron	
Ja. Landreth	[1704]
Ja. Burrell	
Luke Johnson	
Wm Shew	
Geo. Marshall	[1705]
Tho. Milburne	[1707]
Jn ^o Winter	
Matth. Todd	[1705]
Wm Row	
Wm Anderson	[1707]
Jos. Kell	
Wm Wilson	[1707]
Tho. Walton	
Peter Walton	[1709]
Robt Reed	
Richard Watson	
Wm. Milbanke	
John Stephanson	

Joyners:

Tho. French	[1692]
Paul Cooke	
Robert Vipont	[1686]
Chr. Bland	[1688]
Geo. Young	[1700]
Wm. Dixon	
Tho. Lowrison	[1699]
Tho. JoBlin	
Rich ^d Farrington	[1693]
Geo. Coward	
Jn ^o Middleton	[1682]
David Williamson	[1684]
Tho. Bilton	[1685]
Laur ^{cc} Herrison	
Geo. Turpin	[1692]
Geo. Allat	[1698]
James Litster	
Jn ^o Anderson	[1700]
Tho. Marshall	[1700]
Nicho Farrington	[1702]
Jn ^o Bell	[1703]
Jn ^o Chiney	[1704]
Antho. Davison	
Sam ^l Thompson	
Geo. Jackson	
Andrew Holliday	[1706]
Jn ^o Guttery	[1708]
Isaac Simpson	
Adam Gilliss	[1709]
Rich ^d Wilkinson	[1710]
Robt Spoore	
Joseph Wheldon	[1709]
Geo. Marshall	
John Gibson	[1709]
George Errington	[1709]
Tho. Wilkinson	[1711]
Rob ^{rt} Hudson	

* Date registered as freeman.

Above agreement approved and signed by full Common Council under mayorship of Matthew Featherstonhaugh.

APPENDIX H

Extract from the Newcastle upon Tyne Common Council Minutes for December 1726

(Twas 589/13, fols. 141-2)

At a Comon Council held the fifteenth day of Dec^e, Anno Dmⁱ 1726. Present Nicholas Fenwick Esq Mayor, Sir William Blackett Barrr

Housecarpenters and Joiners. The Company of Housecarpenters formerly petitioned setting forth that they being employed by the Gentlemen who had the Care and inspection of building the Meeting House at the Head of the Tuthill Stairs to do and finish all the Carpenters' Work in & about the same (Amongst other things) they made and placed therein Transom Windows and the Gentlemen not approving of plain Transom Windows with upright Barrs in Order for Lead the persons So employed proceeded to make them with Lattices in Order for Glass Without Lead But before they had made much progresse therein they were discharged by the Joyners from proceeding further But they not desisting but endeavouring to Compleat their Work (As they had good right to do) have since been much obstructed by the Joyners who alledge that it is a Branch of their Trade alone which the Petic oñers humbly insisted it was not for that by Agreem^t with the sd. Company the Petic oñers alone have the doing of all Windows moulded or not moulded Save only Sash Windows and the Petitioners further shewed that the sd. Windows are not nor can they in any wise be deemed Sash Windows as they the Pet^{er} can easily demonstrate And as they are not and as Pet^{er} have the making and finishing of all other Windows no Joyner Can proceed to fix or place a Barr or other thing therein without being guilty of a Breach of the sd Agreement And the Pet^{ers} therefore prayed that the Comon Council would be pleased to take the p^{er}misses into Consideraçon & to make Such Order & take Such Measure therein as that they might be at Liberty to Compleat and finish the sd Windows (As they humbly Conceived they had a right to do) without any Lett

or disturbance from the sd Company of Joyners

And the Company of Joyners also petitioned settin forth an Agreement made between them & the sd Company of Housecarpenters the first day of October Anno D^{mi} 1711. Which was approved of allowed & Confirmed by the Comon Council the twelfth day of Dec^e 1711 whereby all Windows moulded or not moulded (Except Sash Windows) are to be done by the said Company of House Carpenters And All Sash Windows are to be done by the sd. Company of Joyners And that Some of the s^d Company of Housecarpenters notwithstanding the sd. Agreement had taken upon them to Sash the Windows of a dissenting Meeting House lately erected or at least make such Work in the sd Meeting house which is no part of the Work or Business belonging to the sd Company of Housecarpenters but solely belongs to the sd Company of Joyners And the sd Company of Housecarpenters putting up Such Sashes or Sash Work is an absolute Breach of the sd. Agreement & very much tends to the prejudice of the s^d Company of Joyners They therefore prayed that the Comon Council would be pleased to take the p^{er}misses into Consideraçon and discharge or order to be discharged Such of the sd Company of Housecarpenters as have made or Shall presume to make any Sashes or Sash work or any other Work which by the sd Agreement doth not properly belong to the sd Company of Housecarpenters.

Both Which Petiçons were referred to a Comittee and in pursuance of Such Reference William Ellison Francis Buxton & Francis Johnson Esq^s and Aldrmen Joseph Liddell Esq^e Sheriffe & M^e Robert Johnson this day reported that they had Considered the Contents of the s^d Petitions and heard Severall persons deputed by each Company & their Sollicitors And they the s^d Comittee are of opinion that all Windows made with Wood wherin Glass is fixed with Putty or other Such like Past Should be made by the Company of Joyners the Same being in the Judgement of the sd Comittee Sash Windows All which they humbly Submitted to the Comon Council.

The said Report being read the Same is

approved of allowed and confirmed and It's ordered that the sd Company of Housecarpenters do not at any time hereafter make any Windows with Wood wherein Glass is fixed with Putty or Such like Past the Same being the proper Work of the sd. Company of Joyners.

APPENDIX J

"*The Case between the House Carpenters and Joiners*" (Undated, probably 1740s)
(Twas 903/3 Document 38 (later copy document 24))

"Disputes formerly arose between the Company of Joiners and of House Carpenters within the town of Newcastle upon Tyne in relation to the *Particular work* and Business to *Each Company* respectively and one (among others) concerning *Moulded Windows* to witt whether they were *joiner work* or *carpenter work* to determine which the Stewards and Company of joiners in the year 1672 Comenced a suit at Law against one *Rob^t Mills* (a free Housecarpenter) for making Moulded windowes (and thereby exercising the joiners Trade as the Plaintiffs alledged) to which action the Defend^t pleaded the Generall Issue and the same was tryed at Newcastle in the year aforesd and a *Verdict* was thereupon given for the *Difendant* which was recorded accordingly see cop. of ye Record."

"The joiners *acquiesced* under this Verdict as to the *Windows*. But other Branches of trade exercised respectively by Each of the sd Companys frequently affording new Matter of Dispute *it was proposed* in the year 1711 that a small number of persons Sho^d be chosen out of Each Company to meet and endeavour to accommodate the said Differences and accordingly a Committee Consisting of four or five persons of each Company respectively was appointed who met and entered into an Agreement setting forth what sorts of work sho^d be deemd and taken to be the Trade and Business of each Company respectively but when the sd

agreement was reported by the Committee unto the sd Company of Housecarpenters the same was *Disapproved* of by the *Majority* of the sd *Fellowship* who ventured that the sd *agreement* tended to their Ruin (a great Part of the *house carpenter Trade* being therein *given up* to the joiners. But, the Cheif of the Housecarpenters *Comittee* being men who did *not* depend on the said trade for their maintenance *insisted* that the said agreement sho^d be observed and Complied with and *taking upon* them to *Exclude* severall members of the sd Society who dared to oppose them *the rest* were thereby *intimidated* and acquiesced therein and the sd agreement was put into form and reduced to writing and an Act of Comon Council Confirming the same was soon after obtained by the sd Company of joiners and among the few Branches of the Trade therein allowed to be Carpenter work the making of all windows moulded or not moulded (except sash windows) was one—see the agreement".

"Notwithstanding the verdict abovement^d. and also the agreement confirmed by an act of Comon Council as aforesd the joiners insisted that they the sd joiners are to make all windows whatsoever where the glass is put in or fixed with putty or paste (that as they alledge making them sash windows) and have actually obtained an act of Comon Council in their favour prohibiting the Housecarpenters to make any *windows* where the *Glass is put in in manner afores^d* so that it is now become the generall Fashion to put in and fix the glass in all transim windows and all other windows with putty or paste the Housecarpenters by this act will have the making of no windows at all and this act is directly contrary to the former act which allows all windows except Sash Windows to be Carpenter Work".

"The Housecarpenters *patiently* submitted to all the *hardships* imposed on them by the abovementioned *agreement* tho the same was *obtained* in no further upon their Rights and Priviledges but to take from them *even what the agreement itself allows them* they think is intollerable".

N.B. "There are not above 8 of the *Company* of Housecarpenters now liveing who were *partys* to the *agreement* and they the sd Housecarpenters are above 80 in number whose

support depends intirely on the free use and exercise of their trade and they app^{rhend} that any *agreem'* to *deprive* them *thereof* is against *Law* and Consequently *null* and *void*".

