

VII.—SOME ACCOUNT OF THE INCORPORATED
COMPANY OF FREE JOINERS OF NEWCASTLE-
UPON-TYNE.

By JOHN STEPHENSON ROBSON, a member of the Company.

[Read on the 25th March, 1908.]

Although the woodworkers of Newcastle-upon-Tyne were not incorporated as a company or fellowship until the reign of queen Elizabeth, there is ample evidence from examples yet remaining locally that the craftsmen in this particular trade had attained great proficiency in their art at least two centuries earlier. The guild of carpenters took its share in the mystery plays of the middle ages, and the particular subject assigned to it was the burial of Christ. This seems very appropriate, as the craft carpenters were intimately associated with the three principal events in man's life history, inasmuch as they made his cradle, his nuptial bed, and his coffin.

When Decorated architecture in England began to develop, towards the end of the fourteenth century, into the Perpendicular style, the interiors of cathedral and other churches were enriched and beautified to a much greater degree than had previously obtained. Foremost amongst these embellishments were the rood screens, choir stalls, canopies and tabernacle work, richly carved and cunningly put together. This work demanded a greater skill in the craftsman than that which was needed in the ruder woodwork of preceding periods, and a class of workmen arose which was skilled in the art of constructing elaborate framing, panelling, etc., by joining the wood together in various concealed methods, and these craftsmen were distinguished from other woodworkers by the title of 'joiners.' As early as the year 1412 the word 'joynour' occurs in English

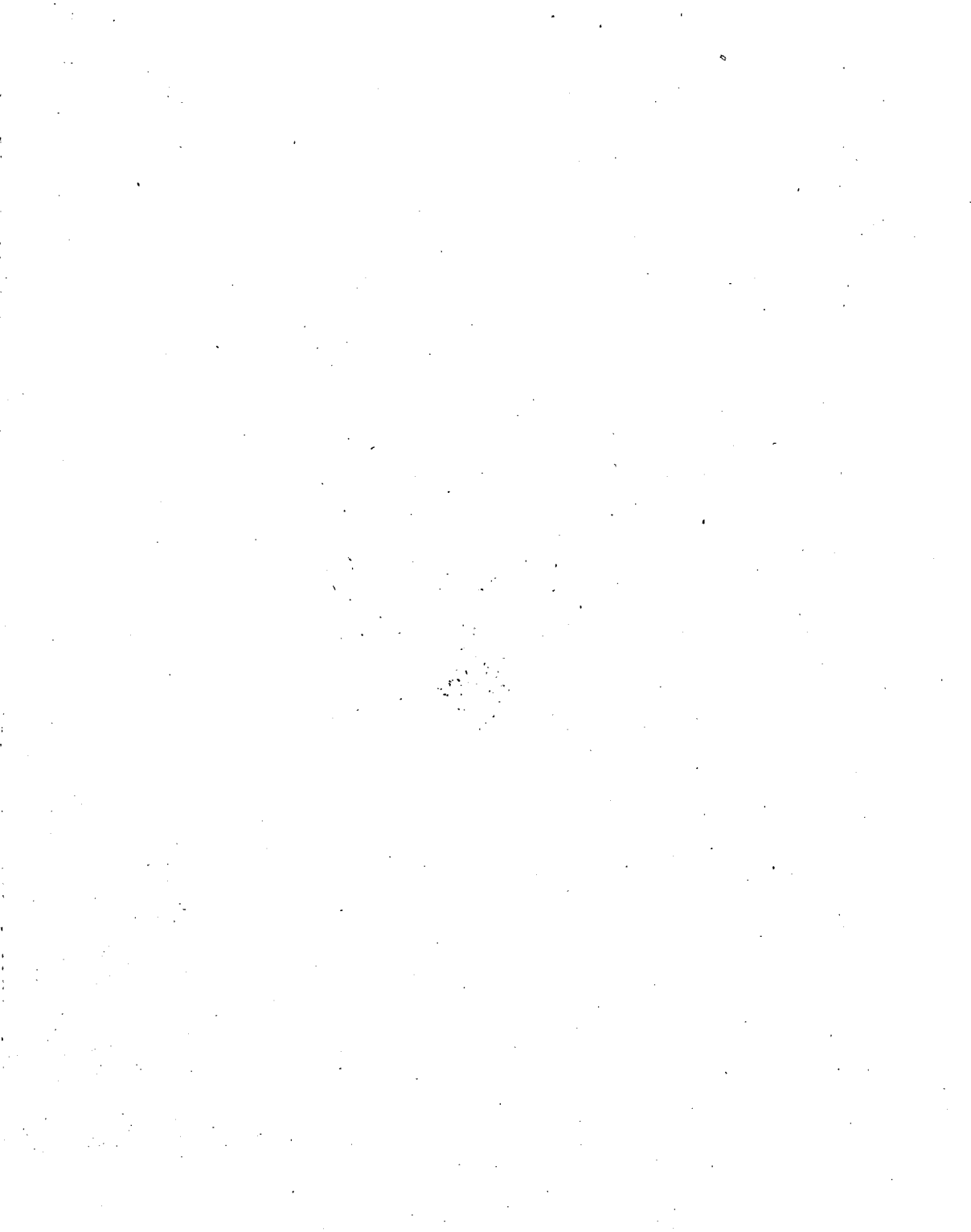
Arch. Art., 3 ser., v. To face p. 175

Plate 1.



ARMS OF THE NEWCASTLE JOINERS' COMPANY.

(This Plate given by Mr. J. S. Hobson.)



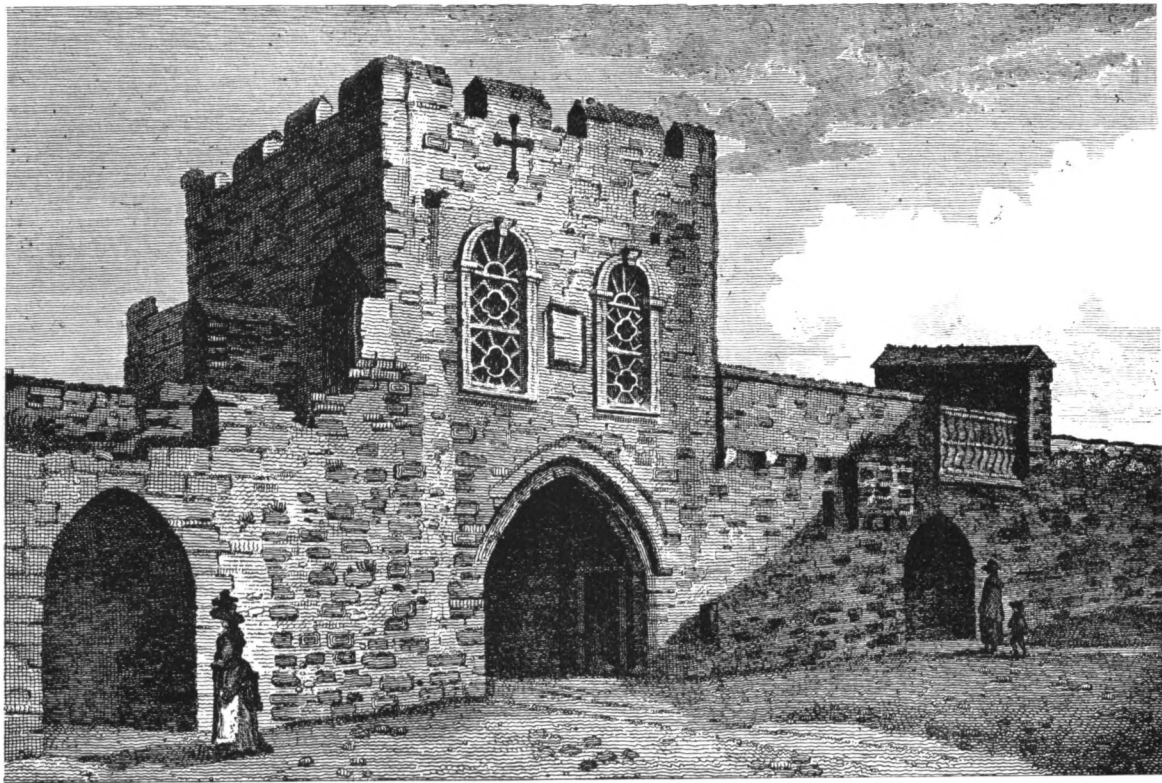
literature, for in Lydgate's *Chronicle of Troy*, written at that date, mention is made of 'eche carver and curious joynour.' That there were joiners carrying on their trade in Newcastle in the fifteenth century, and that they were skilful workmen is evidenced by the scanty remains of Perpendicular woodwork, still existing, a notable example of which is the fine font cover in the cathedral church of St. Nicholas.

When a more settled state of the country and the development of commerce produced an increase of wealth, and the middle class began to share in the general improvement, there ensued a demand for more comfort and luxury in the houses of the well-to-do. The bare masonry of the interior walls was covered with panelling, the ceilings were embellished with carving, and the rude and simple furniture hitherto considered sufficient was replaced by furniture still stout and durable, but much lighter in construction, and more elaborate in design. This development of woodwork in domestic use found another field of occupation for the joiners' craft, which was thus greatly widened. During the first part of the sixteenth century the woodworkers of Newcastle appear to have been without a trade guild or organization, but in the year 1579 they became united, under the title of the 'House Carpenters' Company,' which received incorporation in 1582. The wardens were to be three carpenters and one joiner. There appears to have been a desire to define the limits within which both carpenters and joiners could exercise their trades. It was enacted that the joiners should work 'at the sealing of houses within, the making of dorments and windows, drawn tables of frame work, and tables with twin posts, buffet stools, presses, chairs, and sconces of frame work, trellising of windows, buttries of framework, framed chists and all others pinned with wood, as also for other kinds of joiners' work. That the two trades should occupy in common the making of buttries or any other kind of work with

sealing linck, *i.e.* one board growen in another and nailed with iron nails, chists for corpses and all other chists not pinned with wood, laying of beds, cupboards and draw tables together with making of doors and windows, mulder work; and that half of their fines go to the maintenance of the great bridge, and the other half to the fellowship.'

This attempt to restrict within definite limits the work of each of the two partners in the guild must have been a source of friction and squabbling; and it is not surprising that, after ten years of union, the joiners should have determined to sever their connexion with the carpenters, and set up on their own account. This they did on the 28th March, 1589, when they separated from the carpenters and established the incorporated 'Company of Joiners of Newcastle-upon-Tyne.' The ordinary of the fellowship, dated 'the eight and twentieth day of March, in the one and thirtieth year of the reigne of our soveign lady Elizabeth, A.D. 1589,' and addressed 'to all Christian people to whom this present writing shall come,' sets forth the expectations under which the house carpenters and joiners had been recently incorporated under one government, which was then thought to be 'to the great quietness, profitt, and comoditie of the foresaid fellowships, but, contrary to these expectations, there doeth arise amongst them great debates, quarrellings, malice and strife, to the greate perill of some of the parties, and to the daily trouble of the magistrates of this town.' At the request of the joiners, the mayor and aldermen have determined to grant them a separate charter of incorporation, the terms of which are set forth at great length. Two wardens are to be annually appointed; the fellowship is to possess the right to sue and be sued; to make byelaws, and to impose fines on those of their members who transgress them. Any member who abuses another is liable to a fine of 13s. 4d., and one who 'strikes or beats' another 'with his fist or dagger or any other kind of

weapon' to one of 26s. 8d. The fellowship is to be responsible for its share in plays and martial exhibitions. No Scot or alien is to be admitted as an apprentice. The wardens of the company are to have power to search out and inspect work done by the members of the brotherhood, and to fine those guilty of doing inefficient work. Attempts are again made to apportion the work of each society, the joiners being allowed a monopoly of 'all sealing of houses within, dorments and windows, together with making all draw tables of framed work, all other tables with turned posts, making of all buffett stalls, formes with turned feet and cut sides, and all other formes run with any plaine. Buffetts, ammeres, presses, chairs and screens, being of framed woode, the making of all casements, trellesing of windows, buttresses of framed worke, framed cheists, and all other cheists being pinned with wood' are specially mentioned. A list of articles nailed with iron, and not pinned with wood, of which both carpenters and joiners may 'occupie the making,' is further added. All fines are to go 'one half to the use of the town and towards the maintenance and repairing of the great bridge of the towne' and half to the wardens of the company. All disputes between the two societies thus separated, as to the interpretation of the ordinary, are to be referred to the mayor and aldermen. The ordinary is signed by Roger Nicholas, mayor, Robert Anderson, William Selbie, Henry Anderson, Robert Barker, Marke Shaftoe, Roger Raw, William Riddell, Henry Mitford, Henry Chapman and Edward Lewen, aldermen, and George Farrabie, sheriff. The brethren were charged to bear arms in defence of the town, the particular portion of the town wall assigned to their charge included the Pilgrims' Gate. The gate being on the northern or Scottish side of the town, and therefore more liable to attack, this trust tends to show that the brotherhood was amongst the stalwarts of the town defenders. The room above the gateway continued to be the meeting house



PILGRIMS' GATE, NEWCASTLE.

Formerly the meeting place of the Joiners' Company. Reproduced from the copperplate in Brand's *Newcastle*.

of the company, until its demolition in 1802, when a new meeting house was built by the company in High Friar Street. This also was demolished in 1901 to make room for the new buildings of the Young Men's Christian Association, and the company is now without a local habitation.

The head meeting day was St. Peter's day [29th June], and the company assumed the coat of arms, *Gules, a chevron argent between two pairs of compasses above, and a sphere in base or, on a chief of the last a pale azure between two roses gules, seeded of the third barbed vert; on the pale an escallop shell of the second; and crest, a demi-savage proper, wreathed about the head and waist with leaves vert, holding in his dexter hand over his shoulder a tilting spear or, headed argent; the motto being 'In God is all our trust.'* This is very similar to the arms borne by the joiners' company of the city of London, incorporated in the year 1571.

The new company thus formed entered upon a period of usefulness and activity, which is continued down to the present time. The rise of Newcastle in wealth and prosperity was just then very remarkable, the great influx of trade to the port had enriched its merchants, and a portion of their wealth was spent in building the handsome and picturesque, many-windowed and many-gabled houses, which formed such a prominent feature in the architecture of the town, and made the Quayside so picturesque a subject for the local artist. These houses displayed in many a panelled room, carved fireplace and oaken staircase, the skill and artistic taste of the old craftsmen. Amongst the best examples still surviving of the joiner work of this period, are the beautiful merchants' courts in the Guildhall dated 1636; the panelled and painted room in the same building called the mayor's parlour, where the grand jury now sits; the pulpit of St. John's church; the rooms in the Surtees house, Sandhill, with their handsomely carved fire-

places; the chapel in the Trinity house. Cosyns house, no. 1 Quayside, has only recently been destroyed, and unhappily many of the buildings which stood intact as late as the middle of last century have now disappeared to make way for modern improvements, but enough is still left to show the excellence of workmanship and beauty of design which characterized the joinery of the Jacobean period, executed by the brotherhood.

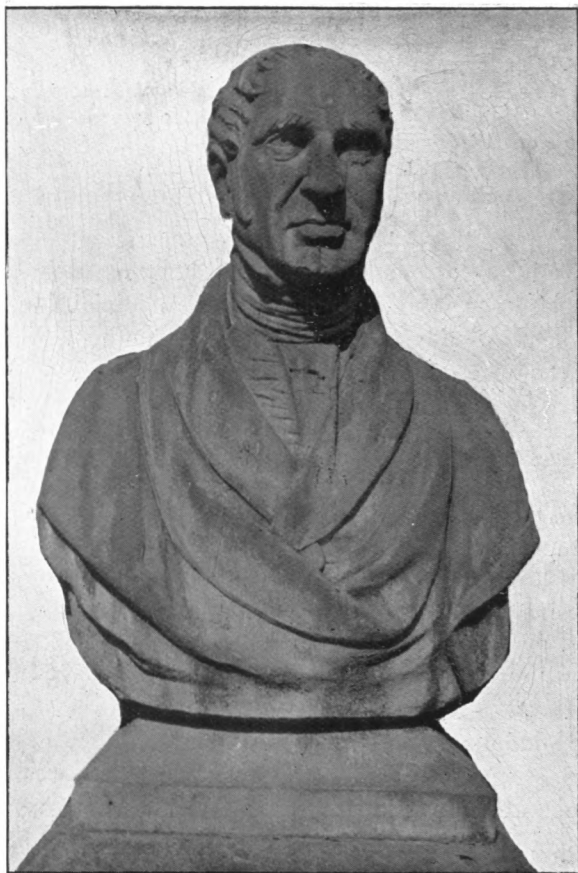
In the latter half of the seventeenth century, another change in the division of work took place. The introduction into furniture of the arts of veneering and inlaying, and the more highly decorated designs thereby rendered possible, necessitated a demand for workmen skilled particularly in these arts, and the making of furniture became less the work of the joiner, and more and more the work of the new craftsmen. These became designated cabinet-makers, probably from the fact that their greatest skill and ingenuity were displayed in the construction of those elaborate pieces of furniture, with many drawers, and enclosed by folding doors, which were so characteristic of this period, and which are now so much prized by their fortunate possessors. The French term 'ébéniste' for the same class of workmen seems to favour this explanation, as these articles were largely made of ebony. The joiners' company accordingly found it necessary to relax the stringency of its rules against the employment of foreigners, so that it might gain experience in this new branch of work by availing itself of the services of those skilled in the arts of veneering and inlaying. The privilege was abused and in 1715 the following order was made:

'Whereas by 2 severall orders made 20 or 30 years ago regarding the employment of foreigners, and which said orders were made at a time when there was not a competent number of free brothers to supply and assist in the art of cabinet making, inlaying and phinearing, and it was agreed that if any brother did undertake that business of a cabinet maker, such brother might have liberty to entertain, hire or sett at work such journeyman or

journeymen in cabinet work only. But of late years some brothers have employed foreign journeymen, who were not competent workmen in that art and trade of cabinet making, inlaying and pinearing. Brothers having employed foreigners as journeymen who have not been instructed in it before they came to this town, to the great prejudice of the said company, it is now declared that the 2 above in part recited orders, shall be henceforth null and void. Any brother of the said company may have free liberty to begin and end all the work that he or they shall take in hand. Every brother may entertain, hire or set at work such journeyman or journeymen who have served 7 years and are compleat workmen, or have wrought 7 years in the said art and trade of cabinet making, inlaying and pinearing.

The word cabinet maker occurs as early as 1681, when it is mentioned in the trial of one Colledge, a joiner, implicated in the Popish plot. The joiners' company, however, did not lose its members when they became cabinet makers. No guild of that craft was founded; and they continued for the most part to remain in their old company, only adding the second title to the first, and styling themselves 'joiners and cabinet makers.' As late as 1778, when the first Newcastle directory was published by W. Whitehead, there were of the thirty-three master joiners and cabinet makers then carrying on business in Newcastle, sixteen members of the joiners' company. This number gradually decreased as the privileges of the freemen were curtailed, but during the last century the brotherhood included such well-known makers of furniture as Farringtons, Sopwiths, Robsons, Liddells, Renwicks, and Jameses. They preserved the traditions of good workmanship which had characterized the productions of the craft from the formation of the brotherhood.

Amongst the names just mentioned, perhaps one of the most original was Richard Farrington, born in 1767, and died in 1840, a member of one of the oldest families connected with the guild, the name of a Richard Farrington occurring as early as 1689. In his early days he was a contemporary of the celebrated Thomas Sheraton and A. Hepplewhite, and the furniture made by his firm was notable for its excellent design and perfect work-



RICHARD FARRINGTON.

From the bust, executed by himself, on his tomb in Jesmond Old Cemetery.

manship. The bust upon his tomb in Jesmond old cemetery, executed by his own hand, testifies to his ability as a sculptor. This firm, in addition to cabinet making, were shipbuilders on the North Shore, and Richard Farrington had a high reputation for carving the figureheads, which at that time graced the prows of the old sailing ships.

The furniture makers of the eighteenth century never put their names upon their work, so that it is difficult to identify. Nowadays it is all classed as Chippendale or Sheraton; but, in some rare instances, a workman has left a pencilling in some hidden portion of his work. Some of these have come under the writer's notice. Thus a half-circular satinwood card table with beautifully inlaid top was marked in pencil 'John H. Goodrick made these tables anno domini 1794, 4th July, prentice to Jack Wilson'; a bow fronted mahogany cabinet with satinwood inlay, after the manner of Sheraton, bore the name of Ralph Carnaby and was dated January 1st, 1806. This leads to the inference that much of the old furniture, now so prized by collectors, was made locally and by members of the joiners' company.

Margaret Stephenson, relict of Mr. John Stephenson, merchant, of Newcastle, died 23rd August, 1729, and by her last will and testament gave 'to the company of joiners of Newcastle aforesaid 20*l.* to be lent to two such members of the fellowship as shall want stock to set up with for four years without interest and so be transferred to other two such brethren of the said joiners at the end of every four years for ever.' The kind bequest of this good lady to aid young joiners in commencing business on their own account is interesting as showing the state of trade at that period, the presumption being that an apprentice just out of his time had provided himself with tools during his apprenticeship, and if he could obtain an order, could forthwith blossom into a master craftsman with his 10*l.* worth of material. These sums, though often lent to poor brethren, are still in

possession of the company, and at the disposal of any young aspirant who can satisfy the wardens as to the security.

Mrs. Fairbridge, widow of another brother, who died in 1743, also left to the company 20*l.*, the interest of which was to be paid to the poor widows of deceased brethren on St. Peter's day. This charity also is still in existence.

RELATIONS WITH THE CARPENTERS.

According to the deed of incorporation, there had been many quarrels between the carpenters and the joiners, and indeed the company had been formed for the express purpose of securing peace. In order that the joiners may 'alwaise hereafter live in unities and more civil and better order of government than heretofore' the joiners were on their own petition incorporated into a separate company. But the hope of 'more civil and better order' or at least of 'unities,' was not realized, and the minute books of the next two centuries contain frequent references to disputes between the two societies on the ever open question of overlapping. In 1696, disputes must have been very frequent, for two of the aldermen of the day endeavoured to bring the parties together. Two interesting minutes prove this, though it is not possible to say whether or no the carpenters and joiners came to any definite understanding for the time.

On July 29th, 1696, there is the following entry:

'Whereas Thomas French, one of the members of this company, was on the 26th inst. ordered by Alderman White to give notice to the stewards of this society of a meeting to be of the said Alderman White and Alderman Wars in the afternoon to terminate differences between the company and the carpenters, to the end, the alderman said, our stewards might not be circumvented, yet the said Thomas french, in disobedience and neglect of the said order of the magistrates and in violation of his oath, whereby he is obliged to do all things for the benefit and commodity of this company, and to the great damage and prejudice, did not acquaint the said stewards, by reason whereof they were altogether unprovided to attend the said meeting, not having any notice of it until the serjeants came for them. . . .'



THE STEPHENSON ARMS.

Unfortunately the entry breaks off here and it is not recorded what penalty was inflicted on the neglectful French, but serious delay seems to have taken place in the negotiations, for five months later, on December 30th, 1696, the company appointed representatives to act for it in the matter. According to the entry, 'it was voted this day by the whole company that Richard Harrington and Christopher Bland, the stewards of this society, be freely impowered to manage, direct, and expedite all matters in difference betwixt this company and the house carpenters, according to their discretion, and that this company will board and defray and pay all such costs and charges and expenses as they shall sustain and expend into in. or about the same.'

A document, executed between Thomas Langstaff, Matthew Young and Richard Chambers, on behalf of the carpenters, and John Walker, the elder, William Dixon and Richard Harrington, on that of the joiners, provides for future disputes; and from that time forward every new freeman admitted into either of the contracting companies is to be required by the stewards to enter into a bond to the amount of 100*l.* as security against his undertaking any of the kinds of work scheduled for the other company. In the event of his violating his pledge, he is to be liable to a forfeit of 50*l.*, while it is stipulated that his company shall not assist him in his defence against any legal action taken against him on account of his offence. Provision is made for the periodical inspection of each society's books at Michaelmas and Whitsuntide, in order that the number of new members may be ascertained. The deed is in an imperfect condition, and either was never completed or the signatures are lost. The names of John Walker and Richard Harrington appear frequently in the day book of the company about the year 1714.

Such attempts at settlement were, however, ineffective, and disputes still raged. Among the disbursements for 1728, for



THE FARBRIDGE ARMS.

instance is found the following significant entry, 'Gave Mr. Longstaff for serving copy of the order of common council upon the stewards of the carpenters' company 5s.' Possibly this order may have been one made in 1696. In the same year there is an item of 3s. allowed for expenses spent in gaol 'in discharging a carpenter for making beds.'

If the joiners were jealous of encroachments by the carpenters, they were equally concerned to preserve their monopoly of the joiner work in the town from 'foreigners,' as all outsiders were called. In 1694 is found this interesting entry: 'Voted by the major part of the company that Matthew Hills and Thomas Pattison doe goe along with the stewards to assist them about importing work lately done by foreigners at Mr. Phillipson's house at Spittle Tongues, and in going before Mr. Maior, and what is obliged about that business.' In 1728 there are several entries relating to a Scots joiner who had evidently been doing work in the town.

The accounts of the stewards contain an entry of 5s. spent in soaking a Scots joiner in Sandgate, and Mr. Marshall and Mr. Atkinson are allowed 9s. for money spent while discharging Scots joiners in Sandgate.

But if the society had trouble with non-members, it was not without internal differences. These may be divided into three classes, first there was a continual tendency to scamp work and consequent trouble with the searchers, who were appointed to deal with offences of this kind. The order of the company on this matter, beautifully engrossed in a manuscript folio of 1729, runs as follows:—'If any brother of this company finish a piece of work, and the owner thereof, or any other person shall complain thereof, and the same be found not-workmanlike done by the searchers of the said company, then he which hath soe wrought the same shall forfeit to the said company the sum of 1s. 8d. in the £, or one penny in the shilling, on the value of such insufficient work.'

It would be tedious to recite the numerous records of complaints arising out of attempts to enforce this rule. Generally it is the searchers who made complaint of the abusive language used to them when making investigations into cases of bad workmanship. In 1714 it is recorded of such a complaint, 'the searchers,' the minute says, 'complain of John Walker for abusing them when they went to search his work, and saying, "you search such things as you cannot make, and if Cuthbert Robinson had been at home and given you a gill of ale you would have past it by."' Sometimes, however, it was the searchers themselves who were at fault. On 15th April, 1718, Richard Wilkinson complains of the searchers, 'John Charlton and Richard Guthrey, for coming in a riotous manner into his house, and without handshaking, and ransacking his drawers where women's linen was. He also presents the said John Charlton for being drunk.' It is only fair to the memory of Richard Guthrie to say that a pen has been subsequently drawn through his name, so that we may infer that the charge, in so far as he was concerned, was withdrawn.

That the members were jealous of their reputation as workmen is illustrated by the number of complaints made against those who taunted their fellows with inferior workmanship. On the 25th August, 1720, for instance, Matthew Carnaby complains of Thomas Lowerison for abusing him in calling him 'brother marwood' and calling him 'botching cobbling dog,' and saying 'you are not fitt to carry my tools,' with much other abusive language. Carnaby himself, however, had not so long before given occasion for a similar complaint. He had taunted George Marshall with not knowing how to make a coffin without daubing it with clay, and had nicknamed him 'clay joiner' and 'dirt dauber.'

Our ancestors were a festive race, and many entries bear witness to their liking for good cheer. At the accession of

George I, Thomas Joblin was in the employ of the company, receiving a wage of 6s. a-week, while his daughter was paid 1s. On April 19th he is allowed 8s. 'for drink when he warned the company.' This seems a fairly liberal allowance considering the rate of wages. At the accession of George I the company had only allowed 1s. 6d. for candles to illuminate the meeting house.

On June 29th, 1725, Edward Dobson is recorded for 'bringing drink into the meeting house'; apparently this had serious results, for, in addition to Dobson, William Longman, Anthony Wallas and Michael Harrison are also recorded for 'drinking upon the tower.' A tavern bill preserved by some careful steward records how the company to the number of fourteen dined 1st July, 1811, at the house of one T. H. Dinning. Their dinner cost them but 2s. each, and there is a sum of 14s. for apprentices' entertainment, which is pleasing to note. The company must have possessed a magnificent thirst, as the items for liquor were: ale 12s., sherry 3*l.* and port 6*l.* 10s. At the prices then current, this allowed each brother about two quarts of ale, and three bottles of wine. This recalls Falstaff's celebrated score with its 'poor halfpenny worth of bread, and most intolerable quantity of sack.'

But in tavern bill in the middle of the last century, the company had a unique opportunity for festivities. On June 29th, 1854, an entry says they received the money from Challoner and Todd and others for the sale of the hall; and after paying off the mortgage, a sum of 88*l.* 19s. 3*d.* was left, which the members divided amongst themselves, and 'take note that the same night, after the meeting, the company partook of an excellent dinner, and spent the remainder of the day in a convivial and harmonious manner.' After this reprehensible violation of their trust, enriching themselves at the expense of their successors, doubtless their festivities had the additional zest which guilt is said to add to pleasure.

A curious entry under date 1675 illustrates the co-operative method of buying, enforced among the brethren. Wood was purchased by the whole company to the order of the various members, and no member was allowed to buy individually, or resell wood he had bought from the fellowship. The entry reads as follows: 'Voted by ye major part of ye company that noe brother of ye said company shall hereafter take any sort of clapboards, wainscot boards or any other goods, with intent to assign or hand ye same over to any other person or persons, but every brother to hand and take his share that he gives in at the meeting house, and bring them home to his dwelling house or shopp, every person offending herein to pay 13s. 4d. fine for every such offence' (*Book of Orders*, 1719, order No. 33).

In the closing years of the eighteenth century and the earlier part of the nineteenth, the fellowship played an active part in the public affairs of the town: and whilst they were anxious to defend the rights of the freemen in the town moor, they were not above taking part in the general affairs of the nation.

Amongst the following extracts from the records are numerous instances of the public spirit with which the company thus took part, and the patriotic spirit which animated it:

In 1781, on May 12th, an account of acknowledgments received for, and on behalf of the joiners' company as follows: J. Goodfellow for employing non-freemen to do joiner work at his house at the Ouseburn within the libertys of this town by order of John Erasmus Blackett, esq., mayor, Hugh Hornby, alderman, the sum of two shillings and sixpence. Signed, De Vergy Lisle, John Rankine, stewards.

N.B.—It was at the same time ordered by the said mayor and aldermen that all such persons offending in the above like manner that all such work as should be done by them should be pulled down and rebuilt by the free burgesses.

5th February, 1828. This night the company met for the purpose of turning over Robert Salmon's apprentices, John Ratcliffe takes John Alex. Sarlby, Messrs. Farrington take George Waugh Dodd, Ebenezer Elliott takes

Thomas Fletcher, George Downey chooses James Sopwith, who was not at the meeting, Thomas Mitcheson chooses Robert McAllister, who was not at the meeting.

The following extract from the minute book of the company referring to erections put up by Mr. Bradley on ground adjoining Todds-nook, Gallowgate, shows the sturdy resistance made by the freemen against any encroachments on their rights:—

4th December, 1828. At a meeting of the stewards the report of the opinion of the companies was received, when 21 companies determined to fill up the quarry and remove all the erections, and support the question by legal proceedings if necessary. It was then resolved that the recommendation of the Company to fill up and level the quarry be carried immediately into effect.

Resolving that the stewards meet to-morrow and carry the above resolution into effect at 10 o'clock in the morning by pulling down the erections, and that hand bills be printed giving notice that a depôt for rubbish is laid out at the barracks.

This was all duly accomplished.

On the 5th December, 1828, the stewards met at the Quarry near the Barracks, served a notice to Mr. Brandling and then pulled down the staiths and depôt for coals, removed the door opening to pit, and laid off the work for coal.

June 29th, 1830. On a motion moved by the stewards resolving that should the Common Council not prevent the trespass made by Mr. Grainger at the Leazes, this company would support any proceedings to prevent same.

2nd November, 1831. Resolving that the struggle now making by the free burgesses to compel the Common Council to govern Newcastle, elect its officers, and its ministers revenues, according to the charters without deviation, for the best interests of the town trade and port.

June 10th, 1834. To the right worshipful the mayor, aldermen, and gentlemen of the Common Council now assembled, the humble petition of the incorporated company of joiners sheweth that this company having considered the proposed improvement of the town by Mr. Grainger's plans is of opinion that the same if carried into effect will be a great public addition by promoting the interests of trade, and the general welfare of the inhabitants. This company therefore pray that your worshipful body will be pleased to sanction the removal of the markets and will afford Mr. Grainger the requested facilities for accomplishing this great undertaking.

On the motion of Thomas Sopwith seconded by John Anderson, it was resolved that the stewards be adopted to present the petition on Thursday first and that the resolution and petition be printed in the Newcastle papers.

January 17th, 1854. They agree to sell the joiners' hall for the sum of 430*l*.

27th July, 1775. The Hon. Constantine John Phipps was this day presented with his freedom and admitted and sworn a brother of this company.

3rd June, 1776. Richard Lacey of the town and county of Newcastle was admitted and sworn a brother of the company.

March, 1777. A. Robinson Bowes of Gibside in the county of Durham, esquire, was this day presented with his freedom, admitted and sworn a brother accordingly.

17th July, 1778. Thomas Delaval of Clapham in Surrey was presented with his freedom, admitted and sworn a brother accordingly.

The following orders relate to the government of the company and the careful protection of its monopoly in the town, and of the privileges for which each brother had been obliged to serve a long apprenticeship, the care taken to ensure that these apprentices were absolutely masters of their business, and the rigid supervision exercised by the company's searchers over the work executed by the brothers afford evidence of the manner in which the interests both of the masters and their customers were carefully guarded. The jerry builder or the scamping workman, unhappily so prevalent at the present day, would have had a poor chance under the vigilant inspection of their work by the company's experts.

Order No. 9.—No apprentice after the term of his apprenticeship has expired shall presume to take any work in hand before he be admitted a freeman of the said fellowship under penalty of 20*s*. before admittance to the fellowship.

Order No. 11.—No apprentice to be employed by any member of the company unless entered in the company's books by the space of fourteen days, penalty 13*s*. 4*d*.

Order No. 45.—No person who is, or may be discharged out of the company shall have the liberty to be a bearer at the funeral of any brother or sister.

Order No. 18.—If any brother hereafter shall swear or profane the name of God at any meeting, he shall pay 6*d.* to the company and 1*d.* to be given to the poor.

Order No. 38.—If any brother shall employ, hire, or sett to work as a journeyman or hired servant any stranger or foreigner, shall pay a fine of 1*s.* per quarter for so long as he or they shall be employed.

Order No. 15.—No brother shall entertain or sett at work any traveller or foreigner above the space of fourteen days, except as it be such as have served as an apprentice within the town of Newcastle, upon penalty of 40*s.*

Order No. 41.—Every brother of this society shall upon his marriage pay 13*s.* 4*d.* to the stewards of this company.

Order No. 26.—No brother shall put forth any work either joynering, carving, turning or inlaying to any forreigner belonging to the same trade under penalty of 6*s.* 8*d.*

Order No. 28.—Searchers shall present their report every quarter day of work discovered to be insufficient. Any brother refusing to permit the said searchers to try his goods to be fined 3*s.* 4*d.*

Order No. 57.—Searchers to report every quarter day and head meeting day that they have searched in every joiner's shop, and in other places where they know there has been any joiner's work done since the last quarter day. If they fail in this duty they shall be fined 10*s.*

Order No. 47.—The wardens on their outgoing at St. Peter's day shall provide a treat for the company towards which the sum of 50*s.* shall be allowed by the company.

Order No. 51.—Each member of the company to pay 1*s.* per quarter to the relief of the poor brothers and widows of poor brothers of the company, under penalty of 2*s.* 6*d.* for non-payment.

Order No. 52.—If any of the society be employed in Gateshead and be their molested or be arrested by the joyners and carpenters of Gateshead this company will protect them and jointly contribute to the cost of any lawsuit arising.

It is this day ordered by the whole consent of the company of joiners that noe brother of this company shall make or sell or dispose unto any house carpenters of the town any tool or instrument used or to be used in either of the said occupation of joiner or carpenter on a penalty of 4*s.*

Order No. 61.—Whereas several disputes and controversies have lately happened between this company and the company of house carpenters as to the undertaking of work not properly belonging to each, it is agreed that the expense of all lawsuits arising out of such disputes be defrayed by the entire company.

Order No. 62.—Previous rule 54, regarding employment of foreigners, and 55 to be null and void, from the 26th Nov., 1739.

Order No. 53.—Whereas by an order of this company not to take any apprentices before five years free therein setting forth, that the company of joiners then become very numerous in so much that the trade was not sufficient to keep at work all the members of this company, by reason whereof many of the members of the said company of joiners was impoverished and the trade in general very much decayed. For remedy therefore, it is now ordered that no apprentice be taken until the preceding apprentice has served five years. The fee for enrolling each apprentice to be 3*l.*, and the fines for non-compliance with this rule to be 10*l.*

Levy for poor brethren to be abolished and above fines substituted for same.

Order No. 56.—Mrs. Stephenson's bequest. No brother to be upbraided for borrowing this money under penalty of 6*s.* 8*d.*

Order No. 59.—If the stewards or members of this society met with any coffin or any other sort of joiner work within the town of Newcastle made by any foreigners shall be empowered to seize the same, and in case they shall be sued for so doing the company will defend and stand by them.

Order No. 2.—If any brother of this company finish a piece of work, and the owner thereof, or any other person shall complain thereof, and the same be found not workmanlike done by the searchers of the said company, then he which hath soe wrought the same shall forfeit to the said company the sum of 1*s.* 8*d.* in the £ or one penny in the shilling, on the value of such insufficient work.

Order No. 3.—If any brother slander, defame, misname, and abuse by any evil words or deeds or otherwise any of his brethren of the said fellowship, that he or they so offending shall forfeit for such an offence 3*s.* 4*d.* upon complaint or presentment by any brother of the company.

Order No. 4.—If any brother should soe far forget himself or his duty as to beat, assault, strike, or wound any of the brethren of the said fellowship, either with fist, dagger or any other kind of weapon, shall forfeit the sum of 13*s.* 4*d.*

Easter Tuesday, 1673.—Whereas complaint was made of some of the company for speckling of wood to make it looke like reall speckled wood, and to place it in worke by them made, making the king's subjects to believe the same to be reall, whereas it is not so. Wherefore to prevent the doing of same for the future, it is voted by the most part of the company that such wood artificially speckled shall not be made use of for the time to come, and if any shall transgresse any more therein to be fined 6*s.* 8*d.* for every offence.

The joiners reconsidered this, for we find an entry on the opposite page to this effect :

St. Peter's Day, 1673.—Whereas there was an order lately made not to speckle wood artificially to look like reall speckled wood. It is this day,

upon further consideration, ordered that they may artificially speckle wood, and make use of it in work, provided they do not affirm it to be reall speckled wood, which if they doe affirm they are to pay for every offence 6s. 8d.

'Item, 1721.—Given to Joshua Bilton to pay the doctress, 8s.'

Wine was cheap at that time, for two bottles of wine and one of sack, consumed whilst 'parliamentearing,' cost only 6s. 6d.

When it was so cheap, a great quantity was consumed, for under date July 18th, 1727, we find it recorded :

'Paid for ten quarts of wine for the three candidates, 20s.; paid for three pounds of fine biscates for them, 4s. 6d.

Order No. 21.—No brother shall sell any goods or things appertaining to their trade in the open market place, but shall keep his shopp. Penalty, 6s. 8d.

Order No. 16.—Upon the decease of every brother or sister all the brethren being lawfully warned doe appear at the dwelling house or lodgings of the party deceased at the house appointed for the funeral, and that from thence they decently follow and attend the corpse the common usuall way into the church or place of burial and there reverently wait until such times as the corps of such brother or sister be interred, under a penalty of 12d.

From the following rules it is evident that the pushful tradesman was regarded with abhorrence, and severe rules were found necessary to restrain him within proper limits :

Order No. 33.—Whereas by previous orders made for the good benefit and advantage of this company no member other than the stewards shall buy of the severall sorts of timber hereinafter mentioned, and divers members having in contempt to this rule for their own private gain, lucre and profit, and to the very great detriment, damage and prejudice of all the other members have taken upon them to buy severall great quantities of timber without acquainting the stewards therewith or proffering the same to the company.

It is now agreed that no brother or member (other than the stewards) shall in partnership, or otherwise presume to buy all manner of wainscot boards, oaken boards, clapboards, handpeck (?) and beach, and pieces of all sorts of billots or pieces of beach or oak under forfeit for every 10s. worth of wood so bought 2s. 6d., and the sum of 5s. for every 20s. worth of wood or timber.

If, however, any brother shall buy any of the aforesaid timber (not advising the stewards of the same) and do profer the same to the company at the prices he really and bonafide paid for the same, then such brother shall not be accounted obnoxious or liable to any penalty.

Order 21.—It is ordered by the consent of the company of joiners that no brother at present free or who shall be free of the said company shall sell any goods or things appertaining to their trade in the open market place, but shall keep his shop upon paine of six shillings and eightpence for every such offence.

Order 14.—It is ordered by the whole consent of the company of joiners that noe brother of the said fellowship shall att any time, seek any coffins by himself or any other, they shall not goe to the house where the party is deceased, upon paine for every wainscott coffin to pay for the use of the said fellowship five shillings, and for every firr coffin, three shillings and fourpence of lawfull British money.

Order No. 48.—If any person come to any brother's shopp and buy goods, and from thence shall depart to another brother's shopp, or any person be standing at any brother's shopp pricing or viewing goods, no brother of this company shall presume to call such person from another brother's shopp on penalty of 3s. 4d.

In the year 1719 the company found it necessary to revise and codify the various orders and rules by which they were governed, and on March 31st of that year they appointed Thomas Bilton, Robert Vipont, Thomas French and Richard Wilkinson, as a committee, together with the stewards and the clerk, to look into, and inspect the ordinary and the ancient book of orders, and to consider what orders were fit to be retained, made, omitted, added, altered, confirmed, and established. They met together several times for that purpose, and having drawn up the several orders contained in this book presented the same to the fellowship, who approved of and confirmed the same.

From the accompanying order it is evident that some remnants of the martial spirit of former days still lingered in the company, and they regarded personal service to the state as a thing to be encouraged in a liberal manner. A relic of this liability of personal service still exists amongst the freemen

of this ancient borough, as each brother, on taking up his free-lage, stands charged with a 'musquet' for the defence of the town.

Order No. 78.—In case any brother be ballotted for the militia he shall be allowed 5*l.* to find a substitute, and in case he shall be aminded and willing to go himself, he shall be entitled to the said sum of 5*l.* This order made December 3rd, 1790.

The stewards record Henry Clundy for lending a sword to John Lylley for to oppose the stewards in case they came to discharge the house carpenters for making lattice barrs at Mr. Anthony Dunn's house. 11th October, 1728.

Before closing the records of this ancient company, there are two or three points deserving of notice.

While jealously guarding their privileges and monopoly from the intrusion of outsiders, it will be seen that they took special pains to ensure the quality of the workmanship executed for their patrons. The long period of apprenticeship which the aspirant had to serve, seven years being the prescribed time (two of which were gratuitous), under the eyes of a vigilant master, turned out a well-skilled workman. The apprentice also had to earn a good character during his period of servitude, as in the event of his conduct not having been satisfactory, it was in the power of his master, or any other freeman, to prevent his guild being called, until he had given satisfaction to the company.

Again, the rigid supervision exercised by the searchers over the work done by the craftsmen was not only a guarantee for the quality of the same, but acted as a severe check upon dishonest competition. As master and journeyman stood upon an equal footing and had an equal share in the direction of affairs, sane counsels prevailed in the conduct of business, and the records of the company extending over more than three centuries contained no trace of strikes or wages disputes. Evidently matters of this sort were settled amongst the brotherhood upon a basis of mutual interest.

Wardens, and the Seal of the Company should be granted to the said
to exercise the Trade of a Joiner for one
Year on board of Ships in the River Tyne, within the Limits and Boundaries
above-mentioned, upon his Payment of the said Sum of Two Shillings and
Six-pence in Manner as hereafter mentioned: Now know ye that in Consi-
deration of the Premises, Licence and Liberty is hereby granted unto the
said to exercise the Trade of a Joiner
for one Year from the Date hereof on board of Ships in the River Tyne
between North-Shields and Howdon-Panns, he the said

paying or causing to be paid unto the Wardens of the said
Fellowship for the Time being the said Sum of Two Shillings and Six-pence
on the Day of next ensuing the
Date hereof: PROVIDED always, and it is hereby declared, and these
Presents are upon this Condition, That if Default shall be made in Payment
of the said sum of Two Shillings and Six-pence on the Day above-
mentioned for Payment thereof by the Space of ten Days then next after;
or if the said shall not at the same Time pay
to the said Wardens the Sum of Two Shillings and Six-pence for every Person
not free of or licenc'd by the said Company, whom he shall employ in the
Trade or Business of a Joiner, within the Limits and Boundaries aforesaid,
then and in either of such Cases, these Presents, and every Licence, Liberty
and Privilege hereby granted, shall cease, determine, and become utterly
void.

Given under our Hands and the Company's Seal this
Day of in the Year of our Lord
One Thousand Seven Hundred and