

*Observations on the Hammermen of Edinburgh.**By William Charles Little of Libberton, Esq;*

AS the record of these corporations goes no farther back than the 1582, we cannot with any degree of precision ascertain their original number, as, even at this period, several corporations were either extinct, or at least had extended the objects of their trade considerably beyond their original bounds.

For example, the Armourers who were no doubt originally confined to the making of armour, when that species of defence went into desuetude, extended their trade to the making of sword blades, which was formerly a separate trade; and, indeed, we will have occasion to observe the gradual decrease of these corporations, owing to different trades associating together, and forming different branches of one corporation.

1582.—“Hew Vans, Dalmascar, ordained not to buy sword-blades to sell again;” and for this obvious reason, that the business of a dalmascar was solely confined to the guilding of iron and steel.

The business of the Gairmakers consisted in fashioning sword-handles; accordingly, in the year 1583, Robert Lyal being admitted a gairmaker, wrought for his essay, “a pair of clain skellir gairds, and ane pair ribbit gairds.”

In the year 1584, the Cutlers essay was “a plain finished quhan-zeat.”

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The Sadlers essay “a man’s fadil of the French fashion covered, and a woman’s fadil ready for covering, and ane man’s fadil of the Scots fashion covered.”

Blacksmiths essay, “ane door cruick, and door band, ane spaid iron, ane schoile iron, and horse shoe and six nails thereto.”

For these many years past eight nails have been used for fixing on a horse shoe; and it is probable, that the increased size of our horses occasioned that addition. Indeed, William Paton who writes an account of the Duke of Somerset’s expedition into Scotland, in the reign of Edward VI. does not bestow the name of horses on the Scottish cavalry, but calls them prickers; nay, he will not allow that the Scots rode, but only pricked along; but this observation I humbly submit to the better judgment of the Society.

In the 1586, a Beltmaker’s essay was “ane sword belt, and ane belton belt.” The first of these needs no explanation; but the last was used for two different purposes: In the first place, to keep the body firm; and, in the second place, to hang the side pistols upon.

A Locksmith’s essay, “with consent of the blacksmiths, two kist locks.” From this circumstance, we may infer, that either there was not a quorum of the locksmiths at this time, or more probably, that the locksmiths were anciently a branch of the blacksmith trade.

At this period the Lorimers essay was “ane pair of small ribbit sword gairds, and ane bridle bit, ane pair stirrip irons, and ane pair of spurs; all of the French fashion;” and at this time a fadler’s essay was a man’s and a woman’s faddle of the Scottish fashion.

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In the year 1588, there was an addition made to this essay, viz. a man's faddle, and a woman's faddle of the French fashion, and a woman's faddle. At this period too, I find Pewtherers mentioned; but it appears their trade was then very limited, as their essay consisted only of "ane basing and lawer."

In the 1590, the Armourers essay was "a great hit sword."

Previous to the 1581, it appears that there was only one dalmascar, viz. Hew Vans already mentioned; but, upon the 3th August of this year, there was another admitted, who produced for his essay, "a pair gairdes dalmash'd and gilt with lief gold."

In July 1594, there is mention made of Dagmakers, they were joined with the locksmiths, "their essay was a hackbut and a dag." A few definitions from Minshew's Dictionary will throw some light on this essay, "Haquebut is that piece of artillery we otherwise do call an harquebuse, being both French words.—Haque is a hand-gun of about three quarters of a yard long.—*Arquebuse ab arcus et bugio cavus hollow quia trunco similis est arcui*; because one end of the stock next to the man's breast is bowed like a bow, and the piece is hollow.—*Dagge or pistol, forfana Dacis quod Dacis Germaniae populis primum innotuerit*; because the Dacians were the first that used them."

In the 1595, The Sheirsmiths make their appearance. Their essay consisted of "ane pair of skinner's sheirs, and ane pair of taylor's sheirs."

In the 1600, the Armourers essay was changed into "an mounted braid sword sufficiently wrought; and the Cutlers to "ane finished quinzair."

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Upon the 2d September 1609, a considerable addition was made to the locksmiths essay, which then consisted "of a kist lock and a hing, an bois lock, with an double plate lock."

Upon the 26th September, Walter Duncan a Hecklemaker was admitted; and as there is no mention of this trade before his admission, it is probable that he was the first who obtained a place among the corporations.

Upon the 7th September 1613, Walter Duncan is admitted Linkter, and produced for his essay "a brasin heekle, and goblit of white iron."

1613.—Thomas Duncan, Tinkler, was admitted, his essay "an heckell with a pair of clatting wool cammis."

In the 1614, a very considerable addition was made to the Beltmakers essay, viz. "ane bridlè, ane headstil, and ane pair of stirrip leathers."

In the 1616, the Armourers essay consisted of "an mounted sword and scabbard."

In the 1620, "a quart flaggon became part of the Pewtherers essay."

In the 1621, October 16th, a Dagmaker, with consent of the lorimers, produced as his essay, "a brazen bucklè and an arrow head."

1632, December 3d.—John Sharg, Englishman, produced two pieces of work, one of bras, and the other of copper, as his essay, and

and was admitted a freeman of the brazier and coppersmith trades. He seems to have been the first. His essay masters were a lorimer and a pewtherer.

Upon the 31st July 1634, Robert Duncan was admitted a free-man Bookclasper, heckle and bowitmaker.

Upon the second of October this year, James Younger, in consideration of 100 merks (L. 5 : 11 : 1 $\frac{1}{3}$.) paid by him, was allowed during his life, to make and sell within the liberty, "all sorts of sword belts, all sorts of claspit belts, all sorts of brafs buckles, all sorts of brafs nails, braffin heads for men and women's fadles, braffin stirrups for gentlewomen; and all other braffin work of the like sort."

Upon the 16th June 1641, the Grayfriars Kirk-session applied to the Corporations, in order to have the "Magdalane chapple bell" rung on their account, for which they agreed to pay L. 40 Scots, (L. 3 : 6 : 8 Sterling.) yearly, which was agreed to during pleasure.

In September this year, a Coppersmith produced for his essay "a stoving pan and a scovit."

In the 1644, the Gairmakers essay consisted "of ane double scheith and pair of scheiths, an single schieth and an pair of hulsters."

In December this year, a "key and sprent band" were added to the Locksmiths essay.

Upon the 6th December 1647, a Locksmith and Knockmaker were admitted, and his essay consisted of "a lock, with the key and
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"sprent band, and knock and minuter and dyell." He was admitted with consent of the locksmiths and knockmakers, and is the first who was permitted to exercise these trades jointly.

Upon the 7th April this year, the Corporations ordained 10 or 12 of the ablest men to be in readiness to ride with the Deacon, for searching and finding out the Laird of Kilspindie.

In the 1648, the Braziers essay consisted of "an little bell, an hand-bell, an mortar with an pistol."

In the 1649, the Saddlers essay was changed to "an French fadel and hunting fadel;" and, in the 1653, the Braziers essay was changed to "three several sorts of buckles, three several sorts of nails, with an fadel head;" at this time the Coppersmiths essay consisted of "a stwen pan and skeilit;" and the Armourers of "an mounted sword, with a new scabbard and an Highland gaurd."

Upon the 21st March 1657, Mr Charles Smith, Advocate, was admitted a Blacksmith; and was pleased to produce, by way of essay, "the portrait of an horse's leg, shoed with a silver shoe fixed with three nails, with a silver staple at the other end thereof; which was found to be a *qualified* and well wrought essay."

I was much disposed to trace this ingenious gentleman's family and connections*. I had the mortification, however, to discover, that the record of the Faculty of Advocates goes no farther back than the year 1660; but hope some other Member of this Society may be more fortunate in his researches.

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* He was a son of Sir John Smith of Grattle, Knight, who was Lord Provost of Edinburgh in the years 1643, 1644, and 1645.

As to this curious essay, I shall only beg leave to observe, that it is no stretch of probability to suppose, that this mechanical genius would choose the foreleg for his exhibition, in which case the allusion to his former business is too obvious to need any illustration; and would no doubt be considered as a very good joke in those days.

In the 1659, and 1660, the Sadlers essay underwent a further alteration, and consisted of "a great saddle, an woman's saddle, a small saddle, a side saddle, and a hunting saddle."

In the year 1664, mention is made of a White-ironman, who produced as his essay "a lantern, a sugar box, an lamp, and candlestick;" and upon the 16th September this year, the harnessmakers are mentioned for the first time. The essay "a coach horse harness;" and much about the same period, two persons are appointed to convey the Deacon over the water, to the Laird of Lundy's burial, under the pain of L. 10 each, (16s. 8d. Sterling.)

Upon the 10th September 1667, the Beltmakers essay was considerably improved, and consisted of "a shoulder belt, a waist belt with an furniture;" by which is possibly meant lace or fringes.

In the 1668, the White-ironmens essay was extended to "a stove pan, a lantern, a watering pot for the gardening, and an chandler;" and upon the 26th September a Dagmaker was admitted with the usual essay. We shall meet with no more mention of this trade, as in the 1676, the buckle and arrow-head were added to the Gunsmiths essay. And of the same date a Gunsmith makes his appearance for the first time; his essay was a pair of sufficient pistols.

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In the 1673, James Innes writer was admitted a freeman, on his application. I am sorry to say, I find no essay on this occasion, neither can I trace the cause of his admission.

In the 1675, the Coppersmiths essay consisted of "a skellit of brass, a stoving pan of copper, and an standing chandler of beaten brass;" and upon the 7th of August, a watch was added to the Knockmakers essay; and, upon the 6th October James Aitchison, Engraver, was admitted in the art of Engraving and Clasp-maker trade; his essay was "a pair of lock brass clasps, and a cut seal bearing the Hammermen's arms."

As I cannot trace the smallest connection betwixt these two trades, I am led to believe that this conjunction proceeded from the very imperfect knowledge we had then acquired of engraving, which, in my humble opinion, at this time, extended little farther than the cutting of letters and seals; and as this could afford but a very small field for business, he was admitted among the Clasp-makers; which business, considering the very limited use of shoe-buckles, and the very extensive use of bibles at this period, (most, if not all, of which were ornamented with clasps), could not fail to be very productive.

In the 1676, a brass cast candlestick was added to the Founder's essay; and, in the same year, the Gunsmiths extended their essay to "a mounted pistol, a carriban, a buckle, and an arrow head;" and, in 1677, the clockmaker's essay was the movement of a watch.

Upon the 13th November this year, a servant of the Duke of Lauderdale was admitted an Upholsterer, but discharged to take any apprentices but Scotsmen's sons.

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It gave me a great deal of pleasure to observe so much spirit in the corporations, considering the uncommon influence which the Duke had at this period. For my own part, I should have been nowise surpris'd had I found him provided with a pension out of the corporation funds. But it seems this is an abuse which has been reserved for more enlightened times.

The 11th of January 1679 was rendered remarkable by the ratification of the admission of Sir George Mackenzie of Rosehaugh, as a freeman.

It seems he had been admitted in December preceding, by the Deacon, Boxmaster, and other members, at a meeting held in presence of the Lord President of the Session, (Sir James Dalrymple of Stair,) the Lord Arniston, and several other persons of quality.

It does not appear that this distinguished character produced any essay; but it will be no hard task to prove that few members promoted more the interest of the hammermen than he did.

Mr Cruikshanks, in his Ecclesiastical History, (vol. 1st, p. 411.) observes, "upon the 4th August 1677, Sir George Mackenzie of Rosehaugh was admitted a Privy Counsellor; and about this time Sir John Nisbet, who had been his Majesty's Advocate for several years, was turned out and succeeded by Sir George, who was greatly instrumental in the after sufferings of the presbyterians; so that the prelates themselves could never charge him with any thing like moderation." And whoever looks into Mr Woodrow's history, will find that no period has occurred more distinguished for the use of handcuffs, gallowstocks, spikes, chains, axes, cleavers, thumbkins, boots, and other engines of torture, death, and demembration. Indeed this period was rendered remarkable by inventions of this
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fort, as appears from the following act of council, 23d July 1684, "Whereas the *boots* were the ordinary way to expiscate matters relating to the government; and that there is now a new invention and engine, called the Thumbkins, which will be very effectual to the purpose and intent foresaid; the Lords of his Majesty's Privy Council do therefore ordain, that, when any person shall, by *their order*, be put to the torture, the said boots and thumbkins both be applied to them, as it shall be found fit and convenient."

I have already observed that the records are silent with regard to Sir George's essay; however, as the word *new* has no very determined signification, I think it not impossible that this new invented "engine called the Thumbkins," may have been invented upon that occasion, and lain dormant till an after period, when this worthy member acquired sufficient influence in the Privy Council to establish his invention. However, be this as it will, this engine was far excelled by an *essay* of the Privy Council, indisputably new, with which I shall conclude this disagreeable subject. (Cruikshanks, vol. 2d, p. 282,) 26th July 1684, "The Lords of his Majesty's Privy Council order General Dalzell to receive Mr William Spence from the Magistrates of Edinburgh, and to appoint a sufficient number of officers and soldiers to watch him by turns, and not suffer him *sleep*, night nor day, but use every method necessary for *keeping him awake*; and, in the meantime, to take down in writing every thing he shall say in relation to the plot."

1682.—"A cruick and cruickband" was added to the Locksmith's essay.

Upon the 13th May 1686, mention is first made of a Hookmaker. The essay, "a dozen of hooks and a dozen of clasps." This year,

too, a considerable addition was made to the Locksmith's essay, viz. "a pafs lock with two brafs drawers, the lock polished."

In the year 1687, the Chapel was fet to the presbyterians for the purpose of performing divine worship in, at L. 3 Sterling quarterly. This indulgence, however, was discharged by his Majesty's letter, dated in November this year; but afterwards restored by another, bearing date 14th February 1688.

In the 1689, the Clockmaker's essay was "a house clock, with a watch larum, and locks upon the doors."

This year, too, the small brafs Founder is mentioned for the first time. His essay, "a fuit of oval buckles with the pertinents, a bul-lion nail, a coachnail, and a chairnail." He paid L. 50 (L. 4: 3: 4) more than an apprentice.

About this time, too, the Framesmith makes his appearance. His essay "six sinkers."

In March 1691, Paul Martin, a distressed French protestant, was admitted freeman, for making lancets, razors, and all manner of chyrurgical instruments. His essay was "a dismembering saw for the leg, a trepan, a razor, and lancet." I humbly think it a little extraordinary that some medical gentlemen, or at least, some Lords of the Session, did not attend this admission, as, the razor excepted, the hammermen were no judges of the sufficiency or insufficiency of this essay.

In August 1694, John Kello, Embroiderer, was admitted and joined to the saddlers. His essay, "an embroidered thistle, and the motto *nemo me impune lacesset*."

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This year, too, "a pistol with a bridged lock," was added to the Gunsmith's essay; and "a buckle of trophee work" to the Founders.

In May 1698, two knives and a fork were added to the Cutler's essay; and, in 1700, the barrel forged, to the Gunsmiths'.

In February 1701, the Founder's essay was "a brafs cannon, a bell, and a plain round casten candlestick;" and the Knockmakers "a pendulum clock, with a large and short swing, and a lock to the door, with the key;" and, in 1712, "the movement of a watch."

In the 1713, the Sadlers obtained the addition of "a charging saddle."

In the 1720, a Pinmaker is mentioned. His essay, "three lots of different sizes of pins."

In June 1728, for the safety of the lieges, the Locksmith's essay was appointed to be "a cruik and cruikband, a pafs lock with a round filled bridge not cut or broke in the backside, with nobbs and jamb bound."

In March 1733, a very elegant essay was appointed for the white Ironsmiths, viz. "a box with three cannisters in it, of beaten work, a struck globe lanthorn with sixteen horns, and a syphon with a brafs bow or curtee;" and, in June following, the Pewtherers, in imitation of their brethren, extended their essay to "a bafon, a pint flaggon, a decanter with a lid and stroup to it."

I find nothing further remarkable, till the 25th March 1746, when William Duke of Cumberland was admitted to the freedom of the corporation of Hammermen. He was likewise admitted to the freedom.

freedom of all the corporations within the city; and the acts of admission were transmitted to him by the Lord Justice Clerk, (Lord Miltoun), in a gold box, the expence of which amounted to L. 1212 Scots, or L. 101 Sterling.

As it is extremely probable that some weeks would elapse before the Duke was informed of this mark of attention, I humbly submit it to the Society, if the victory at Culloden may not be considered as his Royal Highness's essay.

In May 1764, Thomas Laing was admitted the first Edge Tool maker. His essay "a set of boring bits, and a plain iron."

In July, a Fishhookmaker was admitted. His essay "a fishhook, and a clasp and eye."

In January 1774, an antiburger was admitted, upon signing a declaration in place of taking the oath of admission.

This liberality of sentiment does the corporations much honour. The religious prejudices of mankind well deserve our pity, but can never render their deluded votaries objects of punishment.

Having detained the Society so long, I shall now conclude with a very short observation.

The ancient essays are few and simple, and entirely confined to the means of defence or the necessaries of life; but, as civilization advances, the necessaries of life increase, and of consequence, the arts for manufacturing them; and it is curious to observe, as one trade goes into defuétude, another gradually succeeds in place of it. Thus, though we have no more occasion for the ancient armourer
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and dagmaker, the guilder, cutler, and gunsmith, have ample employment; and the founder, from the invention of cannon, finds a field for business, unknown in former times.

Though I behold with pleasure the gradual improvement of the useful arts, yet it would make me infinitely more happy, could I say with truth, that the improvement of our manners went hand in hand with that of our mechanical operations.