

THE INCORPORATION OF BARBERS OF STIRLING.

(By DAVID B. MORRIS.)

INTRODUCTORY.

The Incorporations which existed in Stirling were the Merchant Guild or Guildry, the group known as the Seven Incorporated Trades, consisting of Harpmermen, Weavers, Tailors, Shoemakers, Fleashers, Skinners, and Bakers, and four independent bodies called the Tolerated Communities, these being the Maltmen, the Mechanics, the Omnium Gatherum, and the Barbers. The Barbers were generally styled the Barbers Periwig Makers, the word periwig appearing in many weird forms of spelling. A periwig, of which the word "wig" is simply a shortened form, was a small-sized wig, and was also known as a peruke.

Information as to the Incorporation of Barbers in Stirling is chiefly to be derived from the Town Council records, as, unfortunately, the Incorporation's minute books and documents have all been lost. They may be lying safely somewhere, and it is to be hoped that they will be found and be placed in proper custody.

INCORPORATION BY SEAL OF CAUSE.

The earliest mention of the Barbers in Stirling which we have traced is in a Minute of Town Council dated 18th June, 1698, which states that a Petition had been received from two Barbers who were burghesses, one as a Merchant and the other as a Glover or Skinner. The Town Council ordained that no one practise the art of barbarizing or periwig making in Stirling without being entered as burghesses. It will be observed that this is not a Seal of Cause as it does not constitute an Incorporation of Barbers. It only protects the interests of burghesses, who happen to be Barbers.

The Barbers were granted a real Seal of Cause on 1st September, 1718. The Town Council were approached by two Barbers and "pirrieweg" makers who were members of the Merchant Guild. The Act of 18th June, 1698, was confirmed, authority was given to the Barbers and periwig

makers, who were burgesses, to incorporate themselves in "ane Tolerate Society or Incorporation," to elect office-bearers, to punish members for insufficiency of work, to admit members and charge dues, to support their poor, two of their number to ride the parade at the fair. They were not allowed a Deacon, the preses being designated the Overseer. The dues of entry were £8 to the Incorporation and £12 to the burgh, Scots money.

On 14th September, 1728, at the request of the Barbers, the dues exigible from a stranger were raised to £16 to the Incorporation and £24 to the burgh, Scots.

In September, 1729, the Town Council cleared up difficulties which had arisen among several of the burgh Incorporations, and, on the 25th of that month, they passed another Act in favour of the Barbers. This confirmed the three previous Acts, and enacted that all "burgesses qua barbers or piriewigmakers" should reside with their families at least eight months in the year within the burgh. It was, however, provided that any persons entered with the Guildry or with any of the Seven Incorporated Trades could follow the art of barbarising upon payment of £4 Scots to the Society.

The fact that members of the Guildry practised as Barbers is confirmed by a minute of the Guildry, dated 17th April, 1725, which bore that many extraneous persons, not actual traffickers, such as writers, surgeons, listers, bookbinders, wigmakers, maltmen, wrights, and others had entered with the Guildry. These were forbidden to teach their apprentices anything except merohandising.

The foregoing four Acts of the Town Council, constituting together the Barbers' Seal of Cause, were in the following terms:—

Seals of Cause.

Discharging Unentered Barbers to Practise.

18th June, 1698.—Anent the petitione given in to the saids magistrats and council by Robert Stewart, merohand, Robert Napeir, glover, and others, barbers and burgesses of the said burgh, mentioning that severall strangers and other persones not burgesses of the samen burgh doe come to and take up ther residence within the

said burgh and practise the arte of barbarizing and piriewigmaking to the great prejudice of the petitioners who are burgesses and bear portable burding with their neighbors, and therfor craving that the saids magistrats and council might by their authoritie discharge the saids unfrie barbers and piriewigmakers from the said arte and practice, and to ordaine them to enact themselves for that effect; which being considered by the saids magistrats and council they unanimously grant the desyre of the said petitione, and have statute and hereby statutes and ordaines that noe persone nor persones whatsoever living or residing within the said burgh, who are not entered burgesses, presume or take upon hand in any tyme comeing to practice or make use of the said art of barbarizing or piriewigmaking, under the penaltie of tuentie pounds Scots, toties quoties; and whoever shall be found contraveening decernes them in payment of the saids penaltie and to enact themselves in maner forsaid.

Act Incorporating the Barbers.

1st September, 1718.—The provost, baillies, and town council of the said burgh, being convened for treating of the common concerns thereof, and having under their serious consideration ane petition formerly given in to them by William Maiben and William Mitchell, barbers and pirieweg makers, merchands and burgesses of the said burgh, for themselves and in name and behalf of the remanent barbers and pirieweg makers therin, which had been presented and read in councill upon the 22nd of August last, and maketh mention that where albeit the town council by their act the eighteen day of June jmvic and ninty eight years, statute and ordained that no person living within this burgh, who is not entered burges, presume or take upon hand in any time thereafter to practise or make use of the said art of barbarizing or pieriewig making under the penalty of twenty pound Scots money, toties quoties, yet the samen no wayes authorizes the petitioners to oblidge any intrant burges who barbarizes or makes wigs to enter with the petitioners or give them any acknowledgment; and seing they are willing if indulged by your worships to imbody or incorporat themselves in a society of barbers, and for the better support of their poor and sufficiency of their work to oblidge each burges who shall hereafter enter and use the foresaid art or trade to enter with

the said society of barbers and pay in [blank] Scots money of entry money to them, and to appoint one of their number as overseer for manadging their concerns and taking care of the sufficiency of their work, and other necessar members, if authorized thereto by your worships; and therefore craving your worships might take the premisses to your serious consideration and allow your petitioners to reimbody or incorporate themselves, and annually to elect one of their number as their overseer to take care of their publick concerns and inspect the sufficiency of their work, and to appoint other requisite members, and to statute that any person hereafter entering burges and practizing the foresaid art or trade shall be obliged to pay in to the said society of barbers [blank] money foresaid of entrie money. The saids provost, baillies and town counsell, after mature deliberation, hereby not only ratify and approve of the above former act of counsell in the hail heads, articles, and clauses thereof, made in favours of the barbers within this burgh, but also hereby grant and allow liberty and priviledge to the barbers, pieriwig makers therin, who are burgesses, to imbody or incorporate themselves in one tollerate society or incorporation by their allowance and under their authority, granting and giving to them full power annually to elect one of their number as overseer of their society, who is hereby authorized to take care of their whole publick concerns with consent of the other members of said society or plurality of them as they shall see cause and find just, and more particularly to inspect the sufficiency of the work of the members of said society, and with concurrence of any of the magistrats for the time to punish for insufficiency of work as the magistrats shall direct and appoint, and to appoint any clerk, box-master, and officer of their society, as the members thereof be unanimous consent or majority of votes shall from time to time think fitt to elect and appoint, and to do every thing else reasonable, lawfull, and convenient for the right management of the said society and its concerns, as freely in all respects as any other society tollerate by the saids magistrats and town counsell have done or may by law do and exert in the like cases; and furdur, the saids magistrats and counsell hereby statute and ordain that any person hereafter entering burges and practizing the foresaid art or trade of barbariz-

ing or pieriewigmaking, being a stranger, shall be oblidded to pay in to the said burgh for the liberty of the said practise within the same the sum of twelve pound for his entrie with the burgh, and whither he be stranger or not the sum of eight pound Scots to the said society of barbers for the use of their poor for his entry with them, unless the said society or tollerate incorporation shall hereafter think fitt to low the said entry as to the children or apprentices of those thereby incorporate or that hereafter shall enter with the said society; providing alwayes that by this present grant the said society be oblidded to apply their entries and other publick stock that shall arise amongst them for the support of their poor, and defray the expence of their other publick and necessar concerns so as that this burgh being no wayes burdened with the poor belonging to the said society; and likewise hereby enacting and appointing that two of the foresaid society of barbers shall ride at the parade of the next ensuing fair, and yearly thereafter when the fair is rid, when thought fitt that they should so do, and that they shall be warned for that end. And in testimony hereof the dean of gild, as precess of counsell, has in their names subscribed this present act and grant, and appoints the great seal of the burgh to be hereto appended.

Grant to the Barbers and Weigmakers.

14th September, 1728.—The counsell having under their serious consideration a representation and petition given in to them severall months ago be James Lockart, barber and weigmaker and merchant burges of this burgh, present overseer to the tollerat incorporation or society of barbers and weigmakers within the same, for himself and in name of the remanent members of said incorporation, creaving upon the grounds therein sett furth that the magistrats and counsell might now raise or augment the entries of such barbers and weigmakers as are strangers who shall hereafter enter neighbours burgesses with this burgh, as their wisdoms should think fitt, both with respect to the entry money payable by such to this burgh and to the said tollerat society of barbers and weigmakers therein; which having been att first presenting thereof and on severall dyets of counsell since read in public counsell, and being maturely deliberat by the saids magistrats and counsell, they (butt prejudice

to or innovation of the said tollerat incorporation of barbers their act and grant the first of September one thousand seven hundred and eighteen from the then magistrats and town council except in so far as the entries of such being strangers are altered hereby in manner underwritten) by this present act appoint, statute, and ordain that in all time coming, during the magistrats and council present and to come their pleasure, each barber or weigmaker, being a stranger, who beis hereafter admitted to enter neighbour and burges of this burgh, shall pay to the town treasurer for the time for behoof of this burgh twenty four pounds Scots for his entry as neighbour burges, and to the said tollerat society of barbers for his entry with them sixteen pound money forsaid, notwithstanding such entries were lower by the forsaid act and grant. Providing always, as it is hereby specially provided that the entry money payable to this burgh by the sons and apprentices of such barbers and weigmakers as are freemen of this burgh and entered with the said tollerat society shall still be and continue as formerly according to the said former act and grant.

Act and Grant in Favours of the Barbers and Pirioweigmakers.

25th September, 1729.—Anent the representation and petition given in to the saids magistrats and council by James Lockart, present overseer to the tollerat society or incorporation of barbers and weigmakers within the said burgh, for himself and in name of the remanent members of the said society (referring to acts of town council in their favor dated 18th June, 1696, 1st September, 1718, and 14th Sepetmber, 1728), by which three severall acts and grants it might be thought that no person unentered with the burgh and said society of barbers and weigmakers should have the liberty or privilege of exeroing the forsaid art or trade of barbarising and pirioweigmaking within the said burgh, yet notwithstanding there be persons, one or moe, who have presumed and taken in hand to follow and practise the forsaid art or trade of barbarising and pirioweigmaking not only by themselves but also by bringing in journeymen to work under them in that art or trade within the said burgh without entering as afor said, under this colour or pretext that their being sons of merchant burgesses of this burgh intitles or

allows them to follow and practise the forsaid art and trade of barbarising and pirioweigmaking within the same without entering therewith and with the said society as afor said. . . . (After consideration of the petition and representation, the magistrats and council) statute, enact, and ordain that in all time coming all barbers or pirioweigmakers, as well entered as to be entered with the said society and with this burgh as burgesses qua barbers or pirioweigmakers, who do not reside themselves with their families at least eight months in the year within the burgh, shall not have the liberty or privilege of barbarising or pirioweigmaking therein during their not residing within the same as afor said notwithstanding of their entries; and that no inhabitant of the burgh who follows and professes the said imploy shall have the liberty or privilege of taking journeymen or apprentices under them as barber or pirioweigmaker journeymen or apprentices till such time as he who takes them be himself first entered with the said society: but statute, enact and ordain that in all time coming any person entered or to be entered with the gildry or with any of the seven incorporat trades of this burgh, who follows and practices the forsaid art or trade of barbarising or pirioweigmaking and resides therein as afor said, shall still have the liberty and privilege of following and practising that imploy within the said burgh and of taking barber or pirioweigmaker journeymen or apprentices under him upon his paying in four pound Scots to the said society of barbers and pirioweigmakers; and the saids magistrats and council furdere declare that he shall be free of all other charges or expenses for speaking drinks, or att going the marches and fairs of this burgh, or otherways as a barber or pirioweigmaker.

THE CHURCH.

The Barbers took part in the arrangements for paying the stipends of the Second and Third Ministers of the burgh. They passed an Act on 13th January, 1731, thirling themselves to the burgh mills and coming under certain obligations, similar Acts being passed by the Guildry, the Seven Incorporated Trades, and the other Tolerated Communities. In response, the Town Council, on 16th January, 1731, passed the well-known Act of Relief, by which provision was

made for the support of the ministry of the Second and Third Charges and other public objects.

In recognition of these obligations, the Barbers' Incorporation were consulted in the election of the Second and Third Ministers, and appointed a delegate to vote with the Town Council and with the delegates from the other Incorporations.

There was a scheme proposed on 25th December, 1740, to support the poor and prevent begging. The Barbers were convened, as well as the other Incorporations, and this course was again followed on 12th June, 1741.

The Barbers as an Incorporation had no sittings allotted to them in either the East or the West Church.

THE ASSOCIATION OF BARBERS WITH SURGEONS.

There was an old association of the Barbers with the practice of surgery, at least in that aspect of it which concerned the operation of bleeding for the purpose of the cure of illness. So close was this association that the term Barber-Surgeon was applied to those who followed this joint occupation. It is said that the two signs which a Barber is wont to display at his premises signify the surgical branch of his profession. The brass basin with a bite out of the rim was the vessel for receiving the blood when bleeding was performed. The pole was the rod which the patient grasped with his hand, while the white stripe encircling the pole represents the bandage with which the operation was completed.

There is no evidence of the Barbers' Incorporation of Stirling having had any connection with the Surgeons, or Chirurgeons as they were called, and the Physicians who practised in Stirling, or that medical men, as such, ever were members of the Incorporation. The Incorporation was definitely a community of Barbers and Wigmakers.

The Town Council of Edinburgh, on 1st July, 1505, granted a Seal of Cause to the Brethren of the Surgeons and Barbers in that city. The Petition was presented by the Kirk Master (the Deacon) and Brethren, showing that the Craft was already incorporated, and their occupation was referred to as the Crafts of Surgery or Barber Craft. Apparently the terms were considered to be synonymous. The chief qualifications of a member was that "he knaw Anatomia, Natur and Complexion of every

member of Human Body, and lykwise that he knaw all the veins of the samen, that he may maik Phlebothomia in due tyme." The Crafts maintained the altar of Saint Mungo in the College Kirk of St. Giles. It is probably not without significance that the foregoing Seal of Cause was granted during a severe visitation of the plague. Three days later the Town Council of Edinburgh enacted a number of stringent regulations, including the first example of compulsory notification of infectious disease, namely that all cases of plague must be revealed within twenty-four hours of onset. By a decree of the Court of Session in 1722, the Barbers and the Surgeons of Edinburgh were in effect separated.

In Dundee certain unincorporated bodies were erected by the Town Council into Fraternities called "Pendicles of the Guildry," being thus placed under the supervision and control of the Dean of Guild. One of these was the Barbers and Wigmakers. The Guildry in their case disapproved, and the Fraternity had only a short existence. They were in no way associated with the Surgeons.

In Glasgow the Incorporation of Surgeons and Barbers was an important body. A prominent member was Dr. Peter Low, who is remembered as in 1599 the founder of the Glasgow Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons.

In an Aberdeen case decided on 5th January, 1711, the principles of the combined occupation of Barber-Surgeons were discussed at some length (Burnet, Gordon and Skein v. Magistrates and Dean of Guild of Aberdeen. Morrison, Vol. III., Page 1919). Three chirurgeon apothecaries were prosecuted for merchandizing. It was pleaded that "chirurgeons are no more but a pendicle of the Barbitomsors, the old trade of Barbers." "Ho who brings home silk, wool, marble, timbor, and other materials is a merchant; but the weaver, wright, and mason that joins them together is a tradesman. Even so, he that imports drugs and deals in simples is a merchant; but if he mix and compound the drugs, and keep an apothecary's shop, he is a tradesman." "It were derogatory to the estate and dignity of merchants that every tradesman might, at his own hand, invade their office, to the reproach of our merchants in foreign countries." "These men may practise surgery and pharmacy, the trades they profess, but no more.

It were an insolence to force the Magistrates to admit them guild brothers." It was answered for the Barber-Surgeons that "shirurgery and pharmacy are rather sciences and branches of medicine than manual arts, and so must be designed a famosiori analogato, and they are none of the erected deaconries, and so must necessarily come under the denomination of merchants." The Surgeons lost their case.

In England, Barbers first received incorporation from Edward IV. in 1461. In the reign of Henry VIII. they were united with the company of Surgeons, it being enacted that the Barbers should confine themselves to blood-letting and drawing teeth, while the Surgeons were prohibited from "barbery or shaving." In 1745, Barbers and Surgeons were separated into distinct corporations.

The following entries taken from the Minute Books of Stirling Town Council are given partly to show that the Stirling Barbers had no connection, or at least no official connection, with the healing art, and partly for their own intrinsic interest.

The earliest record of a Surgeon in Stirling is in 1602, when William Broge, Chirurgion, was elected to the Town Council as one of seven nominees of the Stirling Merchant Guild. He must have been entered with that body. He probably kept a "Doctor's shop" and sold medicine, combining the occupations of doctor and chemist.

Alexander Sklatter, Chirurgiane.

20th February, 1609.—The ballies and counsall advysit, suspendis and discharges Alexander Sklatter of all farder using and exercesing the office and cure of ano chirurgiane fra this furth quhill they be farder testifijt of his knowlege and sufficiencie, under the pane of banishment.

Act for Johnne Ownynghame, baillie, his cuir.

28th August, 1615.—Findis that the hurt and wound laitlie gevin be Aulay M'Aulay to Johnne Ownynghame, baillie, wes done to him in the execution of his office, and thairfoir ordanes for his bettir curring of the said wound that Thomas Bachope, thesaurer, sall becum debtour to James Kynloche, churgian, for the soume of tua hundredth merkis money as the toun and he hes agreit; and for the thesaureris releiff, the counsall dedicattis and assignis the ordinar fies

this yeir dew to the provest, baillies, dene of gild, thesaurer and clerk, extending to xxxvj li.; and of the unlawis this yeir the provest and baillies assignis to the said thesaurer the sowme of xl pundis, quhairof they sall caus him be payit; and the sessioun of the kirk sall be delt with to gif out of thair box xl li.; and the dene of gild and his brethir sall be delt with out of thair box to gif according to thair guid plesour; and the toun themsellis, out of their commoun guid, sall gif xl lib., with ano voluntar contribution of nychtbouris, quhairof the thesaurer sall be comptabil to the toun of the superplus according to his intronissioum; and thair sall be allowit to him the intres and annuell of the said sowme of ijo merkis incas he be compellit to borrow the same, with all coistis, chargis, and expensis the counsall sustene thairthrow.

Chirurgian Nychtbour and Burges.

9th March, 1646.—Ressaves and admittis Johnne Buchannan, chirurgian, to the libertie and freedom of ano nychtbour and burges of this burgh, and that gratis, quha maid faithe as use is; and he sall not mak malt not use na uther tred nor handling within the said burgh and libertie thairof except his awin calling, but licence of the counsall; with libertie to him to tak a chalmer in the toun fra' any nychtbour and burges thairof for himself, his mother and sister, to duell in, but ony using of ony change or othor libertie as said is.

£12 Paid to a Highland Doctor.

13th March, 1697.—The council approves of the toun treasuror his paying twelve pound Scots to ano Hyoland doctor for helping to pay him for cutting of John Stewart, lister, his son, of the stone, upon which accompt both the kirk sessioun and others gave their charitable contributions.

Curcung Officer.

20th August, 1706.—Appointes the treasurer to pay to Hario Chrystie, chyrurgeon, four poundis for curcung of John Cunninghame, officer, his head being severlie cutt.

Practitioner of Phisick and Chyrurgerie.

24th June, 1710.—The council allowes Mr. Francis Clerk, practitioner of phisick and chyrurgerie, to erect a stage in the publick street, upon this condition that he shall not by

himselfe or his servants enter upon the stage upon the publick mercat day untill one a'clock in the afternoon.

Furnishing Medecines to the Poor who are Sick.

10th September, 1716.—The councill considering the present callamity of this place by the great sickness therein, and that severall of the poorer sort of the inhabitants suffer exceedingly thereby through want of means to obtain propper remeadies for their malladies, and that the phisicians in this burgh have freely offered their service gratis to such if there were any way laid down for furnishing of medcines therefore, and for using the means for preventing the further growth of the present raging sickness in this burgh, the saids magistrates and councill recomend to the elders of the kirk session to take up ane exact list of the sick persones in their severall quarters who have not means of their own to procure propper medcines for their recovery, and to lay the said list before the councill, and appoints baillie Chrystie, chyrurgeon, to furnish what medcines the phisicians shall prescribe or direct from time to time to be given to the said poorer sort, till it please God of his infinite mercy and by his blessing the means to putt a stop to the present sickness, and the councill declare they will pay the said baillie Christy the equall half of the ordinar rates of what medcines beis so furnished by him; and recomend to the minister and elders of the kirk session of this burgh to appoint payment to the said baillie Christy of the othor half thereof.

£18 Scots to Baillie Chrystie.

30th August, 1735.—Appoints the treasurer to give to Hairy Christie, chyrurgeon and late baillie, eighteen pound Scots for medicines furnished by him and his pains and trouble in the cureing and attending upon two of the quarriers that were ill wounded and hurt in the setting down of the toms well in the Backraw.

£12 for Curing a Broken Leg.

14th April, 1744.—The councill having considered a petition of William Christie, son of the deceast Hary Christie, chyrurgeon, for curing a broken leg of Charles Swords wife, they appoint the treasurer to pay him twelve pound Scots on that account.

CONCLUSION.

In the Report on Municipal Corporations in 1833 the Incorporation of Barbers was stated to have four members. The dues of entry were 6s 8d for sons and sons-in-law and £1 6s for strangers. The Barbers were stated to have no realised funds. It is probable that the Incorporation died out shortly after the above date.