

FOURTH MEETING.—21ST JANUARY. 1902.

## THE CRAFTS OF STIRLING.

(By EX-BAILIE RONALD.)

The great change which has taken place in the municipal government of Stirling since the date of the Reform Bill renders it somewhat difficult for those living in the present day, under new jurisdictions, new laws, and new conditions and customs, to realize the place and the position occupied by the Craft Associations for at least four centuries. The power which they possessed and the jurisdiction they exercised in virtue of Royal Charters, Acts of Parliament, and Acts of Council were far more extensive than is generally supposed. As Mr Ebenezer Bain tells us in his history of the Aberdeen Trades, their monopoly of trading privileges, so far as their own handicrafts were concerned, was but one thing. They were much more than mere industrial or trading societies; they had a far wider scope. They embraced a rigid supervision of the whole conduct of the individual; all the journeymen, servants, and apprentices in the town, as well as the members proper, came within the jurisdiction of the deacons and their courts. Each craft acted as its own Parochial Board, they were the only friendly and benefit societies in existence, and, to a certain extent, members were assisted by loans out of the general funds to carry on their business. It will be readily understood, therefore, that as the individuals connected with the Craft Associations, both directly and indirectly, formed by far the largest proportion of the population for over four hundred years, the history of these societies cannot fail to assist in throwing light on the habits, customs, and general mode of living of the people from the sixteenth century down to the present. Under the jurisdiction of these associations the individual gave up almost all freedom of action on religious and social, as well as trading concerns; and the different acts and statutes passed in these associations, and to which we will refer more in detail as we proceed, will illustrate the extent to which individual or per-

sonal liberty was voluntarily resigned in favour of the common weal. The early history of the Crafts of Stirling is, to some extent, traditional. We have evidence of the existence of special trading privileges as far back as the twelfth century, but it is not until the sixteenth century that the burgh records give us any direct information of the existence of organised bodies of craftsmen. Deacons or masters of the Craft are known to have been in all the leading burghs of Scotland about 1424, but it is impossible to fix the precise date at which any particular craft formed an association with "ane wise man of the Craft at its head." The earliest charters granted to Stirling had reference to trading privileges solely. Charters confirming the town in the possession of its property came at a much later date; in its infancy the town only sought protection to hold its market and carry on its small trading concerns freely and peaceably. William the Lion granted "speciall fredomes to the whole burgesses of Scotland," one of these being that no prelate, earl, baron, or secular person shall presume to buy skins, hides, or such like merchandise, but that they shall sell the same to merchants and burgesses within whose sheriffdom and liberty the sellers of such merchandise dwell; and also that the merchandise aforesaid and all the other merchandise shall be presented at the Mercat and Mercat Cross of burghs, and there "profferit" to the merchants of the burgh "effectuouslie" without fraud or gyle, and the custom thereof to be paid to the king." By two separate charters Alexander II. granted to his burgesses of Stirling "a weekly market, a merchant guild, and other privileges," also freedom from toll and custom on their goods throughout the whole kingdom. These were again confirmed by David II. In 1386 Robert II. granted "the Burgh of Stirling to the burgesses thereof, with the fishings in the water of Forth and small customs and others pertaining to the burgh." This charter is looked on as the fundamental charter of the town. It will be observed that these charters were granted to "the burgesses" of Stirling generally. Here we find the starting point with regard to both merchant and Craft Associations. This is the basis on which the superstructure rests,

and unless this fact is clearly kept in view, it will be impossible to understand the growth and development of the merchant and Craft Associations known as Guilds and Crafts. The rights were conferred generally, and the distinctions between the privileges of the merchants and craftsmen arose gradually before being recognised by law or royal charter. Originally they both belonged to the one general class designated as burgesses, and only became separated when their particular interests began to conflict. It was a simple case of development. First, the general body of burgesses loosely brought together; then followed the grant of rights and privileges; then arose combinations in each class for the defence of the privileges pertaining to their particular branch of trade or industry. But at no time were the Crafts under the control of the merchants. The merchant burgesses, it is true, had greater influence in the Town Councils than the craftsmen, as was the case in Stirling, but the one class of associations did not spring from the other; they all sprang into existence on account of the trading privileges granted to the general body of the burgesses or inhabitants.

On 18th August, 1226, the following charter was granted to Stirling by Alexander II. :—

"Alexander by the grace of God, King of Scots; to bishops, abbots, earls, barons, justiciars, sheriffs, provosts, officers, and all good men of his whole land, clerics and laics, greeting. Be it known to those present and to come we have granted and by our charter confirmed to our burgesses of Stirling a market day in our burgh of Stirling, that is to say Saturday in every week; and we have rightly given our firm peace to all who may come to that market, and we strictly forbid any one wrongously to cause injury or molestation or any trouble to those who shall attend our fforesaid market, in coming or returning, upon our full forfeiture. We also strictly forbid any stranger merchant within the Sheriffdom of Stirling to buy or sell anything outwith our burgh of Stirling on pain of our interdict, but stranger merchants shall bring their merchandise to our burgh of Stirling, and there sell the same and interchange their pennies.

Also, if any stranger merchant, upon this our prohibition, shall be found buying or selling anything in the sheriffdom of Stirling he shall be apprehended and detained until we have declared our pleasure concerning him. We also strictly forbid any stranger merchant to cut his cloth to be sold within our burgh of Stirling, except from the day of the Ascension of our Lord (Whitsunday, May 14) till the feast of St Peter (Lammas) within which terms we will that they cut their cloth and other merchandise in common with our burgesses in the same manner as our proper burgesses, saving our rights. We command, also, that all who dwell in our burgh of Stirling, and who wish to take part with our burgesses at the market, shall take part with them in contributing to our aids, whose men soever they be. We forbid also that any tavern shall be kept in any town in the sheriffdom of Stirling, unless where a knight is lord of the town and dwells therein, and there shall not be kept more than one single tavern. We grant also to our said burgesses of Stirling that they shall have a merchant guild, except the waulkers and weavers. We strictly forbid, likewise, than any one dwelling outside our burgh of Stirling in the sheriffdom thereof make or cause to be made cloth dyed or shorn within the sheriffdom of Stirling other than our burgesses of Stirling who are of the merchant guild, and who take part in paying our aids with our burgesses of Stirling, except those who have had their charters with this liberty heretofore. Wherefore we strictly forbid any one in the sheriffdom of Stirling to presume to make cloth dyed or shorn upon our full forfeiture. And if any cloth dyed or shorn shall be found made upon this our prohibition, we command our sheriff to seize the said cloth, and do thereupon as was the custom in the time of King David. And all these customs and liberties foresaid we grant, and by this our charter confirm to our foresaid burgesses of Stirling."

In the curious exception made in the above charter regarding waulkers and weavers—an exception that is also made in charters granted by Alexander II. to Aberdeen and Perth—we have an indication that the merchants even at that early period had been desirous of securing

the monopoly of dealing or selling, and of confining the craftsmen to the exercise of their particular crafts. The same exclusion was attempted in England during the reign of Edward II., and it is the first indication we have of the long standing conflict between the more plebeian crafts and the more wealthy merchant burgesses. In all countries, the weavers and their fellow-craftsmen, the waulkers or fullers, were the first to make their existence known as a combined body, and it is thus interesting to note that in Scotland, as far back as the thirteenth century, they were specially mentioned in a charter excluding them from the same privileges as the Merchant Guild. The same idea seems to be indicated in a modified manner in one of the laws of the Four Burghs

Of them that may not be in "Gilde."

"It is to wit, that neither listar, nor flesher, nor soutar may be within the freedom of the svidle, but gif he shall forswear to do that craft with his own proper hands, but with servants under him." *Leges Quatuor Burgorum* xciv. It was under these early charters that the craftsmen began to form their associations. One of the first Acts of the reign of James III. was to the effect that "no man of craft use merchandise to himself, nor sell merchandise either by himself, nor his factors nor his servants, unless he leave and renounce his craft without colour and dissimulation." In the reign of James IV. the Convention of Royal Burghs enacted that "no craftsman sell use any maner of merchandise within the burgh, but occupy his awin craft under the pains content in the Actis of Parliament." Thus the merchants and the crafts were driven apart, and each had to form associations for the protection of their particular privileges. As towns grew in size, craftsmen of the same calling multiplied, and, having interests in common, it was natural for them to associate together for the promotion of their mutual interests. When, therefore, they had interests in common to protect, they were compelled to meet and form combinations of some sort. Out of such meetings the formation of private fraternities or societies, composed of members of the same handicraft, was an easy step. Such private societies existed long before the members

sought public recognition by the authorities, and before the Magistrates of the Royal Burghs had the power conferred upon them to bestow exclusive privileges upon craftsmen." (Wardens "Burgh Laws.")

When the crafts began to assume a position of importance in the burghs, the Legislature took more particular cognisance of them; and for their better organisation and "conduction" the second Parliament of James II., held at Perth, passed the following Act on 12 March, 1424:—"It is ordainit that in ilk toune of the realm, of ilk sundrie craft used thairin, be chosen a wise man of the craft, and be consent of the officer of the toune, the quhillk shall be holdine Deacon or master over the rest for the tyme, to governe and assay all workis that beis made by the craftsmen, of that craft, so that the Kingis leidges be not defraude and skaitched in tyme to cum as they have been in tymes bygone through untrute men of the crafts."

This is the first mention of deacons in an Act of Parliament. Previous to the passing of this Act the craftsmen appear to have elected their deacon without asking the consent of "the officer of the toune," perhaps for the good reason that in many of the burghs there was no chief officer in existence.

Three years after the passing of the above Act or statute, another was passed which plainly indicates that the deacons and the crafts had been assuming more power than was deemed advisable. This Act emphatically declared "Whereas the statutes made in former Parliaments anent Deacons of crafts in the Burghs of the kingdom, tended to the hurt and common loss of the whole kingdom, the King with the advice of the three estates of the realm, has revoked the said statutes and wholly annulled them, forbidding in time to come the election of such deacons by the craftsmen in any burgh in the kingdom, or the exercise by them though otherwise elected of the duties of deacons, or the summoning of their customary assemblies which are believed to be meetings of conspirators." The Act then proceeds to specify the duties to be performed by the Wardens who were to be chosen by the Councils:—"It is statute and ordainit that men of craft within burrows shall have for a year to come of every

craft a warden chosen by the Council of the Burgh, who, with counsel of other discreet men unsuspected, assigned to him by the said Council shall examine and appryze the matter and the workmanship of ilk craft, and sett it to a certain price, the whilk if any breakes, the said Warden shall punish the said breakers in certain pain, whom, if he punish not, the Alderman, Bailies, and Council of the Burgh shall punish them in certain pain of that burgh. The pain of the breakers of the price shall be ascheat of the samen thing of the whilk the price beis loken, to be applied, the one half to the Warden of that Craft, and the other half to the common wark of that burgh, where it beis seen most convenient. The pain of the Pryzer, if he be negligent and punish not shall be in the unlaw of the Burrow court as oft as he beis convict culpable, and fallseye, shall be applied for the half of the common purse of the town, and of the other where it beis most expedient to the work of the town. The pain of an Alderman, Bailies, and Council of the Burgh that beis negligent in punishing of the Warden shall be in ten pounds to the King, and shall be raised after that they be challenged and convict by the Chamberlain and his deutes, the whilk shall be extended to Measons, Wrights, Smiths, Taylors, Weavers, and all others likewise generally who has fees and handling shall be prysed as is before said, and attour to landward jurisdiction, ilk Burgh shall pryse in the Burrowis, and punish the trespassers as the Warden does in the Barronies, and if the Baron does not the Sheriff shall punish the Barron, and if the Sheriff does not they shall be in americiament to the King. And the Alderman, Bailies, and Council in Burrowis shall inquyre ilk month at least if the Warden of the Crafts pryse will and punish the trespassers, and if any man complains of over great price or breaking of the price made or sett to the Alderman, Bailies, and Council that they punish the pryser and gar the party complaining be asized under the pains foresaid."

The above Act furnishes a striking illustration of what may be called the State regulation of industry instituted in the fifteenth century and continued down to very recent times. Wages were regulated, the price of manufac-

tured goods of all kinds, from the penny loaf to a pair of slippers, fixed, the number of journeymen and apprentices strictly limited, and the quality of the work inspected. All these matters were subject to the control of the local authority and craft associations acting under Royal Charters, Acts of Parliament and Acts of Council.

It is evident from numerous Acts passed at this period that the craftsmen had a hard time of it. No sooner was the election of deacons legalised, and the powers they were entrusted with put into operation than the association of craftsmen were condemned as conspiracies "of general prejudice to the kingdom, their gatherings denounced as meetings of conspirators," and the election of deacons declared illegal. About 1457, however, the crafts seem to have taken the law into their own hands, and elected their deacons without obtaining the consent of the governing body of the town. An exemption had been made in the case of the goldsmiths of Edinburgh, who were authorised to appoint "ane officiar" to inspect all work and see that it was up to a certain standard; and taking advantage of this case as a precedent, the craftsmen throughout the country generally continued to elect their deacons in despite of the statute that was passed in putting them down "in all tym cuming." This however was soon put a stop to. In 1491, the office was again abolished, because it was "understood by the King and the three estates that the using of Deacons of Crafts in burghs is richt dangerous, and as they use the same, may cause trouble to the lieges by convening together and making laws of their craft contrary to the common profit, whereby when one leaves work another dare not finish it," and "it is statute that ilk sik deacons shall cease for ane year, and have no power but to examine stuff and wark wrocht by the craft; that measons and wrichtes and uther men of craft who statutis that they shall have fee as weil for the halie day as for the wark day shall be indicted as common oppressors and punished accordingly." For a time the craftsmen were less aggressive towards the Town Council; but as they gradually increased in numbers and influence in the communities they

commenced a long series of conflicts, which on more than one occasion very seriously disturbed the peace of the burgh. When the published records of the Town Council began in 1519, we find eight crafts in existence, with eight Deacons, viz., the Hammermen, Weavers, Tailors, Shoemakers, Fleshers, Skinners, or Glovers, Bakers and Maltmen. At that time all the other industries in the burgh were included under the term *Omnium Gatherum*. At this early date we find these eight crafts with their deacons flourishing and prosperous, legally recognised, and supported in their authority by the Town Council. In 1522 the deacons were furnished with "ane key of the lok of the common kist in keipin cuhar all the evidents of this gud town and the common seill ar in keipin." In 1545 they were for the first time permitted to have "four persons of the wisest of thaim yeirlio on the counsale," and one of them to be fourth bailie. Soon after this they began to assert themselves still more, until in a Parliament held by the Queen Regent on 20th June, 1555, an Act was passed wherein it was stated "that the chosen of Dekinnis and men of craft within Burghs hais been rycht dangerous," that as they have conducted themselves in times "bygone hais causit great trouble in burrowis, commotioun and rising of the Queon's liegis in divers parts, and the making of liggis (longues) and bands among themselves and betwixt burgh and burgh," appoint that they have only "visitours," instead of deacons, and that only two of the most "honest and famous among them be chosen to be on the consale." This act caused so much contention between merchants and craftsmen all over the kingdom, that in order to allay the dissatisfaction, the Queen Regent by letters under her great seal, dated at Stirling, 16 April, 1556, restored the former privileges of craftsmen, including the right of electing Deacons. This is looked upon as the Charter of the Seven Incorporated Trades of Stirling, a copy of which was found in the Convener's box.\* Some years ago we got it translated into English by the late Mr W. Troup, Bridge of Allan, assisted by Mr John Thomson of the High School.

Restored to their former privileges we find them increasing in power and influence within

\* See Charter at end of paper.

the burgh. In 1562 an equal number of craftsmen and merchants were chosen to audit the town accounts; the eight deacons were admitted to the Council board, and two craftsmen along with two merchants were appointed to the oversight of the Almshouse. This prosperity continued to the beginning of the 17th century. In 1595 we find the Convener Court established, bringing the members of the different crafts closer together, and forming a stronger bond of union between them. The Deacon Convener was president. The Maltmen were excluded because it was decided by Act of Parliament in 1567 that they were not craftsmen, and were not entitled to have a deacon—only a visitor. In 1610, however, things came to a crisis. For a period of thirteen years from 1595 to 1603, and from 1604 to 1609, the Town Council had elected as their Provost John Murray of Touchadam, contrary to the Act of Parliament, inasmuch as he was not "ane actual burgess dwelling within the burgh." There were beside other irregularities. At the meeting of Convention in July, 1609, the Town Council were ordered to conduct their next election "conform to Act of Parliament." They elected "ane actual burgess," James Short, as their Provost, but they did not rectify the other irregularities, and at the meeting of Convention in July, 1610, the Burgh was fined in the sum of fourtie pounds with the threat of a further fine of one hundred pounds if they did not conform at the next election. The matter is explained in the following record, 28th September, 1610:—"The Proveist, bailleis counsall, and deacons of craft being convenit in the Tolbooth of Stirling . . . compeirit ane noble and potent lord John Erle of Mar lord Erskyne . . . commissioner in that part . . . who produced his commissioun from the lordis of his Majesties secret counsall giving him warrant to be present at said election, and to command that the said election should proceed conform to Act of Parliament. Also "compeirit James Winderhame, general agent for the hail burrowis within the realm, who produced ane Act of the Convention of Burghs dated 4 July last, ordaining the burgh to conform to the Acts of Parliament. The election proceeded under the guidance of these gentle-

men, and the result proved most disastrous to the craftsmen. All the deacons but two were excluded from the Town Council. They were also deprived of their bailie. The number of Town Councillors was fixed at twenty-one, making nineteen merchants and two craftsmen. It caused great dissatisfaction among the craftsmen of the burgh. The two deacons chosen refused to serve on the Council for four successive years until they were threatened with the prison. Meetings were held on the hills, processions were formed, and their ancient banner, the Blue Blanket, was unfurled, a summons which every craftsman was bound to obey. They also refused to "satisfie Maister Patrik Symson, minister of the aucht bollis meill quhair of the craftsmen hes bene in use of payment to him as ane pairt of his stipend this monie yeiris bygane." For five years the struggle lasted, the town being kept in an excited state, defiant speeches were made, and rioting took place. The ringleaders were put in prison, and the inhabitants generally were kept in an unhappy condition.

On 3rd April, 1615, the Deacons and hail freemen of Craft of the Burgh supplicated the Council, making mention that where notwithstanding it pleased his Majestic five years since or thereby to pass the Act referred to above, that it was only done to exclude some noblemen not actual burgesses from holding the office of Provost . . . and seeing that the Earl of Mar has declared to the Town Council, that it would content him if they and the craftsmen could agree among themselves." A conference took place, which ended unsatisfactorily. Happily the dispute was settled very much through the influence of the minister, Patrick Symson, an agreement was come to, and on 4th November, 1616 it was ordered to be inserted in the Council books. The agreement is a very long one, but we may quote one of its most important articles, as it was the cause of much trouble and litigation.

"Item, it is agreeit that na craftsman buy top nor sell any merchand wairis, sic as silk, lace, buttounis, fustians, buckesie, bukrum, poldavye, foran clayth of all sortis, baling nor na uther stapill wairis quhatsumevir, in

hurt and prejudyce, of the merchand gildrie, under the pane of confiscation of the same to the townes use. reserving alwayis to the said craftismen and thair successooris action to sute the privilege of the merchand gildrie as accordis of the law. Nather yit, that ony merchand buy top or sell ony handy work belonging to the craftismen sic as brydill bittis, brydillis, stirrup imes, stirrup ledderis, maid' girdis with buckillis, inn hors cambis, spurris, buittis, schone, pantones, and picke-dailis, nor na uther handywork maid within the burgh belangand to ony craftismen quhat sumevir, in hurt and prejudyce of the said craftisman under the pane fairsaid of confiscation of the same to the townes use." The craftismen also agreed "that in all wapin-chawingis thair sall be na baneris nor pinsallis brocht furth nor careit, but onlie the Kingis standard be ane quhom the counsall sall appoint with the merchandis and crafts standart accompanying the same, to be leftit in a quyet and decent maner as the magistrates sall direct." Five deacons were admitted to the Town Council, one of them to be chosen a baillie. They also agreed to pay the minister's meal, including the arrears, and promised "to observe the kirk for heiring of Godis word with greater reverence and cair nor they had done in tymes bygane." The craftsman had become very humble and were glad of the settlement, though it was not until 1620 that the seven deacons were admitted to the Town Council. Means were found by the merchants and others to evade this agreement causing constant contention, so much was this the case that, as Sutherland informs us from 1616 down to 1682, the decisions of the Court of Session under the title "burgh" exhibit little else but contests from Stirling. In 1682 a complaint was brought before the Council by Thomas Galloway, late Deacon of the tailors, who produced an act dated 9th May, 1645, "purporting that they are mightily prejudiced by unfriemen dwelling outside the burgh, who are employed by gentlemen and others resident on the burgh employing landward tailors unfreemen." Having considered this Act and two other Acts, the Town Council "ordained that no neighbour nor inhabitant within the burgh employ unfreemen to work

for them under the pain of ane unlaw of five pounds and to take caution of them to desist in tyme coming." This Act was also "ordained to be intimated at the Mercat Cross that no person pretend ignorance thereof." The craftismen had now reached the summit of their ambition, to be equal with the merchants or guildry in the attainment of exclusive trading privileges. These may be summed up as follows:—

No unfreeman could be a craftsman.

No merchant could buy top or sell handywork made by craftsmen within the burgh. No merchant neighbour or inhabitant within the burgh could employ unfree craftsmen, and as we have seen they obtained full representation of all the trades in the Town Council. About the year 1670 they begun to adopt the name by which they are and have been known ever since that of the Seven Incorporated Trades of Stirling. With the exception of having their privileges renewed from time to time, not much change took place among them down to 1832, when the Reform Bill was passed.

#### ROBERT SPITTAL'S MORTIFICATION AND OTHER DONORS.

We come now to speak of Robert Spittal's mortification and other donors. Not much is known of Robert Spittal's bequest, but from a most interesting paper on the subject by Mr W. B. Cook in the 20th volume of our transaction, page 79—we learn that he erected the hospital which bears his name, and endowed it with the revenues of lands and tenements within the burgh. The unfortunate thing is that his will has been lost, and it is therefore somewhat difficult to ascertain what the lands were. There is a strong presumption that the lands in the immediate vicinity of the hospital, known by the name of Friars Carse and Friars Yard, extending from Viewfield Street and Maxwell Street to the back of the gardens of Baker Street and the Mary Wynd with Irvine Place as their north boundary, afterwards known as Sauchie Orchard and now Princes Street, belonged to and formed part of his bequest; also some tenements in Spittal Street. At the same time, while his

name deserves to be held in grateful remembrance for what he did in many ways, it may be well not to forget other benevolent donors who contributed to the funds of that noble institution called Spittal's Hospital. In 1562 the Town Council gave the fines of assise to the poor of the hospital. On 3 November, 1654, they bought "frae Marioun Patersoun ane annual rent of ten schillings usual money of Scotland yearlie to be uplifted of all and heall the tenement of land pertenying to Henry Cunningham quhillk is applyit to the hospitall of the said burgh," and on 29th May, 1681. "The provest, bailleis, and counsall of the burghes of Striviling, greting in God everlasting. . . we according to the dewtie of all guid Christians being of compassioun and movit with pietie upoun the puir in hospitale within the said burgh, and willing for thair support of liberal almous, to bestow ane memorie of our zeall thairupon; being convenit in the tolbuthe of our said burghes, within the counsall hous of the samyn concludit, decernit and ordanit that ane char-tour be maid be us to the puire in the said hospitale of all and hail the piece Craigis, callit the Ruid Brayis, lyand within the territorie of the said burghes and boundit as followis . . . the Craigis, upoun the southe side of the said burghes, betuixt the common dyke of the said burghes upoun the north part, the Ruid Croft upoun the southe part, the Kyngis dyke upoun the west, and the nuke of the Grayfreir yaird dyke now pertaining to the said hospitale on the eist part." The above is the gift of the Back Walk with the revenues derived therefrom to the poor of the hospital. It was let in feu on 1st April, 1592, to James Monteith of Randifurde—terms—a present payment of aucht scoir merks usual money of the realm, and a yearly payment to the puire of the said hospital of the sounne of fyve merk Scots. On 21st July, 1600, "Comperit Robert Forrester of Boquhan and delyverit and friellie gaff to Johnn Gawie (merchant), ane of the maisters of the hospitall, the sounn of fiftie merkis, to be wairit, imployit and laid on land for yearlie annual rent to be gotten thairfoir, to the utilitie and commoditie of the hospitall of the said burgh, and puir being thairintill, present and to come, be the advyse of the

provost bailleis and counsall of this burgh, and that for the zeal, favour and gud will, the said Robert Forrester hes and beiris to this burght and puir of the said hospitall." On 23rd November, 1602—"A letter of mortification was made and granted by Adam Commendator for the time of the Abbey of Cambuskenneth, in favour of the hospitallers for the time of the hospital of our burgh of Stirling called Spittell's hospital, and their successours for the better help and support of the decrepit poor of the said hospital, by virtue of which the said commendator mortified to them the sum of twenty-three merks of money." In 1602, we have "ane charter of mortification of money to the hospital of Stirling by Johnne Stoddart, minister of Campsie, designed for poor old men in the Hospital of Stirling, in pure and perpetual charity, consisting of an annual rent of 40 merks from the tenement and yard of Anthony Bruce, Burgess of Stirling, lying within the said burgh in the Middle Row, between the tenement of the deceased James Shaw on the west, the tenement of Alexander Cousland on the east, the tenement of Archibald Allane, notary public, on the north, and the king's highway in the "bak row" on the south parts—and the yard formerly belonging to the Franciscan Friars and now to the said Anthony, lying in the "bak row" of the said burgh on the south part—between the tenement of James Wallace, notary public, on the west, the yard of David Commendator of Dryburgh on the east, and the rock sloping to the outside of the wall of said yard pertaining also to the said Anthony. On 14 April, 1608, Thomas Cours gave £20 Scots to the poor in the hospital, for which the Members of Session heartily rendered him thanks. In 1614 we have a charter by the Provost, Bailies and Town Council granting to the Hospital an annual rent from a house in the Castle Wynd which formed part of the endowment of St Lawrence's Altar in the Parish Church.

On 6th January, 1617, Dame Elizabeth Schaw—Mrs Murray probably of Livlands—sent a letter by the hands of Patrick Symson, minister of Christ's evangel at the Kirk of Sterling, to the Town Council bearing that for the good she bore to the town, she was of



mind to bestow on the hospital to the support of the poor, one hundred pounds Scots yearly during her lifetime, the payment to begin at Yule last. On 23rd February, 1618 it is recorded that she gave according to her promise £100 Scots. On 4th February, 1628, there was delivered by John Cowane, Dean of Guild, to Thomas Bauchop, merchant, and James Spittal, alias Waird baker, maisters of the Almoushouse or hospital of Sterling, in name of the pure thairrof, the soume of ane hundredth pundis money, quhilk wes left in legacie be unquhile Sir Robert Dennestoun, lait conservatour in the Law Countries for the Scotis nation to the poor of the said hospital of Sterling." Scottish Consul at the port of Campvere in Holland, which was the staple port in connection with Scotland. On 26th February, 1618, Boweys Aisle in the Parish Church was given to the hospital by the Town Council for the use of the poor. A considerable revenue accrued from this gift, as they charged for the interment "for ilk persoun, man or woman fourtie poundis, and everie bairn twentie poundis." On 10th June, 1628 the sum of £200 Scots was given by Janet Alexander, spouse of Walter Cowane, to the poor of the Hospital of the said burgh, and the ministry within the said burgh equally betwix them.

On 22nd December, 1628, a legacy of 200 merkis money to the poor of the hospitall of Sterling by James Short, and another of 100 merkis by Agnes Cowane, spouse of James Short, was on this day handed to the Masters of the hospitall. On 30th March, 1647, three hundred merks were given, and bestowed "for help to the stock and provision off the auld hospitall at Stirling callit Spittal's hospitall" by Harry Dow of Arnehall — because he had his education in his youth in Stirling, to the glory of God, and in token of thankful remembrance to the place. Then we have a letter of mortification dated the third day of March, 1674 years, whereby David Adamson sometime minister at Fintry "did legate and mortify the sum of 800 merks (only 700 merks were recovered) for maintaining ane Bursar of Philosophy in the College of Glasgow, being the son of any tradesman within the Seven Incorporate Trades.

On 5th June, 1724 John Allan, writer in Stirling, bequeathed 30,000 merks Scots for maintaining clothing and educating the male children of tradesmen, members of the seven Incorporated Trades of Stirling. We only mention this donation in passing, intending to deal with it more in detail in a future paper, it being a separate trust altogether from Spittals.

And lastly there is on 2nd August, 1804, the donation of £1000 by Alexander Cunningham, merchant in Stirling to the Patrons of Spittals Hospital to be laid out and bestowed on a separate stock by itself for the better support of the poor widows of tradesmen in the burgh, in aid of the funds of the hospital. As the will of Robert Spittal is lost, we cannot tell the amount of his benefaction, but including it and the sums mentioned the hospital soon became prosperous. The Town Council as patrons and administrators invested the sums thus bequeathed in the purchase of lands and bonds on heritable property in the burgh. The first purchase was made on 26th February, 1618, by the masters of the hospital with consent of the Town Council and Kirk Session, of the "Leper's house, yaird, and croft lying within the territorie of the burgh of Stirling." This has been since 1811 the glebe of the first minister. They advanced on loan 1000 merks to repair the kirk, which was seriously damaged by the storm of February 11, 1633. They held a bond of 1000 pounds on the Earl of Stirling's new mansion in the Castle Wynd. During the 17th century they acquired acre by acre of the land in the burgh as it came into the market, Chapel Croft, and adjoining lands, also part of the common lands on the south side, known as the south acres. In 1632 they purchased the lands of Southfield, from Sir John Stirling of Keir, "for fourteen thousand merkis, and two hundred merkis to his Lady in lieu of her gown."

In 1708 they acquired the lands of Whytehill, now known as Laurelhill, and in 1828 they purchased the Enclosure House and garden. These lands are now mostly all fenced and built upon, yielding to-day a gross annual rental of £1600. As already stated the administration of the property and funds of Spittal's Hospital, has always been in the

hands of the Town Council as patrons. At first two merchants and two craftsmen were appointed to act along with the Town Council but after a time only one Merchant and one Craftsman were appointed, these were called Masters or Preceptors of the Hospital. The beneficiaries were decayed Merchants and Craftsmen, occasionally neighbours and members of the Omnium Gatherum, and sometimes widows and daughters of merchants and craftsmen. One qualification was necessary, they all had to be burghesses, men who had borne scot and lot in the burgh, and through no fault of their own, in their old age, had been worsted in the battle of life. There were other poor in the burgh, those who were not burghesses, or had been burghesses and had lost the rights of freemen. These were looked after by the Church, and had no part in the benefits of the Hospital. There were periods during the centuries when poverty and scarcity amounting to famine came into the burgh, when the Town Council had to act the part of Joseph to store up and deal out meal to keep the inhabitants alive. We refer only to the ordinary administration of the hospital. The beidmen were required to live in the hospital, and wear a distinctive dress called the "Towns gown or livery." They were provided with bed and bedding, clothes including the gown referred to, and a sum of money weekly usually two merks Scots, sometimes this was increased to thirty shillings Scots, and sometimes it decreased to twenty-four shillings. Female pensioners generally got one half of the above sums. We do not know what the money was for, unless to buy food, which they might prepare themselves. The masters of the hospital and the Kirk Session exercised a rigid supervision over their conduct. They were provided with a seat in the Church which they had to attend or lose their place in the hospital. It was an equally grave offence carrying a like penalty if the beidmen were seen without their gown, or not wearing the mark or badge on their gown sleeve, or to be seen the worse of drink.

About 1670 the decayed merchant poor were withdrawn from this hospital and installed as beidmen on the funds of Cowane's hospital. About the beginning of the eighteenth cen-

tury the system of weekly payments was adopted, the pensioners living in their own homes, and this system has continued ever since. From 1670 down to the present the benefits of Spittal's Hospital have been almost exclusively confined to the members of the Seven Incorporated Trades, and their widows. We now come to deal with the Hospital as a building.

#### SPITTAL'S HOSPITAL.

Spittal's Hospital was called the Nether Hospital, because there was another hospital at the top of St. John Street, which after its restoration in the beginning of the 16th century became the manse. From the slight notices we have of the Nether Hospital we entertain the idea that it was not a very large building, but it must have been large enough to accommodate male and female pensioners at one time. It stood on the North Craigs or little Gowan Hills abutting on what is now known as Irvine Place.

Its situation is well described in an extract from a Disposition dated 1854, by the Trustees of the late John Burd, Esq., Seafield, in favour of John Johnstone, wood merchant, of the property known as Rock Cottage, Irvine Place. "All and Heall that Maltham, kiln, coble, yard and pertinent, thereto belonging, lying within the territory of the Burgh of Stirling on the north side thereof at the Gowan Hills, and bounded betwixt the tenement which belonged to Alexander Baxter on the east, the house called the Nether Hospital on the west, the lands which belonged to the said Hospital, and afterwards belonging to and enclosed by John Don, Sheriff Clerk on the south and the public way leading to the Bridge on the north side, excepting and reserving always from the last mentioned subject that part and portion of the same sold to Robert Henderson, writer, Stirling, on behalf of the Trustees of the road from Linlithgow Bridge to Stirling (Barnton Street.) As also all and heall the Almshouse belonging to Spittal's Hospital, founded within the Burgh of Stirling, with the whole privileges and pertinents thereto belonging, so far as not disposed or given away to William Don or his predecessors with the vacant ground, if any, be contiguous and adjoining thereto . . .

lying on the north side of the Burgh of Stirling on the little Gowan Hills within the territory and parish of the said burgh, with free ish and entry thereto by the ways used and wont." Those who remember the picturesque little house known as Rock Cottage, perched as it was on the top of the rock at Irvine Place, will be able in some degree to realise the position and site of Spittal's Hospital. To those who never knew Rock Cottage, it may be stated that though the old almshouse and Rock Cottage have each in their turn been swept away, and the rock on which they stood has been blasted away, the malbarn still remains as a landmark to guide them to the spot. In the beginning of the 18th century the Almshouse buildings having got into a dilapidated condition, the seven Incorporated Trades with the approval of the Town Council on 4th September, 1712, purchased from William Callander the house in "Baxters Wynd" known as "Lowrie's Turnpike" for a meeting place. This was a house with a circular stair in front, which stood on the north side of Baker Street. It had a passage known as "Lowrie's Turnpike Close" with an access to the north, which was built up at the time of the Rebellion to prevent the rebels getting into the town. It formerly belonged to, and was probably built by Andrew Lowrie, merchant, in the end of the 16th century, hence the name. Lowrie's Turnpike is not now in existence, but we have no doubt that the close remains; it has not yet been located, but we think it likely to be either No. 66 or 72 Baker Street. This building evidently did not suit the purpose for which it was bought, as the Trades sold it in 1722 to Colonel John Erskine of Carnock. With the sale of the building Lowrie's Turnpike passes out of view so far as Spittal's Hospital is concerned. They continued their meeting at the old place as we find they passed an Act on 30 April, 1737, for repairing the "Conveener Court-House on the hills, which is in great disrepair." But the end was near, in 1738 part of the Almshouse fell down altogether. The buildings got more dilapidated still, "irreparable" is the expressive phrase used, and on 2nd

March, 1751 what remained of the old Almshouse of Robert Spittal, tailor to King James IV., was sold to Patrick Stevenson of Knockhill, he being the highest offerer, at the sum of £28 12s. The same year the Trades Hall was erected as their new meeting place. They removed the old memorial tablets, placing one of them on the 'Hospital House in the Back Row and the other on their new meeting place the Trades Hall. The marble tablet on the inside of this hall is modern. It was erected by the Trades in 1792, and the inscription was composed by Professor Anderson of Glasgow. It is as follows:—

"In order to relieve the distress of useful members of society the ground within this wall with the adjoining Hospital and lands for supplying it were given to the tradesmen of Stirling in the year 1530 by Robert Spittal, who was tailor to King James the Fourth of Scotland. He likewise gave part of his wealth for building useful bridges in this neighbourhood. Forget not Reader, that the scissiors of this man do more honour to human nature than the swords of conquerors." To commemorate his benevolence the Seven Incorporated Trades of Stirling have erected this Tablet.

#### THE HOSPITAL HOUSE IN THE BACK ROW.

The house No. 82, Spittal Street, belonging to Mr Oswald, slater, is the house referred to under the above title. The popular belief is that it stands on the site of property which belonged to Robert Spittal in his lifetime. This may be, but it is now ascertained to be the tenement, or a successor of it, which belonged to Anthony Bruce of Walton, and which is referred to in John Stoddart's mortification. Although the deed of mortification is dated 1692, Spittal's Hospital did not get full possession of this property till 1665, when on the death of Thomas Bruce of Walton, his brother-german James Bruce, for the sum of fiftie merks Scots delivered to the Patrons "the original writs of the frier yaird and tenement thereto belonging." Mr Oswald's house

is the "tenement thereto belonging." It was then called the "frier house," and was let along with the Greyfriars garden\* for a term of years by public roup. In 1672 we find the "frier house and yaird, presently possessed by Robert Johnstoun, merchant, again set to him for seven years at a rental of 80 pounds scots yearlie." In 1702 Maria Johnston got one year's possession of the frier house and yaird at the old rate being 80 lib. scots. On 8 November, 1709, the Friar yaird with the house, office houses, brae, land and pertinents was sett after rousing to Sir John Erskine of Alva for seven years to come, for one hundred and fiftie nyne pounds Scots yearlie. Clerk Dow had it for a term, then Robert Wingate and William Cowane for £120 Scots. It was let to so many members of this Cowane family that the name clung to it. In our schoolboy days the playground of the old school was known as Cowane's Yard. It continued to be let for various terms down to 1781, when the Greyfriars yard was let in feu to the town for a flesh market. In 1779 this house was called the "Hospital house in the Back Row." The patrons sold it in 1804 for the sum of £415. The old quaint inscription still remains on the front of the building. About thirty years ago the appearance of this house was entirely changed. Before that it was a turnpike house with circular stair abutting on the street, and having dormer windows, the only interesting parts about it now being the inscribed panel and the vaulted basement which bears evidence of 17th century work. For a long time this house was known as Spittal's Hospital, but as we have seen it was not so, not even an almshouse. So far as we have ascertained there was no almshouse in connection with Spittal's Hospital, other than the one situate at Irvine Place. To resume

\* The "frier yaird" embraced the whole square now occupied by the High School, the Trades Hall, and the South Free Church.

It was so called because it was occupied by a company of Franciscans or Greyfriars, who were brought here by James IV., from 1494 to 1600. During their occupancy they erected a church, churchyard, nunnery, and other conventual buildings. At the Reformation we are told that "the multitude entered and destroyed the church and all the monastic buildings, not even sparing the retreat of the nuns; also, they devastated the garden and cut down the fruit trees." But as we have seen, the name adhered to it.

our story after leaving the old meeting place the Trades kept it in memory by making it their rendezvous on the occasions when they walked the marches. At Michaelmas, 1833, when the full effects of the Burgh Reform Act were beginning to be realised they met "on the hills" at the old place, around which clustered the Associations and memories of the past three centuries. In the open air they proceeded to elect their office-bearers for the ensuing year, and discuss their future prospects which at this time were gloomy indeed.

#### THE CRAFTS IN RELATION TO THE CONVENTION OF ROYAL BURGHS.

The Convention of Royal Burghs of Scotland was a development or outcome of the ancient court of four Burghs, of which Stirling was one, which underwent various changes, till by an Act of Parliament in 1487 the Royal Burghs of Scotland were first ordered to hold an annual meeting of commissioners at what is now the unimportant town of Inverkeithing "where the welfare of merchandise, the gude rule and statutes for the common profit of burrows," should be discussed, "and which should provide for remeid upoun the skaith and injuries sustained within the burrows." It had a partial jurisdiction in questions as to the general regulation of trade, along with legislative authority over the constitutions of the Burghs, including a right to adjust their "sets." It was purely and simply a Parliament of merchants, from which the craftsmen all over the country were rigidly excluded down till 1583. At this early time the meetings of Convention were held in each of the Royal Burghs in rotation. In 1574 the Provost of Haddington, who was a shoemaker, was elected commissioner—the case was considered at a meeting of the Convention of burrows holdin at Striveling the xxv. day of October, 1574.—Item, The quhillk day, eftir advysement with the auld statutes in the Conventions of burrowis past of befor it being fundin that na Commissioun suld be gevin in any maner of persoun to convene in the Convention of burrows, but sic as are of the merchandis estait bearing burden with

the merchandis and having residence with them in their townis, and eftir reessoning, fynding that ane Johnne Douglas, alledgit Provost of Haddingtoun, being ane cordiner of his occupatioun, to present ane commissioun of the said toun of Haddingtoun, desyring to be haid as commissioner of the said burgh—the suld actis and ordinances respectit—the said Commissiounaris all in ane voice fyndis and delyveris, that no craftisman has ever had, neither aucht or suld haif, voit or commissioun amangis thame; quhar for thay decernit the said Johnne Dowglas, cordiner, to remove himself from thair society, and for his pairt the said commissioun to be of na availl, and in his plaice for the said toun of Haddingtoun, admittis Johnne Seyttoun, ballie thair of, and nane uthair, and ordanes in all thair names ane commissioun to be sent to the said toun of Haddingtoun that na commissioun be given be thame to any craftisman heireftir, under the pane of 1 c. lib. However the craftsmen were more successful in their next attempt. About this time the city of Edinburgh was put into a state of commotion on account of a dispute between the merchants and craftsmen of the town over this very question. The dispute got so bitter that it was submitted to certain judges to settle it with the King himself as oversman. The city of Edinburgh being the metropolis of the kingdom has always had the privilege of sending two commissioners to the Convention, while all the other burghs could only send one. To resume the narrative—In 1583 two commissioners were sent from Edinburgh—Henry Charteris, merchant, and Michael Gilbert (Goldsmith) to the Convention which was held in Ayr that year. David Crawford the Ayr commissioner “askit instrumentis upoun the production of the toune of Edinburghis Commissioun be Henry Charteris and Michael Gilbert, goldsmith, commissioneris thairin contenit, and protestit that the said burgh of Edinburgh in respect of the contraveining of thair actis, suld incur the payne and unlaw of ane hundreth pundis thairin contenit.” And Henry Charteris in the name of the burgh of Edinburgh protested that thay suld nawayis incur the said pane and unlaw of ane hundreth pundis nor yet be compellit to pay the samyn, in so far as for

obedience of our Soverane Lordis decreitt arbitral gevin and pronounoit be his Hieness as Oversman and certane others judges, arbiters betwixt the merchandis and craftismen of the said burgh, they war compellit to obtemper and obey the same; and the said commissioneris of burrowis ordanitt the said letteris and charge to be registrat in thair convention buke of the quhilk letteris the temour followis — “In the quhilk it is specialie providit that ane of the merchandis and ane uthir of the crafts estait sal be commissioneris for the Burgh of Edinburgh, at all parliamentis and conventionis general in tyme coming.” We look upon Michael Gilbert as the first craftsman who attained to the honour of a seat at the Convention of Royal Burghs, and his admission as another triumph gained by the craftsmen of Scotland. We have not found that ever any craftsman from Stirling was elected or admitted either as commissioner or assessor to the Convention of Burghs down to the date of the Reform Bill. We think had it been otherwise, many disputes would have been settled there, which had to be settled by the Court of Session at great trouble and expense to all parties engaged.

#### THE CONVENER COURT.

The Convener Court of Deacons of the Seven Incorporated Trades was establishel in Stirling somewhere about the end of the 16th century. The first convener of deacons of whom there is any mention was Robert Robertson, deacon of the Hammermen, who held office from 1595 to 1599, and was again elected in 1602 and held office for two years. He was a “pewdar maker,” that is to say he wrought in pewter, we have a record in 1599 wherein he was instructed “that all stoupis, sic as quartis, pynts, chopines to be maid be him heirefter, sal be agreeable in measure to the (Stirling) ju<sup>r</sup> and stampit with the touneis stamp.” The Convener court minute book begins on 30 September, 1732, and is principally taken up with the annual elections of auditors and boxmasters and the biennial election of the Deacon Convener, who was elected by the voice and vote of the old and new deacons at the term of Michaelmas. There are a number of

interesting items such as the Act anent Rev. David Adamson's Mortification, also the Act anent John Allan's Mortification. These Acts were judicially read over to every new made deacon who gave his solemn oath to the observance thereof, and subscribed the same to that effect. The book contains a great many complaints from the members of the seven trades, which were submitted and disposed of by the Convener Court. It was also a court of appeal for settling differences and complaints from other trades. The following is the roll of Deacon Conveners from the days of Robert Robertson, 1695, down to the present time:—

#### THE ROLL OF DEACON CONVENERS.

- 1595 Robert Robertson, peudar maker, Hammerman
- 1599 John Henrysoun, Baxter
- 1602 Robert Robertson, Peudrar
- 1604 John Cuthbert, Skinner or Glover
- 1606 John Henrysoun, Baxter
- 1608 James M'Clelane, Tailyour
- 1611 Thomas Couper, Tailyour
- 1614 Robert Henrysoun, Smith
- 1617 Thomas Couper, Tailyour
- 1619 Andrew Downie, Hammerman
- 1622 Robert Henrysoun, do
- 1625 John Mathieson, Sadlar
- 1627 Robert Henrysoun, Smith
- 1630 John Anderson, Talyour
- 1633 James Howstoun, Cordiner
- 1635 Christopher Russall, Baxter
- 1642 James Howstoun, Cordiner or Shoemaker
- 1645 Robert Kidstone, Baxter
- 1648 Christopher Russall, Baxter
- 1650 Robert Russall, Baxter
- 1656 Robert Kidstone, Baxter
- 1659 Thomas Downie, Hammerman
- 1665 James Howstoun, Cordiner
- 1667 John Galloway, Tailor
- 1671 Robert Anderson, Baker
- 1678 John Lowrie, Hammerman
- 1679 John Dick, Hammerman
- 1683 Alexander Turnbull, Baker
- 1684 John Lowrie, Hammerman
- 1686 John Dick, Hammerman
- 1688 James Graham, Hammerman
- 1691 James Russall, Baker

- 1696 James Laurie, Hammerman
- 1701 Robert Duncan, Flesher
- 1702 John Anderson, Baker
- 1704 William Allan, Tailor
- 1706 John Archibald, Hammerman
- 1708 John Anderson, Baker
- 1710 John Littlejohn, Flesher
- 1712 John Laurie, Hammerman
- 1714 John Littlejohn, Flesher
- 1715 William Allan, Tailor
- 1717 Christopher Russall, Baker
- 1721 Col'ne McLourie, Hammerman
- 1723 James Buchanan, Baker
- 1732 Thomas Blackader, Hammerman
- 1735 John Gilfillan, Baker
- 1738 Hugh Lennox, Tailor
- 1740 Robert Stevenson, Flesher
- 1742 Robert Anderson, Baker
- 1744 Walter Stevenson, Flesher
- 1746 John Nicol, Weaver
- 1747 Charles Lyon, Shoemaker
- 1749 Walter Stevenson, Flesher
- 1750 John Sawers, Baker
- 1751 Andrew Turnbull, Tailor
- 1753 Robert Melvill, Hammerman
- 1755 John Sawers, Baxter
- 1756 Andrew Riddell, Hammerman
- 1758 John Gilfillan, Baker
- 1760 John Hutton, Baker
- 1762 John Sawers, Baker
- 1764 Alexander Cuthill, Baker
- 1766 John Hutton, Baker
- 1768 Alexander Cuthill, Baker
- 1770 Robert Barclay, Glover
- 1772 John Paterson, Weaver
- 1774 Alexander Carrick, Baker
- 1776 John Paterson, Weaver
- 1778 Daniel Brown, Skinner
- 1779 John Stewart, Hammerman
- 1782 John Forman, Baker
- 1783 George Gilfillan, Weaver
- 1783 Archibald Dow, Hammerman (Interim)
- 1784 Alexander Cuthill, Baker
- 1785 James Jaffray, Baker
- 1787 Archibald Sawers, Baker
- 1789 John Murdoch, Shoemaker
- 1791 James Peddie, Hammerman
- 1793 John Reid, Weaver
- 1795 James Smart, Shoemaker
- 1797 Alexander Sutherland, Hammerman
- 1798 John Dick, Weaver

1800 John Reid, Weaver  
 1802 Alexander Sutherland, Hammerman  
 1804 William Henderson, Baker  
 1806 Peter M'Gibbon, Taylor  
 1808 William Murdoch, Baker  
 1810 William Henderson, Baker  
 1812 William Dougall, Flesher  
 1814 Thomas Anderson, Flesher  
 1816 William Dougall, Flesher  
 1818 William Thomson, Weaver  
 1819 William Telford, Baker  
 1820 David Gray, Skinner  
 1822 John Thomson, Hammerman  
 1824 James Stevenson, Weaver  
 1825 William Dougall, Flesher  
 1827 John Stevenson, Weaver  
 1830 Thomas Anderson, Flesher  
 1832 John Stewart, Hammerman  
 1834 William Stevenson, Weaver  
 1836 John Stewart, Hammerman  
 1838 Archibald Stevenson, Weaver  
 1840 William Grant, Hammerman  
 1842 Archibald M'Owan, Tailor  
 1844 James Peddie, Hammerman  
 1846 William Grant, Hammerman  
 1848 James Millar, Baker  
 1850 Peter Reid, Skinner  
 1852 William Taylor, Weaver  
 1855 George Thomson, Hammerman  
 1860 Archibald Borland, Baker  
 1861 William Campbell, Shoemaker  
 1862 Archibald Watt, Baker  
 1865 Wright Cumming, Shoemaker  
 1867 James Taylor, Weaver  
 1870 Archibald Watt, Baker  
 1874 John Thomson, Weaver  
 1885 William Brown, Hammerman  
 1892 James M'Queen, Tailor  
 1894 James Thomson, Hammerman  
 1901 John King, Weaver

Here and there throughout the minute book of the Convener Court we come across rather interesting entries, but to avoid being tedious, we have only extracted a few of the more interesting ones.

By the Act, 19th January, 1734, in matters concerning the trades no procurators were allowed to plead—the Convener Court judgement was to be final—no appeal to be allowed to the Town Council, magistrates or any higher court.

By the Act, 12th October, 1737, the Deacon-Convener was incapacitated from continuing in office longer than two years.

Act anent the Officer.

4th June, 1768, the Convener Court being mett, it was proposed that the officer should have a suit of cloaths and hat of a particular make and fashion to distinguish him, as the Guildry give to their officer, which being agreed to they recommend to the Convener to cause the same to be provided, and recommend to the several Deacons to apply to their trades for what they will think proper to give toward defraying the expense thereof, and the remainder to be paid out of the Convener's box.

Like many other things the distinctive dress and hat of the Trades Officer has disappeared.

The (Lessfeerie) Water Scheme.

1st January, 1774, the Town Council being met. Provost Jaffray in the chair. — They opened the estimates given in by the Plumbers and find that the estimate given in by Mr David Young at Perth is the cheapest—£149l 4s 4d exclusive of the purchase of a place for the reservoir, laying part of the streets that require to be lifted to lay the pipes and other contingent expenses.

We are old enough to remember the Lessfeerie water supply, with its reservoir in the water close at the top of Spittal Street, the water would not rise any higher — and from thence it was led to sixteen public wells throughout the town. It was a miserably inadequate supply, but it was hailed with delight in 1774.

The Hospital house in the Back row (Mr Oswald's). 2 September, 1779. The Convener Court being met, it was represented by John Paterson, Merchant, that at the back of the Hospital House in the Back Row, there is a garret room, which used to be possessed by the tenant to Spittal's hospital, under which John Paterson's house has a room, and the hospital one under that, and that he, John Paterson, getting the garret room relinquished to him will uphold its roof which is now very bad, and that if the Convener Court will acquiesce he will settle with the managers of the hospital, which being considered by the Court, they agree to the proposal on John

Paterson paying ten shillings sterling in hand to the hospital, and threepence yearly of feu duty in time coming. Mr Oswald informs us that this complication of rooms in this house continued until the alterations were made thirty years ago.

#### THE BOX WITH SEVEN KEYS.

Trades Hall, Stirling, 3 October, 1829. The Convener Court having met on lawful warning, the Clerk stated that a short while before the decease of the late Convener Miller, he, the Convener was the Preses of a Council appointed to order a new box for the Court as minuted on 4th January, 1828, but that the purpose was never carried into effect owing to the declining state of the Convener's health. That in consequence of verbal instructions from the present Convener and other members of the Court, he the Clerk, had caused a handsome mahogany box be made and the brass plate of the old box preserved and placed on the new. That the expense of this new box by John Fisher, the cabinetmaker, account is £3 16s, but that he (the Clerk) is aware that the outlay altogether regarding the box will be at least £4 4s. The Court having examined the box highly approve of what the Clerk has done, and consider the box to be of such a description as the repository of the documents and Ensignia of the Court ought to be. The Court in order to defray the expense assesses each of its trades with twelve shillings, and recommends each deacon to pay the Clerk the contribution of his trade and that within four weeks.

Thereafter the following papers and ensignia which were in the old box were at the sight of the Court deposited in the new one, and the keys of the box given to the respective Deacons, and the box delivered over to the present Deacon Convener.

#### PAPERS, &C. DEPOSITED.

Deed of Mortification by John Allan, dated 5 June, 1724. Three or four bonds and sundry other papers not of value.

#### The Blue Blanket and Sash.

The Court passed a vote of thanks to the Clerk for superintending the making and preserving the box.

James Stevenson, Convener.

James Chrystal, Clerk.

While the box itself is modern, the brass-plate of the old box is preserved, and purports to have been engraved by John Christie, gunsmith, Sculpt, 1759. It bears the name and emblems of each craft in their order, engraved on it. It is furnished with seven locks, each deacon was provided with the key opposite his own compartment, and all had to be present before it could be opened.

#### THE BLUE BLANKET AND SASH.

The late Mr James Shirra in one of his interesting notes tells us that the Blue Blanket of the Stirling Trades is about 2½ yards square, made up of ribbons and silk, 8 inches broad, sewed together of a dingy flesh colour, and faded sky blue, with a St Andrew's cross from corner to corner. The Convener is provided with a sash of rich white silk 2½ yards, having a fringe 8 inches deep. He also speaks of a sword being worn by him on great occasions. The tradition as to the origin of the Blue Blanket is that when Queen Mary granted the charter of privileges on 16 April, 1556, she presented the Trades with this banner, made by herself. But unfortunately Queen Mary was not in the country at that time, and the Queen Regent had quite enough to do with her own affairs. We believe it to be the one mentioned in 1616, and known as the "crafts standard," which they carried in such a defiant manner as to provoke the wrath of the Town Council. It seems to be very old, and may have been got when the Trades established the Convener Court in honour of the first Convener.

We will now conclude our paper with some remarks on the Trades and their relation to the

#### THE REFORM BILL.

The Trades of Stirling were greatly excited over the Reform Bill; they expected to reap many advantages from the opening up of the Burgh, in the words of one of their petitions, "they hailed with satisfaction the measure proposed by His Majesty's Ministers for the rectifying and enlarging the representation of the people in the House of Commons." They little anticipated that the reform they so anxiously sought for, would pave the way for the sweeping away of their own particular as-



sociations so far as their own trading monopolies were concerned. When they fully realised that the right of Deacons and Deacon Conveners to sit in the Town Council was to be done away with they got alarmed. They called a meeting at the old place "on the hills" and after discussing the subject in all its bearings appointed a committee to prepare a petition to the House of Lords to be presented by the Earl of Rosebery, and to the House of Commons to be presented by Lord Dalmeny, then member for the Burghs. At the first meeting of the Reform Council on 6th November, 1833, Convenor John Stewart, who was the only Tradesman elected rose up before the business was proceeded with and protested that no business should be done relative to the affairs of Spittal and Allan's Mortifications unless the Deacons of the Seven Incorporated Trades be warned to the meetings of the Patrons, and took instruments in the Clerk's hands. Petition and protest were all in vain. The deacons were excluded from the Town Council, and also from their seat in the Church. They were not even warned to the meetings of the Patrons. The Reform movement which they were so active in promoting did not stop where they expected. In its onward march it overtook their own particular trading privileges and monopolies which they had enjoyed for centuries. The only special privileges that remained to the craftsmen of Stirling, over the claim to have their sons educated on Allan's Mortification, and the old age pensions derived by themselves and their widows from Spittal's and Cunningham's Mortifications was that two of them were elected extraordinary auditors of the Town and Hospital accounts, and this honour is also taken away. Otherwise there is now no difference between a craftsman burgess, and an ordinary ratepayer, but the stream of charity set agoing by Robert Spittal still continues to flow, carrying along with it blessing and cheer to many a home.

CHARTER OF PRIVILEGES OF THE SEVEN  
INCORPORATED TRADES OF STIRLING.

Mary, by the grace of God, Queen of Scotland: To all and sundry our lieges and subjects to whom the present letters shall come,

greeting. Know that whereas we understanding that our most noble progenitors, Kings of Scotland, having regard and respect to the public weal and the government of our kingdom, and that a well ordered commonwealth cannot long stand without good artisans, and for this reason they gave or granted many different privileges and immunities to the craftsmen of the burghs and the cities of our realm: to wit that they should choose both skilled men in their own crafts as superiors and deacons for testing and examining all the crafts, and that no extortion should be practised (imposed) on the lieges of our kingdom: but that any craftsman might work and labour diligently in his craft without incurring fraud, hurt, damage, and deception, and that they might in some way procure laws, fines, and penalties anent this and put the same into execution against wrongdoers in their crafts, such as might tally and agree with equity and reason; and that persons as craftsmen when injured should be compensated for their losses: besides, they granted privileges and powers to good artisans who were free burgesses of the burgh for selling and using merchandise as other merchants of our kingdom are wont to do, with divers other distinct privileges liberties and faculties granted to them under the great seal of our most noble progenitors, seen and considered by us; yet to all, by act of parliament last held in June of the previous year, on account of certain reasons stated and discussed in the same parliament, by way of amendment it was ordained that no deacons should be chosen within the burgh, but that the provost, bailies, and councillors of each burgh should choose the artisans that were best and thoroughly trained in their respective crafts, and that these persons should be called visitors, each of his own craft, and that they should be chosen annually at the feast of St Michael, and that no craftsman should hold office within the burgh in future except two annually chosen into the council of the burgh, with divers others restrictions as set forth more fully in the said act of parliament from which statute indeed we have heard that nothing has been taken in effect from the causes and reasons which urged our Parliament to the aforesaid mea-

sure; nay rather that everything among the same craftsmen is being done at the present time with greater carelessness than before: therefore we are unwilling that any infringement be made in the case of the privileges granted by our predecessors, without some great, pressing, and momentous reason and all former fair and just concessions should be fully and completely renewed: and also desiring to meet the disagreements in private and public, hatreds, and contentions of our merchants and craftsmen living in our burghs, and in consequence of certain other good and reasonable causes urging our mind to this course by reason of our knowledge and our action, we have ordained, and by the tenor hereof do ordain, will, all and sundry of our burghs and cities within our said kingdom concerning the said Act of our last parliament and all the details and clauses contained in the same which hinder and obstruct the very liberties and privileges formerly granted by our most noble progenitors, and the permanent and continuous possession held by them in virtue of the same, and we restore them to use and have deacons of the crafts who shall have suffrages and votes in the election of the office-bearers of the burghs, and craftsmen of every kind will be chosen within the burgh who shall use and practise themselves (in the crafts), and in like manner if fit and proper men be found for them they shall both hear the accounts of the common good and form part of the auditors of the same: and they shall meet and make lawful statutes and regulations concerning their own crafts for the preservation of good order among the craftsmen and the maintenance of divine service at their own altars; and they shall sell, use, and practise all kinds of merchandise within our said kingdom, and without as shall seem to them most advantageous, with all and sundry the privileges, faculties, liberties, and customs granted to them by our most noble progenitors and bestowed and held in times past by them in the use and possession of the same; notwithstanding the said act of parliament or any penalties whatsoever contained in the same concerning which we ordain by the present letters with themselves: Moreover by these presents we ratify and approve all the

privileges, liberties, and faculties given and granted by us and our most noble progenitors to the said craftsmen in times past to be used and exercised by them in the manner, efficiency, and effect for the future, just as formerly they enjoyed, possessed, and used the same, without any change. Wherefore you all and sundry our lieges and subjects above mentioned, we command and charge that you or any of you do not dare to make either hindrance, molestation, or obstacle to the said craftsmen in the enjoyment, possession, and use of the privileges, liberties, and faculties prescribed for the future, notwithstanding acts, letters, statutes, mandates, or any proclamations whatsoever made or to be made to the contrary, or petty penalties contained in the same under every penalty, risk, and offence which you or any one of you can incur and commit against our majesty in this respect. In witness whereof we have commanded our great seal to be appended to these presents. At Stirling, on the 16th day of the month of April, 1556, and in the 14th year of our reign.

This is a true copy of the principal letter above written, granted to the craftsmen under the great seal of our sovereign lady the Queen, faithfully copied and collated by me notary public under my sign and subscription manual.

So it is as aforesaid, Robert Ewyn, notary public.

## DISCUSSION.

Mr James S. Fleming referring to Spittal's house in Spittal Street, now occupied by Mr Oswald, slater, said that from its appearance and the style of architecture it was most probably in the actual possession of Robert Spittal himself.

Mr W. B. Cook next spoke, thanking Ex-Bailie Ronald for his paper, which was marked by all his accustomed care and full desire for perfect accuracy. He said the idea that the Merchants and Trades Guilds had all their own way in the town was erroneous, and in support of this Mr Cook quoted an instance of the state regulation of industry in Stirling. After the Court left the town the Baxters baked only coarse bread for the use of the inhabitants, making fine bread on order only for nobles or gentlemen who provided their own wheat. Some of the gentry still left in the town objected to this state of matters, and appealed to the Privy Council in 1627. The Council sustained the appeal, and ordered the Baxters to provide such qualities of bread as were desired by the inhabitants. The paper had made clear the position of apprentices and journeymen in the trade guilds, showing that they were not like the masters members of the Corporations. They were also indebted to Ex-Bailie Ronald for the clear accurate information regarding the position and number of Almshouses and Hospitals in Stirling. When he was looking over some old documents in the Town Clerk's office some time ago a box was found containing no fewer than six original parchment documents, the conveyances of property to Robert Spittal in his life time. These had evidently been passed over by Mr Renwick when investigating the Town's papers for publication of the Burgh Records. He had no doubt that Mr Morris, Mr Galbraith's successor in office, would grant the same facilities to students for the examination of these documents as his predecessor had done.

Rev. Mr Agnew spoke on the Trade Guilds of Edinburgh, whose banner, like that of Stirling, was familiarly known as the "Blue Blanket," and he wished to know if a similar name was employed by the Trade Guilds of

other towns for their banners. He also wished to know if the Coats of Arms of the Trades of Stirling were the same as those of Edinburgh.

Mr Morris said he had not had much time as yet to look into the many valuable documents in the Town Clerk's office, but he was quite willing to continue the facilities granted by Mr Galbraith for their examination and study. He had got a strong iron safe now in which to keep and preserve them.

Mr Shirra, in conveying the thanks of the meeting to Ex-Bailie Ronald, spoke of the prevalent belief that merchant and trade guilds existed solely for the benefit and aggrandisement of the members. Such was not the case. Their privileges were conferred on them by royal or magisterial authority. Their effect was to foster a skilled artizan class, who were able to make articles of common use of any description. They encouraged home industries, and in a comparatively short time after their institution instead of importing all manufactured goods from France or Holland, Scotland was not only able to supply her own home needs, but also to export in her turn. All inhabitants of the towns were not burghesses. It was an honourable position, and took precedence of ministers of the Gospel as was shown by the order in which they were mentioned in the text of the "Solemn League and Covenant." Apprentices and journeymen were not admitted members of the merchants or trades guilds. When an apprentice joined he was "booked," his name was taken down in a book, and his record was kept. When his apprenticeship was over he had to set off journeying to some other place to get "mair insight," hence our word "journeyman." Only those who were the sons of free men or who had purchased their right to be freemen could be admitted a member of a craft or merchant guild with all its rights and privileges. With regard to the inscription stones on the Trades Hall and on Spittal's House, Mr Shirra believed that the former was modern, and had not as ex-Bailie Ronald suggested been brought from the original almshouse in Irvine Place.

Ex-Bailie Ronald thanked the meeting for its kind appreciation of his paper; though it was impossible for him then and there to an-

swer all the questions that had been put to him. The small green beside the malt barn in Irvine Place, which he noticed was now enclosed was public ground, and should never have been enclosed. Here was the meeting place of the Trades beside thir old Hospital and from this point they started to "walk the marches."

A volume of most interesting water colour drawings of the various officials of the town, and the insignia of their offices was most kindly lent by Mr Bain, Bridge of Allan. They had been collected by his uncle, the late Mr Oswald Robertson. The sketches included the Town, Guildry and Trades Officers, the Provost, the Drumaner, the Bellman, the Guildry flag, and arms and ring, the town arms, the batons of high and special constables, the postman, the town guard and the County Police. The sketches were viewed by the members with the greatest interest, and Mr Bain was thanked for his kindness in sending them in for exhibition.