

## *Family, Household and Obligation*

The last chapter began to unpick the Incorporation's chosen identifier of 'the House', which was the usual manner in which the Incorporation referred to themselves in their minute books. Moving on from the issues surrounding inclusion and the headship of the House, this chapter will explore the rest of the household beyond the brethren. The craftsmen needed their wider households for a range of reasons, but they also carried obligations to those households, just as they carried obligations to the House itself. These obligations were primarily to provide stability and security, but as will be demonstrated, the brethren of the House relied on the wives, children and servants within their households to be able to meet these obligations. Just as the building trades of Edinburgh were far greater than just the privileged freemen of the craft aristocracy, so too the Incorporation was more than just the master craftsmen.

The importance of the term 'the House' is that it implied both an attempt at social control and a desire for an ordered, godly society in Edinburgh. Farr has argued that the European craft guild as an institution was 'a device designed to organize and order society'.<sup>1</sup> This was true not only politically and economically, but also socially. Stone, in his study of the family in early modern England, observed that without a standing police force, the household was a crucial element of social control, as it 'helped keep in check potentially the most unruly element in any society, the floating mass of young unmarried males'.<sup>2</sup> Craft guilds, through apprenticeships and the employment of young journeymen, had many of these young males to keep in check, and therefore there was a social imperative on the careful regulation of the corporate body. The House had to be kept in good order not just for their own sake, but for the common well of the whole of burgh society. When the Incorporation of Mary's Chapel chose 'the House', they fully intended to model their corporate institution on the very building block of the well-ordered early-modern society – the godly household.<sup>3</sup>

Aside from wanting to be *seen* as a godly household, upright in character

and integral to burgh society, the craftsmen also *needed* their individual households, as the evidence suggests that all co-residents within a given household made some form of contribution to the household economy. While there were indeed more mouths to feed, there were also more backs to help shoulder the load. In marriage a craftsman gained a business partner, and in parenthood, a future addition to the household labour force. By taking in apprentices and then journeymen, there were certainly costs involved, but there were also more hands to make the work lighter, though this involved a considerable investment in time before they were able to contribute effectively. Allowing people to join a household held both advantages and disadvantages, but as with the biblical model of Adam and Eve, the craft economy relied on helpers.

So, just as the House incorporated more than just one craft, the household in early-modern Edinburgh included a range of individuals. The essence of this fundamental fact was even enshrined in taxation. With the poll tax of the later seventeenth-century, it was decreed that all 'masters of Families and households' were to go on 20 August 1694 at ten o'clock in the morning to their parish church to,

give up their names, qualities, degrees and value of their estates with a full and true list under the hand of ther whole servands, prentices and residents within their families to the effect the respective poles may be stated and set down by the saids magistrats.<sup>4</sup>

Responsibility of the head of house was not just for blood relations alone, but for all who were co-resident. Indeed, the mixed household of several bloodlines was much more common in early modern Europe, as most workers tended to live with their masters.<sup>5</sup>

While this made sense economically, due to the cost of setting up an independent household, it also prompted social concerns in terms of regulating the behaviour of young men without blood connections to the nuclear family unit. Farr, in his study of European corporate structures, discusses a 'concern for subordination and discipline of inferiors'.<sup>6</sup> This preoccupation with status was often predicated on order, and the chief building block of order in the early modern period was the household. It is therefore no wonder that the Incorporation modelled themselves on the family unit; a point illustrated by the adoption of the descriptors, 'the House' and 'brethren', when speaking of their incorporated trade.

Farr, writing on European corporatism in general, noted that, 'A well-ordered society, as theorists never tired of proclaiming, was based upon the well-ordered family, which was supposedly regulated and disciplined by the father, the male head of household.'<sup>7</sup> This raises an important point,

as 'family' and 'household' are not wholly synonymous. Family might be predicated on kinship, but it also might include others who were co-resident, bringing it more in line with the concept of the household. When the Incorporation chose the term 'the House' to describe themselves, they were explaining the complexities of their corporate community, as it was modelled on the hierarchical family unit, as shown in the last chapter. This was a complex social grouping based on both familial kinship and non-familial co-residence.<sup>8</sup> In the same way that the Incorporation held more crafts than just the masons and wrights, the household held more than just blood relations, making the label of 'the House' wholly apt for a composite incorporated trade.

Needless to say, not everyone in the House was equal. As we have seen, the 'brethren' alone were far from equal, though for the early modern period we should not expect equality within the House. As Farr also rightly observed, 'the corporate regime gained definition *by* the principle of exclusion.'<sup>9</sup> This exclusion pertained to the privileged position of freemen over unfreemen, but it also extended to the standing of the craft aristocracy within the House. Moreover, exclusion has parallels with the relationship between master and household, as authority within the craft household theoretically rested firmly with the male husband or father, bringing into sharp focus the parallels between fatherhood and deaconhood. There are, however, limits to the usefulness of this model for understanding the craft household in early modern Edinburgh.

While the brethren managed to secure greater political access through the office of deacon, the 'sisters of the craft' were in a far less-powerful position.<sup>10</sup> Still, there can be no doubt that they were integral to both the individual craft households and to the wider House. Widows often carried on the businesses of their deceased husbands, and craft daughters transferred standing to would-be freemen, though their contributions as skilled or semi-skilled individuals to the work environment is often difficult to discern. As with craft sons, they too posed certain obligations, and though primogeniture might have given advantages to the eldest sons, as with the two senior trades of masons and wrights, still there is little doubt that the common good was usually sought for the whole House, regardless of trade, age, or gender.

Hence, this chapter will explore the makeup of the House beyond the headship of the deacons, masters and brethren. The masters of the House had a duty of care to those within their households, so it is important to consider some of the factors which brought individuals into the craft household and therefore into the House. Whether someone was in the house because of kinship, or simply co-resident, the interactions between

master and wife, master and child, or master and servant were all predicated on obligation. Marriage, education, craft training and work were four crucial institutions which connected the masters to their wider households. Patterns of both craftsmen's marriages and those of their daughters will be looked at, as will education of the youth and training of craft children and apprentices. Inheritance of trade from fathers to sons will be looked at for craft children, as will the prospects of moving beyond this training into the privileged ranks of the masters. The topics of status and gender in work will be considered, whether for the co-resident journeymen, or the 'sisters of the craft'. Let us begin with those immediately under the masters, by focussing on the 'sisters of the craft'.

### MISTRESSES OF THE HOUSE: CRAFT MARRIAGES

In a patriarchal society, it is not really surprising that the craftsmen controlled the House, mirroring the role of the father to that of the mother and children. But as with fatherhood, the headship of a household was much easier when undertaken with the help of a partner, and both the metaphorical 'House' and the individual craft households relied upon the contributions of wives and daughters. Unfortunately, the records available for the study of corporatism do not always lend themselves to the study of the women in the craft households. Hence, there has not been enough attention paid to the crucial role of women in craft affairs.

Although women are often hidden from history in the surviving sources, there are some excellent examples which give us valuable insight. So, what can we know about the wives and daughters of the Incorporation, and what does this suggest about the formation of composite unity? One way to approach this question is to consider the marriage patterns of the craftsmen, as this gives a small, but important, window into the experiences of the craftsman's wives and daughters. First, let us consider the institution of marriage in Edinburgh, as there can be little doubt of its importance in the early modern Scottish capital.

#### *Why Marriage Mattered*

When looking beyond the House to the wider burgh society, we get a sense of just how much marriage mattered. For example, there is evidence that marriage implied responsibility in early-modern Edinburgh. When James Brown, a bookbinder, became a burgess, it was stipulated in his entry that John Ewyne, glassingwright, would provide surety for his taxation and participation in the town watch *until* he was married.<sup>11</sup> From that point

forward the young bookbinder was apparently deemed responsible enough to be trusted with burgh duties and obligations, linking marriage with both honour and obligations to the common weal.

Clearly marriage did matter, but why? There was, no doubt, an emotional bond on a personal level, though approaching this with the sources available is difficult at best. In terms of religious belief, marriage was patterned on the biblical example of Adam and Eve, and helped to reinforce the teaching of the kirk. Socially, the marriage bond promoted stability, as it helped provide security for daughters in a patriarchal society, and security and status for sons in a partnership that was likely to be 'the most lasting and least soluble' social bond formed by the craftsmen.<sup>12</sup> Possibly more importantly, it was an economic bond that brought women into the masculine environment of the Incorporation – both the environment of the 'House', making them 'sisters of the craft', but also, occasionally, the environment of the work site.

To emphasise this last point, we must consider the nature of occupations in the early modern period. Livelihoods were rarely gained by a single activity. Most individuals would have had both their primary occupation, but also numerous secondary occupations, carried on by either themselves, their family members, or a combination of the two. A good example of the need for this is the tendency for work in the building trades to be seasonal.<sup>13</sup> Slaters normally worked at considerable heights, especially in Edinburgh, which was known for the height of its buildings in the early modern period. Ice and snow on a slate roof increased the normally-high danger of falls from a height, which are still the primary cause of death in the Scottish building industry today.<sup>14</sup> It is therefore little surprise that one slater in Cruden, Aberdeenshire, gave his apprentice time off from Martinmas (11 November) 1733 to Candlemas (2 February) 1734, as he apparently did not see himself having work for him over these winter months.<sup>15</sup> Of course not all winter work for slaters involved slating. One slater in Edinburgh submitted a bill to the Incorporation for removing snow from one of their roofs in New Assembly Close, demonstrating just one of several by-employments for those used to working at a height.<sup>16</sup>

Though it is not possible to gauge just how slow winter work was, nor how pervasive this problem of seasonality was across the ten trades within the House, the need for supplementary income seems quite logical. Some contracts were quite large, and took years, while others were smaller repairs, so the work of the family business most likely would have been a patchwork of different jobs at different times. Hence, secondary occupations to make ends meet would have been a sensible strategy for providing for one's house. Evidence of the secondary occupations is not always

forthcoming, though there are numerous examples which provide insight. The slater George Schanks, who was a burghess and a brother of the guild, also kept a tavern.<sup>17</sup> John Reid, whose 1562 burghess entry listed his occupation as 'wright and maltman', clearly had an interest in brewing,<sup>18</sup> while William Hutcheson's 1685 entry gave 'wright and stentmaster'.<sup>19</sup> Some secondary occupations were obviously complementary, as with the coopers who also brewed or dealt in wine,<sup>20</sup> or the cooper who was also apparently a litstar, or dyer.<sup>21</sup> Especially with multiple occupations, it would make sense for the whole family to contribute.

Unfortunately, if it is difficult to find evidence of secondary occupations and by-employments for craftsmen, it is even more so for the women of the House. There is certainly evidence for craftsmen's widows spinning.<sup>22</sup> This was traditionally a domestic by-employment, and there is no reason to think that this was not pursued by the younger wives of working craftsmen (Plate 2). Whether via traditional domestic production, or through participation in their husbands' craftwork, the crucial point is that the 'sisters of the craft' made important contributions to the domestic economy of their households.

For whatever reason the partnership of marriage was entered into, the women of the House were not just involved in their own separate livelihoods, or feeding their own resources from secondary occupations and by-employments into the family coffers, but instead they were an integral part of a partnership. There was, no doubt, a spectrum of involvement, and the partnerships were far from equal, but the evidence suggests that many craftsmen's wives were heavily involved in their husband's businesses.

A fair amount of work has been done on this topic for other countries, such as England,<sup>23</sup> but for Scotland there is much work yet to be done.<sup>24</sup> The main problem with uncovering the role and level of involvement of craft wives in their husbands' businesses is the nature of the records, which tend to record only the most necessary information. The master is always mentioned, and occasionally the labour force, but specifics are not always forthcoming. There are tantalising exceptions, such as the 1761 complaint that deacon Dewar's servant, John Smeal, had been 'inticed & seduced by Deacon Veitch or his spouse to fee with them'.<sup>25</sup> The occasional glimpse of the involvement of wives in a craft partnership aside, the usual focus of the records tends to be on the transaction rather than on those involved in helping the master in the execution of the work, so finding the role of women in this male-dominated environment is usually difficult.

One place to start, though, is with the labour force, as when the master died they were often retained by the business. In fact, provision was often made for widows continuing their late husbands' businesses by 'keeping'

their husbands' journeymen, pointing at the very least to a previously-established ability to oversee their work and manage the actual business. Still, this was toleration on the part of the House rather than an encouraged practice. In 1680 a complaint was given in to the House by John Yetts, upholsterer, regarding a journeyman abusing this custom. One David Aikman was taking work,

under precept of being journeyman to the relict of Jon Young wright wherefore and in effect that it was informed that the benefite of his work was applyet to his owin use and that he was offering to take prenteisses to himself and that he was ane married man keeping ane familie and working in his owin hous<sup>26</sup>

While the upholsterer making the complaint had no problem with Young's relict continuing his business, he did take exception to the journeyman working as a freeman, making his own business decisions in his own house and supporting his own household.

The following year a licence was given to the relict of John Young, wright, for keeping journeymen for her own use. The licence stipulated that she was to have no 'copartnership' with them, and that she was not to 'pack and peel' with them.<sup>27</sup> Again, carrying on her husband's business was fully approved, though setting up an unfreeman in a master's place, or acting as a merchant in import and export, were both seen as abuses of the House's benevolence. The toleration was based on charity rather than financial sense for growing the business.

What is important in these two examples, though, is that the keeping of journeymen by the widows of the House was clearly a tolerated custom. While this was not quite the same as being able to work of their own accord, even this was a grudging recognition of both their ability and their involvement in the work of the House's craftsmen. They were not to be co-partners with their journeymen, but in certain circumstances they were allowed to be in charge.

Custom and the implications for ability aside, a possibly more-convincing piece of evidence for the integral nature of craft wives working with their husbands in the family businesses is found in the will for the deceased wright, Walter Denniestone. When Denniestone died in 1631, his inventory and testament was 'ffaythfulie maid & given up' by his 'relict spouse'.<sup>28</sup> It was his wife who calculated that the thirty-eight deals, at 5s 3d the piece, were worth £10 2s and 8d, or that a hundred 'queinsbrug knappels' were worth £10. It was also his wife who knew the difference between chairs that were 'outred' and those which were not, or that two 'mort kists', or coffins, were worth £3. Indeed, her ability to distinguish between small rough spars, corbels of oak, and clefts of small wainscot, let

alone to compute their market value, demonstrates more than a working knowledge of her late husband's trade. Clearly Denniestone's wife had been an integral part of the family business.

Marriage, as an institution, clearly did matter to the House. It mattered to the individual craft families for a range of reasons, many of which are difficult to find evidence for. It also mattered to the House, corporately. As mentioned earlier, marriage had implications for responsibility, and this cut both ways, as the House incurred responsibilities for the marriages of its members. Hence, incorporated trades often denied widows access to corporate privileges if they remarried,<sup>29</sup> or maintained that apprentices not be allowed to marry.<sup>30</sup> Though the social implications of marriage were important, as they theoretically promoted unity, the economic aspects appear most often in the records. Clearly it is too cynical to think that craft marriages were all about economics, but the Incorporation's concern for its substantial obligations made the economic side of the marriage partnership more overt in its minutes and accompts. So, what can we learn about marriages of the brothers and sisters of the craft?

### *Matches in a Composite Craft*

Unfortunately, we simply do not have sources for studying *all* of the marriages of those in the Incorporation, though the Edinburgh burgess rolls give us an interesting sample to look at.<sup>31</sup> When a craftsman became a burgess, they were entered into the council's roll of burgesses and guild brethren. Although burgesship did not necessarily mean freedom of the Incorporation, the patterns visible for the burgesses will still serve as a rough approximation of the free masters of the House.<sup>32</sup> As burgesship brought access to closely-guarded burgh privileges, this source usually included a record of what right they had to become a burgess. For some this was through 'right of wife', having married the daughter of a freeman.

By looking at the burgesses of the trades in Mary's Chapel who were listed in the rolls as having attained their burgesship through right of wife, we get a glimpse of the marriage patterns for a very specific subsection of the House's brethren. Though not a view of the whole House, it is still a coherent group. To illustrate the limited size of this sample, we know that at least 585 wrights took burgesship in Edinburgh from 1406 to 1760, though only 108 of these were through marriage, or 'right of wife'. Hence, our sample of wrights' marriages is at best only 18 per cent of the actual free craftsmen.<sup>33</sup> Still, to the best of our knowledge, it does represent those who *married into* this privileged group. While others were the sons of freemen, or did an apprenticeship with a freeman, our sample sought



freedom of the town through marriage, so the data presented in Table 2.1 still has much to say about craft and corporate endogamy.

Endogamy is the practice of marrying within one's own group. Marriage was not simply about choosing a partner and reproducing; it also allowed individuals and family units to pursue strategies for the elevation of their standing and status, whether socially, politically or economically.<sup>34</sup> Therefore, endogamous marriage could be a double-edged sword. It cemented ties between craft families of the same trade, but it also cut off other avenues of advancement.<sup>35</sup> A journeyman cooper marrying his master's daughter made him a son-in-law to a freeman, even if he could never be a freeman's son. But by marrying the daughter of another cooper, he was closing off the possibility of marrying the daughter of a social superior, such as a merchant, lawyer or minor laird.

Of course marrying within one's own social stratum did not always mean marrying humbly. Indeed, such a match could also be quite beneficial for achieving upward social mobility, as demonstrated by the case of the wright, John Forrester.<sup>36</sup> Forrester became a burgess in 1642 by right of his wife, Catheren Mawer, who was the daughter of William Mawer, a burgess tailor. When his father-in-law became a brother of the guild in 1645, an affiliation much more prestigious than simple burgesship,<sup>37</sup> Forrester followed suit, again by right of his wife. Here we see a wright who attained not only freedom of the city, but also freedom of the guild, with its privileges of importation and exportation, all through marrying another craftsman's daughter. As one's fortunes rose, so did those of the other. Hence, we must be careful to avoid suppositions about endogamous marriages, as marrying within one's group did not necessarily deter social mobility.

In the growing historiography of artisanal marriage patterns, there is a general view that endogamous marriage within guilds was not the normal pattern.<sup>38</sup> The sample from Mary's Chapel has something to add to this, as it highlights another facet to the complicated question of artisanal endogamy. Much of the historiography looks at individual trades, but what about marriage patterns in the context of *composite* corporatism? Is endogamous marriage any more common when one is not only cementing ties within trades, but also ties across trades in an Incorporation of ten different arts? Although only a small percentage of the actual marriages are visible, Table 2.1 and Table 2.2 make some interesting, if tentative, suggestions about craft and corporate endogamy in the marriages of the House. Beginning with craftsmen's marriages, as can be seen in Table 2.1, those taking burgesship through the right of their wife tended to marry within their social strata, and showed a reasonably high tendency towards

endogamy in terms of the similarity between their trade and that of their fathers-in-law. Totals for the whole Incorporation show that out of 214 sampled marriages, all of which were to a burghess's daughter, 50 per cent of these were endogamous marriages to the daughter of a burghess of the same trade, while only 4 per cent were to the daughter of another one of the other nine arts in the Incorporation. Here we see different levels of endogamy. While 60 per cent of masons married another mason's daughter, only 4 per cent of masons married the daughter of one of the other nine trades within the Incorporation. Similarly, 55 per cent of glaziers married another glaziers' daughter, while only 9 per cent found a partner from the daughters of the other Mary's Chapel trades.

Of the endogamous matches in our sample of 'right of wife' marriages, the slaters, coopers and masons showed the greatest tendency to look to their own trade for finding a master's daughter to marry. Others looked farther afield. The bowers, plumbers, sievewrights and upholsterers all chose partners whose fathers had trades which were different to their own, though with such small numbers of recorded marriages for these arts, their statistics are far from conclusive.

Marriages outside of the Incorporation, but within one's social stratum, as with a painter marrying the daughter of a surgeon,<sup>39</sup> or a mason marrying the daughter of a stabler,<sup>40</sup> tended to be less common than endogamous matches, but were still considerable at 25 per cent. For the purposes of this study, merchants are considered a stratum above, based on the struggle for parity with the merchants in burgh politics in the 1500s.<sup>41</sup> Here, marriages to the daughter of a merchant were only 14 per cent of the whole sample, highlighting the greater emphasis on craft matches over those with merchants. Some trades showed a greater tendency towards such merchant matches, as with the wrights at 21 per cent. Marriages with professional families accounted for only 1 per cent of the sample, while 6 per cent of the marriages did not list the occupation of the father of the bride.

Hence we see that of the craftsmen obtaining freedom by marrying a burghess's daughter, 54 per cent chose daughters from within the House,<sup>42</sup> while 25 per cent married outside the House, but within their social stratum. This could be argued to suggest a reasonably high percentage of endogamy, though it also raises an interesting point about endogamous marriage, in that the precise definition of the label is not wholly clear in an Edinburgh context. Endogamy could be qualified as exclusively referring to marrying within one's own trade, or it could be used for marriages within the composite incorporation as a whole. It might even refer to one's social stratum, including all craft families, but excluding those of merchants, professions or those of higher status yet.

The marriage patterns of this small sample of craftsmen are informative, but perhaps by considering a different approach to marriage, as with the known marriages of the *daughters* of freemen, we will enhance our view of the wider Incorporation's matches. While the previous table looked at the marriages of those craftsmen of the Mary's Chapel trades who took burgesship through the right of their wives, the sample in Table 2.2 looks at marriage from the perspective of the daughters themselves. Where marriage was endogamous, it will appear in both tables, once from the point of view of the husband, and once from the perspective of the wife, which explains why some of the figures in these two tables are similar.

As mentioned above, in cases of burgesship through right of wife the trade of both the incoming burgess and that of their father-in-law is usually recorded. By taking a count of the various types of occupation of those who married the *daughter* of a burgess from one of the ten arts of Mary's Chapel, a rough indication is visible of marriage patterns for this particular group of 'sisters of the craft'. Again, burgesship did not necessarily mean freedom of the Incorporation, but the patterns visible from the burgess rolls will serve as a rough approximation, but only for the sample of 'right of wife' marriages.

Again, there is a relatively high percentage of endogamous marriages for craft daughters, with 48 per cent marrying men from their fathers' craft, and 4 per cent marrying men from another trade within the wider House. For marriages to other craftsmen, or similar unincorporated occupations, such as stablers or gardeners, the figure is 22 per cent, whilst marriages to the next social strata, merchants and professionals, were 17 per cent and 4 per cent respectively. This might suggest that the daughters of craftsmen were slightly more likely to marry above their social group than their fathers or brothers.

Looking at Table 2.2 by individual trade, endogamous marriage in the same trade tended to be highest for the daughters of slaters, coopers and masons, though not quite as high as with the craftsmen in Table 2.1. Though the painters showed reasonably high endogamous tendencies, with 44 per cent of their sampled daughters marrying another painter, a third of their admittedly-small sample married men who had some profession, such as education, ministry or law. The smaller trades proved elusive in the sample, with no plumbers', sievewrights' or upholsterers' daughters being recorded as marrying incoming burgesses.

The data presented in Tables 2.1 and 2.2 is not a complete view of the marriages of the House, though as a sample of those seeking freedom of the burgh through right of their wife, or of those wives passing their fathers' freedom on to their husbands, the tables make some interesting

Table 2.1 Marriages of Mary's Chapel's Craftsmen

	Masons	Wrights	Coopers	Bowers	Glaziers	Painters	Slaters	Plumbers	Sievewrights	Upholsterers	Incorporation totals
To daughter of the same craft	30 (60%)	51 (47%)	11 (61%)	0 (0%)	6 (55%)	4 (57%)	5 (63%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	107 (50%)
To daughter of another Mary's Chapel craft	2 (4%)	2 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (9%)	1 (14%)	1 (13%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (50%)	8 (4%)
To another craftsman's daughter	11 (22%)	28 (26%)	3 (17%)	4 (57%)	2 (18%)	1 (14%)	2 (25%)	2 (100%)	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	54 (25%)
To a merchant's daughter	3 (6%)	23 (21%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	1 (9%)	1 (14%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (50%)	30 (14%)
To a daughter from the professions	1 (2%)	2 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (1%)
Father's trade not given	3 (6%)	2 (2%)	3 (17%)	3 (43%)	1 (9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	12 (6%)
Total of recorded marriages	50	108	18	7	11	7	8	2	1	2	214

Figures indicate the number of marriages (and percentage) of craftsmen of the primary Mary's Chapel crafts (in order of precedence) taking partners from the six groups given in the left-hand column, along with total numbers of marriages recorded for each occupational group. The percentages are rounded (to the nearest 1). Data taken from *Edin. Burs*, 1406–1760.

Table 2.2 Marriages of Daughters of Mary's Chapel's Trades

	Masons' daughters	Wrights' daughters	Coopers' daughters	Bowers' daughters	Glaziers' daughters	Painters' Daughters	Slaters' daughters	Plumbers' daughters	Sievwrights' daughters	Upholsterers' daughters	Incorporation totals
To husband of the same craft	30 (51%)	51 (47%)	11 (52%)	0 (0%)	6 (38%)	4 (44%)	5 (56%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	107 (48%)
To another Mary's Chapel craft	2 (3%)	5 (5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	8 (4%)
To another craftsman	9 (15%)	28 (26%)	7 (33%)	0 (0%)	2 (13%)	1 (11%)	2 (22%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	49 (22%)
To a merchant	11 (19%)	18 (17%)	2 (10%)	1 (100%)	4 (25%)	1 (11%)	2 (22%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	39 (17%)
To a husband with a profession	1 (2%)	5 (5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (6%)	3 (33%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	10 (4%)
No trade given	6 (10%)	2 (2%)	1 (5%)	0 (0%)	2 (13%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	11 (5%)
Total of recorded marriages	59	109	21	1	16	9	9	0	0	0	224

Figures indicate number of marriages (and percentage) of daughters of the ten Mary's Chapel crafts taking partners from the six groups given in the left-hand column, along with total numbers of marriages recorded for each occupational group. The percentages are rounded (to the nearest 1) for clarity. Data taken from *Edin. Burgs*, 1406–1760.

suggestions. How representative they are of the experiences of the rest of the House's men and women is not clear, but they still give us a small but valuable window into craft marriages. From these a few tentative hypotheses might be put forward. First of all, it is clear that the experience and aims of marriage were not identical across the ten trades, suggesting that the prospects of a wright or a wright's daughter were not the same as those of a cooper or a cooper's daughter. Did this exacerbate the tensions outlined in the preceding chapter on headship?

Secondly, it is very clear that endogamous marriage appears in roughly half of the sampled marriages, demonstrating a tendency for the House to look within the House for partners. To add nuance to this, endogamous marriage for the sample from Mary's Chapel really meant marrying within one's own trade, rather than across the ten trades of the House. In the wrights, marriages within their trade can be seen in 47 per cent of the two samples, and the wrights tended to be on the lower end of the endogamy scale. For masons, coopers and slaters the figures were higher, and those of the glaziers and painters were roughly comparable.

If craft endogamy was fairly common for members of a single art or trade, at roughly 50 per cent, *corporate* endogamy, or marriage within the rest of the Incorporation, was strikingly low, at 4 per cent for craftsmen's choice of wives, and 4 per cent for daughters' choice of husbands – if indeed they had a choice in the matter. Cross-trade marriages did happen, as when Robert Clephane, wright, married Hellen Forrest, daughter of Thomas Forrest, glazier in 1722, but these were far from the usual pattern.<sup>43</sup> Perhaps these cross-trade marriages were intended to solidify business partnerships, as a glazier would clearly have business with a wright when undertaking contracts, but the rarity of these cross-trade marriages does undermine the idea of a unified House. Indeed, the sample of marriages suggests not brethren in unity, but instead a House divided.

## EDUCATION: CRAFT CHILDREN AND DEPENDENTS

Marriage patterns might demonstrate a compartmentalised, divided House, but the records of the Incorporation suggest that the craftsmen agreed on the importance of education and learning. Indeed, corporate and individual resources were used fairly liberally for the education of those within the House, whether the immediate children of the family, or those co-resident, such as apprentices, journeymen and servants. Education covers several aspects. The obvious example would be the apprenticeships through which craft techniques and technology were passed down. These were important, and they will be considered separately below, but there

were other aspects of education beyond craftwork that were also valued by the Incorporation.

### *General Education*

As heads of household, craft masters were responsible for the complete education of those under their care. This included religious instruction and church attendance. Interestingly, this responsibility can be seen to have been mirrored by the House as well. When James Herriot, glazier, died in the 1730s, the Incorporation was petitioned for a plaid and a copy of the Bible for his daughter, Elizabeth Herriot.<sup>44</sup> While Herriot could clearly no longer provide for the material needs of his daughter, he also could not attend to the religious instruction of the girl, and the House was called upon to help fill both of these roles.

The Incorporation also undertook provision of general education. The phenomenon of corporatism in Europe overlapped with the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the Enlightenment, making for an intellectual context that increasingly valued knowledge and learning. For the members of Mary's Chapel, the value of education is apparent, as anyone working in wood needs to understand measurement, and therefore have at least basic numeracy. Anyone planning a building, which was clearly much more complex, also needed a sophisticated understanding of geometry. For the builders especially, learning mattered.

An excellent illustration of the necessity of education can be found on James Craig's cartographic proposal for the New Town (Figure 2.1). James Craig was not only a 'mason-turned-architect', but also a would-be town planner.<sup>45</sup> When Craig's 1768 plan for the New Town was printed, the central cartouche was illustrated with the tools of his mason trade, which were fundamental symbols of his merit for the task at hand.<sup>46</sup> One might understandably see an order of precedence in the layout of the various items in the cartouche's border, with its characteristic rococo asymmetrical shape, foliage and implements. Towards the back, on the far right, just before sections of a column, waiting to be erected, lies the mason's mell, hammer and chisels. Before these, moving left towards the centre, lies a plumbline, rule, square, and dividers, but in the foreground, and at the centre of this cartouche, which carries an excerpt from the poet Thomson's *Liberty Part V*, lies a globe and several books, speaking to the centrality of both knowledge and learning to the endeavours of the builders who would bring his plan into reality. The products of the mason were indeed important, as were his tools, but pride of place went to knowledge, demonstrating the fully-rounded Vitruvian architect.



**Figure 2.1** Detail from Cartouche of James Craig's Plan of the New Town

NLS, EMS.s.647, Craig, J., *To His Sacred Majesty George III . . . this Plan of the new streets and squares, intended for his ancient capital of North-Britain . . .* (Edinburgh, 1768). Courtesy of the National Library of Scotland.

While the design of buildings would soon be professionalised and would eventually be taught at universities rather than in the shop to apprentices, access to the knowledge of the building trades was increasingly available to the general public.<sup>47</sup> How far this intellectual context pervaded Scottish society is beyond the scope of this study, but for the free and unfree of the building trades there is substantial evidence of education being valued. It has, for example, been shown that literacy rates in Scotland were quite high, and an ability to read and write would no doubt have been useful in sustaining any business in the capital. Of course literacy was not universal, and the records and papers of the Incorporation do occasionally mention a craftsman's hand being guided by their clerk.<sup>48</sup> Still, it is clear that education made a difference in the lives and business practices of the members of the House.

Further evidence of the value ascribed to education within the House can be seen in the clear interest in craft-related literature. In the medieval period the usual method of transfer of craft knowledge was through formal, indentured apprenticeship, but by the eighteenth century printing had allowed dissemination through published works on building techniques, pattern books and price books, which were available to both builder and customer.<sup>49</sup> One Edinburgh author of a treatise on Palladian design, George Jameson, held classes for journeyman in his house, emphasising the capital's culture of knowledge sharing and dissemination.<sup>50</sup> Even the genre of poetry was taken up by the craftsmen, as illustrated by the



anonymous 1757 publication of *A Poem Inscribed to the Members of St. Mary's Chapel. Upon the Most Honourable, Ancient, and Excellent Art of Wright-Craft*.<sup>51</sup> Not only was the House engaging with literature, but they were involved in its production. Indeed, Houston's work on literacy rates has suggested that illiteracy in Lowland Scotland was much less common for wrights than for other trades, such as baxters, weavers, shoemakers or fleshers.<sup>52</sup> Clearly, learning mattered, and interestingly, the House was heavily involved in its provision.

A great boost to the culture of valued learning in Scotland came with the Reformation, when the reformers emphasised the necessity of education and literacy skills in the spreading of reformed theology.<sup>53</sup> From at least 1562 the idea of a school in every parish was included in Protestant teaching.<sup>54</sup> To a considerable degree, the establishment of schools became a national priority, and legislation to increase provision was produced in 1633 and 1696.<sup>55</sup> The Education Act of 1696 called again for a school for every parish in Scotland, but full coverage and adequate provision was simply not an easy target to meet. There was certainly help from the private sector, though, as numerous 'dame' and 'adventure' schools added to the parish provision.<sup>56</sup> The Incorporation of Mary's Chapel, as with the other incorporated trades in the capital, found themselves in a position to help with this extra provision, emphasising the important role the House played in educating burgh society.

It is known that schools were provided in Edinburgh by the Incorporation of Skinners and the Incorporation of Hammermen.<sup>57</sup> The Incorporation of Mary's Chapel likewise was involved in the support of schoolmasters in the seventeenth century, though details are somewhat hazy. An inventory of the writs included in the Incorporation's papers mentions William Draphane, schoolmaster, while the research of Durkan and Reid-Baxter found that Robert Lindsay, Edward Draffin, William Draffin and John Penman were schoolmasters connected with St Mary's Chapel in Niddry's Wynd.<sup>58</sup> As minutes for the early seventeenth century are missing, little can be known about these men, though a minute from 1719 shows that this tradition continued into the eighteenth century.<sup>59</sup>

Aside from provision of their own schoolmasters, the House also supported the town's 'hospitals', which in this context were orphanages for the care and education of burgesses' children. One important example of this was Heriot's Hospital. George Heriot was a wealthy Edinburgh goldsmith who died in 1624 without an heir. He left a considerable sum of money to the town council for the creation of a 'hospital for orphans', which was to be based on the London example of Christ's Hospital, founded by Edward VI in 1552.<sup>60</sup> Scholars at the hospital, who were 'Poor Fatherless orphans

Burgess Bairns of Honest decent and their Mother unable to maintain them being in a weak condition',<sup>61</sup> were instructed in reading and writing Scots; working with accounts; Latin rudiments; and, of course, the Presbyterian catechism.<sup>62</sup> Hence literacy, numeracy and religion were the main focus.

Although Heriot's bequest was indeed a noble work, space at the hospital was limited, so few of the 'bairns', or children, of the House would have received a place in the institution. Lockhart's research into the occupational background of the scholars' parents has shown that 870 children from the Incorporation of Mary's Chapel attended Heriot's.<sup>63</sup> Of these, only 172 were from the eighteenth century, whilst 594 were from the nineteenth century, demonstrating increased provision and increased consumption over the course of the hospital's history. Still, there was more need, as this one hospital only cared for sons.

The turn of the eighteenth century saw improvements, as additional provision of education for girls was implemented. One of the new hospitals from this period was specifically for the daughters of craftsmen who could no longer take care of them. When in the 1690s the Merchant Company of Edinburgh initiated plans to build a hospital 'for the maintenance and education of poor maidens by charitable benefactions',<sup>64</sup> the craftsmen were invited by the town council to join with the merchants. The crafts decided to invest in their own hospital, and by 1704 the Edinburgh Convenery of Trades recorded their unanimous assent:

It being put to the vote whither or not there shall be a Hospitall erected by the Trades of this burgh, towards the mantinance of the daughters of decayed tradsmen, and others who shall be presented by the contributors to so pious a work, the samen was carried in the affirmative without a contrair vote.<sup>65</sup>

Property was purchased near Horse Wynd, to the south of the Cowgate, and a house was prepared to serve as the hospital, with a governess, a schoolmistress and servants being engaged.<sup>66</sup> With parliamentary and private backing, the hospital soon had a constitution and a 'court', or board of governors, including the deacons of the trades.<sup>67</sup> Part of their work in managing the hospital's affairs and assets included decisions about which children were to be admitted.

Young girls who entered the Trades Maiden Hospital (Figure 2.2) were to be 'brought up in the fear of God', by being taught reformed Christianity.<sup>68</sup> They were also to be taught reading, writing, arithmetic, and music, as well as certain domestic skills, such as how to make stockings, lace, 'coloured and white seam', spinning, carding, washing and dressing of linen, dressing of meat, housecleaning, needlework, and 'ordinary household thrift'.<sup>69</sup> Clearly the intention was to provide them with the skills to be good wives,



**Figure 2.2** 'Trades Maiden Hospital, Winter Dress [female]'  
Edinburgh, mid-nineteenth century. ECA, Howie Print 59. By kind permission of City of Edinburgh Council.

though intriguingly, neither the matron nor the schoolmistress was allowed to be married.<sup>70</sup> It is noteworthy, however, that reading, writing and arithmetic would have made the girls most useful for the running of a business. Were such factors taken into account when choosing a marital partner?

While this no doubt helped with the burden of provision for the daughters of 'decayed craftsmen', there were practical limitations to how many girls the hospital could accommodate. Indeed Colston records that in the nineteenth century the Incorporation of Mary's Chapel was only allowed four of the fifty presentations to the hospital.<sup>71</sup> The Trades Maiden Hospital would have helped, and provision for girls was certainly progressive, but neither Heriot's Hospital nor the Trades Maiden Hospital were final answers to the pressing obligations of providing for the 'poor bairns' of the House.

### *Craft Training: From Father to Son?*

After basic education at one of the various forms of school in the town, specialist training in craft knowledge was the next potential step for the teenaged children of the House who had ambitions for working within one of the ten arts of Mary's Chapel. For those whose fathers were in the Incorporation, this might mean following in their footsteps and training with their fathers, though for others it might mean entering into indentures for an apprenticeship.<sup>72</sup> Apprenticeships often took the children out of their biological parents' households and put them into the household of their masters, which potentially both disrupted the family units and solidified inter-household social bonds. Hence, one of the roles of an overarching corporate structure, such as the House, was to facilitate and govern these extra-household relationships.

Indeed, certain obligations were enshrined in the day-to-day practices of the incorporated trade. Masters may have theoretically controlled the labour of their apprentices, which was one of the benefits to taking on and training those who were effectively low- to non-skilled staff, but they were also responsible for their upkeep, education and general well-being.<sup>73</sup> The taking of apprentices was therefore a substantial investment of time and resources. In the initial years of the indentures they were of little value to the business, and added to the mouths that needed feeding. Through training, though, they later became much more useful on the worksite, and eventually brought in more money to the masters' coffers.<sup>74</sup>

As the interests of the two parties – master and apprentice – were not wholly equal throughout the period of their training, a legal contract was customary to formalise the relationship and protect both parties.<sup>75</sup>

Indeed, these contracts were reinforced by various pieces of legislation against enticing away apprentices from their masters.<sup>76</sup> Although this was enshrined in the Incorporation's 1475 seal of cause,<sup>77</sup> it apparently did not stop the practice, as such legislation was often reissued, as when the wrights, fleshers and cordiners had been recruiting the apprentices and servants of bonnetmakers in the sixteenth century.<sup>78</sup> Complaints about the poaching were made to the town, and the legislation was reiterated, but the practice remained a problem.

And a problem it was. To entice an apprentice away from his master was to undermine a social contract as well as a legal one. To do so was to chip away at the wider social fabric, and hence it undermined the burgh community as a whole. If there were problems between master and apprentice, it was expected that they be worked out in-house. For the apprentices of the incorporated trades, this often meant within the wider House, as their incorporation was their immediate and proper court of appeal. When Walter Galloway had a 'difference' with his master, the wright William Galloway, elder, 'the house Referred the same to Deacon Sandilands, John Nasmith & Thomas Kylle'.<sup>79</sup> As with any household, disputes could be dealt with by appealing to the arbitration of the wider family, so long as one submitted to that arbitration and did not simply break the bonds and leave the House.

Apprentices often posed challenges for both their masters and for the wider House, as they were usually teenagers. While a definitive age for beginning apprenticeships is not easily found, Stevenson makes the point that a seven-year apprenticeship from the age of 14 would lead to completion at 21.<sup>80</sup> The 1475 seal of cause stipulated apprenticeships of no less than seven years,<sup>81</sup> and Carr's work suggests that this was usually adhered to.<sup>82</sup> There were, of course, exceptions, and Stevenson gives examples of both shorter and longer terms, ranging from five to eight years.<sup>83</sup> While these do not show a precise age, they still broadly cover the teenage years. Indeed, in the early 1690s when reviewing the Incorporation's pension giving, two children were taken off the list because they were 15 years of age. Instead they were to be 'put to Trades'.<sup>84</sup> In apprenticeships, the responsibility for raising teenage children therefore fell to the master and his wife rather than the biological parents, demonstrating the important role that the House was playing in the structure of the wider urban society.

Of course not all apprentices being trained by members of the House were the same age, nor were they all from the same background. William Edgar, wright, was made burgess and guildbrother on 23 March 1726, by right of his father, John Edgar 'of Wedderlie', who was also a burgess and guildbrother. William appears to have been the second son, as one 'John of

Watherly' was also made burgess and guildbrother by right of their father in 1736, suggesting that the first son inherited the lands and title, while the younger son was set up with a promising trade and prestigious membership in the guild.<sup>85</sup> Not all craftsmen would have had such a start, being connected from the beginning to both the landed interest and the capital's guildry. There were obviously very different circumstances for each youth beginning their training with a craft.

Some apprentices came from afar, and some came from the immediate community in which they hoped to work; some left a household to join that of their master, while others were fortunate enough to train with their biological father or a close relative. In a patriarchal society one might expect that there had been less worry about provision for the sons of craftsmen, though their futures were far from settled by virtue of their gender. Not all craftsmen's sons followed in their fathers' footsteps. An eighteenth-century glazier, James Forrest, had one son who became a bookbinder while the other became a writer, or lawyer.<sup>86</sup> In 1614, the son of a cooper showed considerable social mobility in becoming burgess and guild brother as the Bishop of Galloway.<sup>87</sup> Some craftsmen did have sons who followed in their fathers' footsteps, but this was far from universal.

Naturally, many histories of crafts and craftwork comment on the likelihood of sons to follow in their fathers' footsteps, but there does not seem to have been a stereotypical model. Friedrichs, in his study of early modern Nördlingen, found that about three-fifths of his sample of men followed their fathers' occupations.<sup>88</sup> Rappaport, looking at London, also found a figure of three-fifths following their fathers' trades, though the samples were taken in different ways.<sup>89</sup> Dolan, specifically discussing weavers and leatherworkers in sixteenth-century Aix, found that the former often passed their occupation from father to son, while the latter did not.<sup>90</sup> Farr recounts numerous examples from across central and northern Europe of percentages of sons following their fathers' trades, ranging from as high as 87 per cent for Augsburg smiths, to 0 per cent for Bruges barrelmakers. The overall figure for York from 1375 to 1500 was 51 per cent, with individual trades varying from 16 to 78 per cent.<sup>91</sup> The huge variation in these figures points to problems in comparing samples with such wide geographic and cultural disparity, not to mention the lack of uniformity in the ways in which the data was collected. Hence, despite an interesting group of studies, there is no set model for craftwork and father-to-son transferral of status and skill.

In Edinburgh, the sources for looking at father-to-son connections within the Incorporation are not as forthcoming as one would like. While burgeship was not the same as freedom of the Incorporation, data from the imperfect Edinburgh *Burgess Rolls* will serve as a suitable substitute, as in theory

one needed burghership to join an incorporated trade.<sup>92</sup> Examples of this rule being broken have already been discussed, but the variation between the two lists will not take away from the valuable insight that the burghers figures give us about father-to-son transferral in the population of freemen.<sup>93</sup>

The status of 'heir' to a burgher brought opportunities not necessarily present for those who became freemen by marriage or apprenticeship. Here the examples of the coopers and the wrights are illustrative. As mentioned above, to become a burgher one took one of several routes, such as by 'right of wife', through marrying a freeman's daughter; by apprenticeship; or by some act of council, bypassing the normal regulations. Although these were all common routes, one would expect that in order to sustain and perpetuate an oligarchic circle of privileged insiders the route of 'right of father' would have to be the most common. This route was reserved for either heir or second son of a previous burgher.<sup>94</sup>

Burgership, or freedom of the town, was heavily weighted in favour of those already connected to the privileged group,<sup>95</sup> but the greatest privilege went to the eldest sons of burghers. The council noted the expected prices for access to this freedom in March of 1507, with eldest sons as heirs paying only 6s 8d, but second sons paying 13s 4d, and daughters likewise having 'the privilege of the second son'.<sup>96</sup> Unfreemen, however, were to pay £3. While there was movement in the price of burgership for unfreemen throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries,<sup>97</sup> the prices for burghers' bairns were confirmed and apparently enshrined in the new burgh sett from the 1583 decret arbitral: '... the privelege alwayes of the bairnis of burghers and gild brether nocht beand prejugit heirby, quha sall pay the awld and accustomat dewtie to the dene of gild allanerlie.'<sup>98</sup> Clearly those taking burgership would have done so through right of father wherever possible, as the cost differential was simply too great.

This means that of the burgher coopers and wrights, for example, we will most likely have a fairly complete picture of how many entrants had fathers who were *freemen*, as this was a decided advantage. Unfortunately, we cannot say with the same certainty what proportion of entrants took on the same *trade* as their father before them. Some sons might have had precisely the same trade, but if they were born and raised in another part of Scotland, their fathers probably would not have been freemen of the capital, so their sons would have entered through some other route, such as serving apprenticeships or marrying a freeman's daughter. Their father's trades would therefore not be listed in our source, meaning we will not get a complete view of father-to-son transferral.

We can, however, see the proportions of entrants that used 'right of father' to follow in their fathers' footsteps, both in terms of gaining

burgesship and in choosing an occupation, as the father's trade was usually given for such entries in the burgess rolls. As a sample, this is flawed, as it only records the privileged few whose fathers were already burgesses. Accepting this flaw, our view of the object itself is hazy, but the perspective it gives on what is missing is extraordinary.

Of these privileged entrants to burgesship, our examples of the coopers' sons and the wrights' sons suggest that the Incorporation was far from a self-perpetuating oligarchy. By carefully searching the first two volumes of the published burgess rolls for all entries of these craftsmen we can see that there were 118 burgess entries for all coopers and 585 entries for all wrights. Of the 118 burgess entries for coopers, only 24 were by 'right of father', or roughly 20 per cent, which clearly represents the establishment's sons.<sup>99</sup> Of these 24 privileged sons, only 14 were listed as having followed in their fathers' footsteps to take up the family trade of coopering. So, sons of burgess coopers represent only 12 per cent of the whole body of burgess coopers, demonstrating that the transferral of burgesship from cooper father to cooper son was far from the usual practice. This was not a self-perpetuating group, but a remarkably inclusive one.

Similar findings can be seen with the wrights. Of the 585 burgess entries for wrights, only 124 were by 'right of father', and of these 124, only 51 were the sons of burgess wrights, giving percentages fairly similar to those of the coopers. Of the 585 burgess wright entries, 21 per cent were sons of burgesses and 9 per cent were sons of burgess wrights. So of the two example trades of wrights and coopers, roughly 20 per cent of entrants were the sons of free burgesses and only about 10 per cent had followed in their fathers' footsteps. Based on burgesship, it is highly likely that 'new blood' was an important feature of the Incorporation, as very few of the freemen were allowed in because their fathers were already members. It was simply untenable to *only* allow freemen's sons into the freedom of the House, and the great majority either married into the 'family' or served as indentured apprentices.<sup>100</sup> This, of course, says nothing of the overall labour market where both free and unfree worked.

Just as not all craftsmen's sons followed in their fathers' footsteps, not all the House's orphans stayed within the House. Many were not given a choice in the matter. In 1680 Jonet Thomsone, relict of umquhile David Anderson, slater, gave in a bill, 'craveing that his eldest chylde might be putt to ane calling . . .'<sup>101</sup> The House agreed, and allowed him to be bound to any person of any art within the Incorporation, though interestingly no mention is made of considering a calling outside the building trades. On the other hand, when James Braidie's child was put to a trade in 1687, he was given his choice, and decided upon the weaver trade.<sup>102</sup> When the



House put one of their orphans to a trade, they did not always demand that the trade be within the House, most likely due to particular circumstances. Braidie's child was already living with a weaver, so the apprenticeship seemed appropriate, but for other cases the judgement was different. Given the right circumstances, favouring those within the Incorporation took priority, but otherwise, expediency was the rule of the day.

This, of course, translates to most areas of the Incorporation's provision, as individual experiences often differed. For example, Andrew Paterson, wright, received burgess-ship as apprentice to James Scott, but within seven years he had married well, to Isobell, the daughter of a merchant guild brother, and through this connection was able to obtain guild-brethrenship.<sup>103</sup> Whereas the master, Scott, only obtained freedom of the town and freedom of the Incorporation, his apprentice went on to also become a brother of the guild. The opportunities afforded to the brothers and sisters of the crafts were simply not equal.<sup>104</sup>

In part, this helps to explain why rules were often bent or ignored. A good example of this was the requisite booking of apprentices, which did not always happen. By not declaring your apprentices one saved money on the 'prentice silver' owed to the House, and got around regulations about numbers of apprentices.<sup>105</sup> This not only affected the Incorporation, though, as the council occasionally complained about masters omitting to book their apprentices with the Dean of Guild. In 1675 the bower John Monro sought his freedom of the town from the Dean of Guild, only to find out that his deceased master, Hew Monro, had not booked him. Fortunately for the bower, the council found his request reasonable, and decided that he should not suffer for his master's neglect.<sup>106</sup> Such cases were apparently quite common, as the council lamented in their minutes a generation before in 1656.<sup>107</sup> For some, the rule was outdated and restrictive, highlighting the gradual breakdown of corporatism.

Indeed, it has been suggested that apprenticeship itself was in decline by this period, and previous work on the masons might support this idea.<sup>108</sup> Looking at the bookings in the Incorporation's accmpts, in 1670 there were 29 apprentices booked, whilst in 1770 there were only 15.<sup>109</sup> More work is needed on this aspect of Scottish corporatism, but for our purposes here, it does raise important questions about one particular form of provision from the House – that of work. As corporatism began to decline, was there a perception that membership of the House was less able to ensure stable employment? Was the Incorporation seen as more of a hindrance to work than the best route to a reliable income? Here, the stage beyond apprenticeship is crucial, as it was the journeymen who were either allowed in or kept out of the inner circle of privileged freemen of the House. Of course, they were not

the only group whose access to work was restricted, so following on from the journeymen we will look at provision of work for the women of the crafts.

### ACCESS TO WORK: THE HOUSE BEYOND THE HEADSHIP

There was no guarantee of admission to the status of freeman just because an upholsterer or a glazier had served an apprenticeship with a master of the Incorporation. Many factors came into play in deciding who was allowed in and who was not, let alone who was allowed to work *for* a freeman and who was not. Having trained with a freeman set one in good stead, as did marrying the daughter of a freeman, or being a freeman's son, but at the end of the day, if the market could not sustain more masters vying for the available work, then the House would become more conservative with its admissions. Hence, many apprentices who became journeymen found themselves unable to progress to mastership.<sup>110</sup> Indeed, the Incorporation's papers give ample evidence of elderly journeymen who spent their whole careers as unfree wage labourers.<sup>111</sup> This is, of course, of the utmost importance, as one's status so often came into play in deciding who had the right to work and who did not.<sup>112</sup>

### *Journeymen and Feed Servants*

Those co-resident within the House were very much subordinate to their masters, with the law reinforcing the masters' position of authority.<sup>113</sup> This posed challenges for the journeymen, due to the nature of their status. Journeymen were quite simply waged labour, with 'journey' coming not from tendencies to migrate, but instead from the French, *journée*, which implied a day's labour. Journeymen were therefore the employees, firmly under the masters. As Farr has observed, journeymen were, 'liminal figures, in some ways part of the guild order, but simultaneously excluded from the respectable ranks of masters'.<sup>114</sup> Hence when they disagreed with their masters over control of their labour, it was perceived not as a purely economic issue, but instead as a threat to the broader social order.<sup>115</sup>

One record of the relationship between master and 'feed man', so called because of their fee, or wages, is found in the Incorporation's minutes for the 1550s:

The quhilk day Adam Robertson wrycht granntit opinly in presens of Johne Owchiltre dekin & in presens of all ye breder that he was & is feit servand to Patrik Schang wrycht for ye space of thre zeirs nixt ye first of witsonday last by past ffor thre merkis ye first zeir, iiij merkis ye nixt zeir & four merkis ye

third zeir to gidder with meit drynk bedding endurying the said zeirs upoun ye  
quhilks ye said Patrik askit ane act<sup>116</sup>

Not only did the relationship need to be declared openly to the Incorporation, which highlights just how few similar entries are to be found, but in it we find rare evidence of the nature of the relationship. Robertson was contractually – and publicly – bound to serve Schang for three years, with a pay rise after the first year. On top of his fee, he also was to receive food, drink and bedding, highlighting that he was co-resident in his master's household. Though this was not a bad living,<sup>117</sup> with no rent to pay and food apparently provided, it did come at a cost in terms of autonomy.

The 'feit servand' Adam Robertson never became a burgess,<sup>118</sup> and while his name is included in a list of servants in 1559, he does not appear again in the few surviving minutes, suggesting that he did not join the ranks of masters either.<sup>119</sup> It would appear that he simply remained a journeyman. While perhaps his relationships with both his master and the House did not change after his three years were finished, over the early modern period the wider association of journeymen and masters did change. Although the law often protected the privileges of the masters, it also strove to protect the needs of the wider community, and over the eighteenth century journeymen found that they could use the courts to fight their masters over some aspects of labour, such as the number of hours worked.<sup>120</sup>

More importantly, the social bonds between master and journeyman were changing, with what has been argued to be a widening gap between employer and employee.<sup>121</sup> Generally speaking, the traditional model of payment in wages, food, drink and board, 'gave way to a more strictly cash relationship', which in turn eroded the paternalistic links between the master and his co-resident servant.<sup>122</sup> How widespread this was for the journeymen of Mary's Chapel is difficult to say, as there is less evidence about residency patterns than one would like.<sup>123</sup> Fraser's work on Scottish journeyman might well be applicable, though more work is needed on this important group, both within the capital and within the wider nation.

Residency patterns for the House's journeymen are difficult to establish with certainty, though other aspects of their work are clearer. While in theory journeymen were fully trained, being beyond the apprenticeship stage, and more skilled than just labourers, they were still not perceived as being fully qualified; an aspect used to keep them firmly in their place and to control the work they undertook. One example from 1568 demonstrates the differences between subordinate craftsmen and their more privileged masters. In that year, William Hendirsoune was granted limited freedom to

work on walls, dykes and simple houses with clay, sand and lime only.<sup>124</sup> He was judged competent to build basic earthen houses, but was forbidden to work with hewn stone or decorative carving.<sup>125</sup> But was this due to a lack of skill, or was it simply a way to control competition?

Similarly, Johne Quhytelaw was allowed to sit an essay for freedom of the Incorporation as a fully-qualified wright in 1575. When he declined to make the essay, the Incorporation responded by simply limiting his work to a set range of furniture types, such as lecterns, coffers, chairs and stools.<sup>126</sup> Clearly Quhytelaw was skilled enough to make these pieces of furniture, but without the full essay, his work was restricted.

Farr, looking at the European building trades in general, points out the increased specialisation of the numerous crafts needed to produce a building.<sup>127</sup> In the examples of Hendirsoune and Quhytelaw we see a form of *forced* specialisation. Though becoming a waller or a furniture maker was indeed work within the building trades, in these particular cases the work was actually used by the Incorporation to control the craftsmen's labour, and to exclude those who were not approved of.

This, however, implies that the entire House agreed on this approval, which was clearly far from the case. Some masters took too many journeymen, just as others forgot to book their servants and pay the requisite booking fees.<sup>128</sup> Likewise, the various acts against journeymen breaking their contracts by deserting masters' service also reveal that at least some fellow craftsmen were quite happy to employ the deserters, given the opportunity.<sup>129</sup> Clearly there was a degree of collusion with the journeymen, emphasising that the headship of the House was not always of a single mind. Similar problems appear in the minutes of other incorporations in other burghs, demonstrating that it was not only the Edinburgh trades which struggled over issues of labour, and not only the Edinburgh masters who occasionally colluded with their journeymen.<sup>130</sup>

As the population grew, it became harder to keep track of labour, and journeymen began to grow more autonomous throughout the eighteenth century, establishing their own societies independent of the House.<sup>131</sup> As Stevenson has shown, the masons, with their 'parallel hierarchies of public incorporation and secret lodge', give interesting insights into this process.<sup>132</sup> By the later seventeenth century, the journeymen masons had been thoroughly excluded from the running of both the Lodge and the Incorporation, heightening resentment of their status and leading them to feel that the headship of the House – or houses, to include the Lodge – no longer had their interests at heart.<sup>133</sup> The journeymen masons withdrew and in 1708 formed their own society for their own 'distressed poor'.<sup>134</sup> The focus of this, and of other journeymen societies, was their common

charity box, mimicking the provision of the incorporated trades, and further loosening the former bonds of master over servant.<sup>135</sup>

At first, it would appear that the masters were in favour of the 'mutual support' element of the journeymen societies, but when they started holding their own initiation ceremonies the tone changed. The dispute went before the Court of Session, and was eventually settled by arbitration in 1715.<sup>136</sup> The masons of the Lodge were clearly opposed to an independent body of journeymen, but elements of the Incorporation would appear to have felt less threatened by the societies, as indicated by the minute of its official blessing with the 'Act of the Incorporation In favours of such of the journeymen wrights as have joyned in the society':

The same Day Thomas Herron wright & present overseer of the Society of the Journeymen Wrights box Represented to the house that notwithstanding of all the paines & care that had been taken for advanceing & bringing the said Journeymen wrights their stock or box for relieving their poor distresst bretheren relicts & Orphants their necessities to some good accompt Yet a great many of their bretheren Jouneymen both old residents in toun & others that came dayly to work therein Delay & refuse to joyne in the said society by paying in their small entry money of half a croun & six pence per quarter pretending they may joyne in that society at any time they think fit, And probably not till they be objects of Charitie themselves . . .<sup>137</sup>

Despite imposing an overseer, the journeymen societies still removed an element of control from the headship of the House, but it also meant fewer 'mouths to feed', so to speak.<sup>138</sup>

### *Sisters of the Craft*

In terms of access to work, journeymen were not the only disputed group within the House, as the 'sisters of the craft' had always had a role to play in the building trades. This reference to 'sisters', from a 1508 charter relating to annual rents of the Incorporation's altar, made it quite clear that women were very much part of the corporate body, but it is still not clear if this implied the right to work as free craftworkers, or simply that they enjoyed the benefits of the altar.<sup>139</sup> Indeed, very similar phrasing can be found in a fifteenth-century charter of the London Carpenters, so perhaps the phrase was simply legal jargon rather than an intentional statement about gender and work.<sup>140</sup> Either way, they were clearly part of the House, and it was in this capacity that widows enjoyed the right to continue their late husbands' businesses. This was confirmed by the conveyer in 1690, in their decret arbitral for the dispute within Mary's Chapel:

Item wee ordaine the relicts of all friemen to have power and libertie to exercise that airt and craft wherof ther husbands were friemen, so long as they continue unmarried and does nothing prejudiciall to the rules and statuts of the incorporation.<sup>141</sup>

By allowing them to continue, the House was providing work, though upon remarrying, the widows were deemed to no longer need this support. Though work can be seen as a form of charitable provision, this is not to say that the 'sisters' were without skill. Examples beyond the House help to confirm that women in the building trades were quite capable, and their work was highly valued.

One such example comes from the records of the royal building works, which were recorded in the *Accounts of the Masters of Works*. While they were probably not in the Incorporation, several women were involved in the provision of building materials to the craftsmen. 'Besse the nutrice' in Abbey Close furnished shells for masons' mortar.<sup>142</sup> Archibald Dauling's 'wife in Leith' sold oak timbers for scaffolding and flooring, sawn deals, and roofing slates by the thousands,<sup>143</sup> while Katrine Maling provided puncheons for scaffolding.<sup>144</sup> Others provided fodder for the horses that hauled materials, highlighting the important transportation networks that kept the building industry going.<sup>145</sup>

Later accounts for the seventeenth century show women in more hands-on roles, such as bringing loads of lyme and sand to the building works at Dumbarton,<sup>146</sup> or the cart loads of hewn stonework brought by Effie McDull from the quarry at Inverleith Craigs to Edinburgh Castle.<sup>147</sup> McDull is of particular interest, as the drink-silver payments are recorded as being to *her* men, implying McDull's oversight of the workmen. Whether 'sisters of the craft' or not, these women provide a glimpse of the overall context of the early modern building industry, and it is certainly likely that the brethren of the Incorporation would have done business with these women.

Occasionally the town council would hire female craftworkers. The dean of guild accounts list several, such as the 1778 payment by the city chamberlain to 'Widow Duncan, Cooper' who supplied the town with two puncheons, having apparently outsourced the hoops for the casks.<sup>148</sup> 'Widow Cowan, Wright' was recorded in the Dean of Guild's tradesmen accounts for work from 1776–7 of 'taking down & putting up seats, with wood & nails' and for mending seats and tables in the New North Church.<sup>149</sup> Both of these examples demonstrate craftswomen bringing their own skills to bear on public contracts. They sourced their own materials, as indicated by the additional discharge to Widow Duncan for 'hoops for the Casks', implying that she purchased specialist parts for use on her or

her workers' puncheons. Whether with the help of employees, or by themselves, they supplied the labour, but how equal they were to their male counterparts is difficult to say.

The discharge for Widow Cowan's work came to £3 7s 10d, though the imprecise nature of the tabulation makes it hard to compare with other tradesmen. The same page of the accounts that records Widow Cowan's wright-work also includes the previous day's discharge of 17s 8d for sundry work to Francis Brodie, a freeman of Mary's Chapel and father of the infamous deacon.<sup>150</sup> Included in Brodie's entry was a payment of 2s 6d for 'Mending seat in N North Church, with dale & nails'.<sup>151</sup> Widow Cowan's work in the same church of 'a days work mending seats, with wood & nails' brought her 3s. Was Brodie's work also contained to a single day, and how many seats were mended? How many tradesmen were in the employ of either Brodie or Cowan? Unfortunately, we have little to go on to draw meaningful comparisons between the established freeman of the Incorporation and the tolerated widow working for the town. Still, we do see clearly a female wright making a living 'with wood & nails'.

Royal and town works clearly brought women into the building trades, but this does not imply acceptance by the Incorporation. Indeed, one case of a craftswoman who was made a burges by the town and who had a contract with a freeman of the Incorporation suggests that the House only allowed female workers in extraordinary circumstances. Mrs Sara Dalrymple was very much a craftswoman, who was not only a successful employer of journeymen furniture makers, but also an expert herself in the arts of japanning, veneering and 'perspective work'.<sup>152</sup> It was due to this particular skill set, which was not commonly available in Scotland, that the town council made her a burges in 1709:

The Councill granted liberty and licence to Sarah Dalrymple, daughter to Charles Dalrymple of Waterside, to use her trade of japanning as a burges of this City all the days of her lifetime and her continuing unmarried providing alwayes she imploy the freemen of this City for the timber work . . .<sup>153</sup>

As long as she did not marry, and only used freemen, her status was thus ensured, though this did not include recognition from the Incorporation; a point which would cause problems for her in the future.

Despite her burgesship, no mention was made of Dalrymple in the minutes of the Incorporation until 1720, implying a rather cool reception for the burges japanner.<sup>154</sup> Though details are sparse, a 1717 inventory of her shop and workhouse refer to her as 'Mrs Sara Dalrymple', possibly suggesting that she had married.<sup>155</sup> A note on the inventory stipulated that her servants were allowed to finish the pieces already in progress, between

the January date of the inventory and 15 May.<sup>156</sup> It would appear that her right to work was being questioned.

Three years later Mrs Dalrymple signed a contract to work with a freeman wright, Gilbert Couper.<sup>157</sup> In the contract, Couper bound himself to patronise Dalrymple of 'all manner of Finneired & Jappanned Work' that she could make in the space of one year. He agreed to hire any servants that she wanted 'for her working her said Work'. Ownership of the servants was to be his, though apparently payment of their wages, as well as direction over the work to be done, was down to Mrs Dalrymple. Couper was to oversee deliveries to customers, as he was to own 'the said Work to be done or Wrought by his men'. Finally, Couper stated that he would defend Dalrymple 'to ye utmost of his power against the Incorporation of the Wrights of Edinburgh', so long as she refunded him any legal expenses. It would appear that their venture failed, as this contract survives in the Incorporation's papers, with the signatures at the bottom emphatically crossed out.

That same year, a complaint was made to the House about Couper's relationship with the burghess jappanner. The clerk recorded the Incorporation's demand that he 'produce any Contract or agreement', which it would appear he did.<sup>158</sup> Dalrymple then petitioned the Incorporation to allow her to keep working, 'haveing with great industry pains and expenses acqueired the airt of Jappanning & perspective worke (the latter never befor practised in Scotland)'.<sup>159</sup> While a committee was set to consider the request, and a considerable sum of 300 merks 'for the use of the poor' was offered by Dalrymple to sweeten the deal,<sup>160</sup> the Incorporation did not look favourably on a woman from outside the House working in joinery and veneering. They did, however, agree to allow her to keep working jappanned work, so long as she employed only 'freemen of this incorporations to prepare the wood she Jappanns upon'.<sup>161</sup> Hence, Mrs Dalrymple was allowed to carry on one part of her trade.

This was not necessarily the letter of the law. Though her 1709 liberty and licence stated that she was only allowed to work in jappanning, it also stipulated that she must remain unmarried and must employ only freemen. By 1717 it would appear that she was married, and by 1720 she contracted herself to employ unfree servants. The fact that they allowed her to continue in just one of her three stated skills of jappanning, veneering and perspective work, has been interpreted as being down to the fact that she could produce goods 'unobtainable in Edinburgh'.<sup>162</sup> Though veneering and perspective work were too close to the normal work of the wrights, her ability to add value to furniture through the application of jappanning ensured her survival in the Edinburgh furniture market, though the House was adamant that they, and not her, would define the parameters of her work.



## Conclusion

The craft economy was clearly so very much more than single 'small master' craftsmen working alone in their booths and shops, but it was also much more than just about craft production. Social factors were intertwined with the economic unit of the craft household, bringing both privileges and obligations. Clearly provision of work was not shared equally across the House. Instead, the Incorporation attempted to reserve work for the privileged few, to ensure that the freemen had enough income to support both themselves and their household. This meant restricting many within those households, and not just those unfreemen from beyond the House. Hence, the craft economy was carefully balanced between restrictive, protectionist policies, and the needs of those associated with its members. Occasionally, outside authorities, such as the crown or the town, interfered with corporate jurisdictions, which offered the unprivileged certain opportunities. At times the House reacted defensively, obstinately fighting expensive legal battles, though at other times they were willing to allow certain exceptions, as with Mrs Dalrymple's japanning, or the journeymen wrights joining the journeymen's society. Access to work was one of the benefits the House was able to provide, but it was often contested and usually controversial.

As Scotland was changing, so was its capital. The population was growing, stone buildings were replacing those of wood, and certain aspects of the makeup of the House were beginning to change. As argued by Fraser, cash payments were replacing payments in room and board in the relationship between the master of the household and the feed man.<sup>163</sup> This tied in with the wider erosion of corporatism, as corporate privileges became increasingly difficult to defend. Thus began the process of the journeymen leaving the House, though other aspects of traditional provision remained. As will be seen in the final chapter, new ideas about work were changing the increasingly-outdated corporate structures, though before this we must turn our attention to the relationships between craft and kirk and craft and burgh, as the Christian and urban contexts were crucial for the rise and eventual fall of the privileged incorporated trades.

## NOTES

1. Farr, J., *Artisans in Europe, 1300–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 20.
2. Stone, L., *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500–1800* (London: Penguin, 1990), 28.
3. For more on the family and the house as cornerstones of early-modern Scottish