

NORTH EAST GROUP FOR THE STUDY OF LABOUR HISTORY

BULLETIN NO. 1

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Bulletin Editors: J.F. Clarke  
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## A NEW SOCIETY

Of the making of books, it has been said, there is no end and the same might seem to be equally true of the formation of societies. Here in the shape of 'The North East Group for the Study of Labour History' is yet another. The question must inevitably arise in some minds, whether such an arrival is justifiable. In one sense it most certainly is: if a number of people are seized with the desire to study a particular subject together, to meet for discussion and the promotion of their interests in whatever ways it may seem expedient and lawful, then they have every right to do so; despite appearances, seemingly, sometimes, to the contrary, this is a free country. But it may be thought that there is a justification in another sense. The study of labour history has been relatively neglected until recently. True there have been general studies which have become classics - 'The Town Labourer' 'The Skilled Labourer' 'The Agricultural Labourer' by the Hammonds, or the 'Short History of the British Working Class Movements' by G.D.H. Cole: there have been studies of the histories of particular Trade Unions examples are the study of the Engineers by Jeffreys, of the coalminers in a national organisation by Page Arnot, or in a County organisation as by Williams for the Derbyshire miners; and there is a host of other works biographical, autobiographical or suitably chronological and reminiscent when particular organisations have wished to celebrate the centenary or jubilee. But these studies need to be supplemented; new facts and new arrangements needed to be knitted into the pattern of the classical studies and the more descriptive, chronological sort of history needs to be supplemented by studies which are aimed to be more analytical and interpretative.

The case for the setting up of another study group such as this is possibly reinforced by two other considerations which depend in part upon time and to the stage the trade union movement has reached in this country. Next year the T.U.C. will celebrate its centenary: it may not be very wide of the mark to guess that its activities in the next hundred years, not merely for reasons of the likely technological changes which may be expected to take place, will be very different from those on which it has been engaged over its first hundred. Within the context of a national government policy of full employment, and perhaps also within the context of European groupings of countries which the E.E.C. is an example the relations of the T.U.C. with both the affiliated trade unions and the government will change: new relationships and new purposes will emerge: a watershed has been passed and the preceding 100 to 150 years present a unity which invites the activity of the historians at all levels. Secondly the members of the study group propose to supplement the usual activities of such groups by most active tape-recording of the views and comments of older people before time silences them.

Beginning this autumn some members will spend an evening, perhaps more than one, with Jack Bowman to talk with him and record the conversation. He has interesting information and views on the origin of the Shop Steward. There must be many such recordings which an active group will be able to make; in time it is hoped that there may be built a small library of them for the use of students and teachers or any who may be interested in less formal ways.

What for example, may not have been lost for the records by the saddening death this summer of Sam Watson of Durham. Our group will not be able to build up anything like the massive recording of dialectical forms of speech which the group at Leeds, inspired by Professor Orton, has been able to achieve; but it may hope to achieve a small contribution in this way of material which otherwise would be lost; something however small, is better than nothing.

The inspiration for the formation of the group came from a group of people in Newcastle upon Tyne notably Mr J Clark of the Rutherford College of Technology who became its first secretary. I should like to pay tribute here to the energy with which he has propelled to the group along the path of its first year. The group has organised two evening lectures and a Saturday school, which was held in May at Van Mildret College. Now it publishes this bulletin and gives notice of the way in which it proposes to extend its activities as it gathers momentum. It is perhaps not immodest to suggest that there has been a useful and promising start and it would certainly be to miss an opportunity if I did not say that I hope the publication of this bulletin will attract many new and keen members. It is a well worn phrase, but used here most sincerely, they will be very welcome.

Edward Allen - University of Durham.

#### Summary of Visiting Lecturers

On the following pages or summaries of papers prepared by each of the lecturers who spoke to our group during the last year.

## THE PRESENT POSITION AND PROSPECTS OF LABOUR HISTORY

Until the years after the Second World War most Labour history was written by people who are committed to the Labour movement. The outstanding figures were the G.D.H. Cole. It was not an academic subject in the sense that it was taught in universities as part of the normal history syllabuses although there were a few places, Oxford and LSE (where H.L. Beales was an important influence), where the accident of personalities meant that the subject was at least recognised and where some research work was done. Since the last war, the situation has changed in a remarkable way. Labour history has become a well accepted academic subject; the number of universities teachers who are specialist in labour history have increased notable and the number of research theses have shown a similar growth. From being a field in which standards of scholarship were rather poor, (with the obvious exception of Cole and the Webbs and a few others) Labour history is now a 'respectable' area to work, and professional standards have improved considerably. There has been a loss as well as it gave in all this: for what is sometimes, indeed often, lacking in the academic approach is sympathy and understanding.

All this is not to encourage any sense of complacency, for we are only at the beginning of the development of this subject as an essential and integrated part of the general subject of historical change and development. There is still much to do on quite an elementary level, not least in regional studies, for most labour history to date has been written from national records and often from a London standpoint. Yet even here much remains undone, for there are many movements about which we still know too little and many personalities for whom we have only the outline of their biography. But the great lack is the story of local movements and local struggles. This is an old country: its local and regional life has been well developed for many centuries and as the working class became increasingly important part of our social structure it was in the regions that local trade unions and political movements establish themselves before national organisations were gradual formed. This is where the emphasis must now be; and when we have the detailed history is of local labour movement all round the country the national histories which can then be written will be immensely richer in scope and depth than those we have today. Many examples could be given of the gaps in our knowledge which can only be filled by research among the grass roots. Unskilled unionism is one. We now know that the traditional story of the great explosion of unskilled unionism in 1889 must be greatly modified. There were stirrings and actual organisations among sections of the unskilled workers in the boom years of the early 1870s; and some managed to keep a semblance of organisation in the difficult years of the later 1870s and early 1880s. There is a degree of continuity in the twenty years before 1889; and unskilled unions had much stronger roots in the 1880s than we formally believed. But we shall only have the complete story when the histories of individual towns, and particularly of individual trade councils, are written. Since so few trades councils have had their history properly documented, this is going to mean the work of money local historians for many years.

The tasks, however, of labour historians are by no means limited to what may be called the traditional sort of history: the chronology of a movement or an organisation, or the biography of labour and trade union personalities. As already mentioned there is much to do in this field, and without this basic work attempts at interpretation will increasingly be one sided and inadequate. But we are beginning to reach the stage when Labour history as such must begin to be seen in a wider context. British historiography has always looked upon the working class, in any of its social manifestations as the subject matter of government policy and decision. When historians of the working class, or rather their organisations, first began it was more or less inevitable that they should turn in on their subjects since so little had mapped and the most obvious landmarks had to be created. But for too long now labour history has been a thing apart from other historical research and writing and what is now needed is the integration of labour history, which is about the working people, and general political history, which in this country is too narrow in its context and limited in its range. The work of Edward Thompson on the first half of the century is an outstanding example of the exploiting synthesis that can be achieved when someone with a powerful historical imagination and insight fuses the story of the struggles of humble men with general political history. In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Dr Royden Harrison has cast a new light on working-class political pressures and the Reform Bill of 1867.

We have to educate, not only ourselves, but our fellow historians; but our future does not end there. It will be an important advance when the political history of the working class is taught as an integral part of British political history; but there is a good deal more to our subject. What we are interested in is not just the chronology, the details of organisations, the genesis and evolution of ideas, the impact of personality; but also the causal relationships between social facts and factors; the connections between economic foundations, ideas and particular ways in which particular groups evolved. One would like an interpretation, for example, of the ideology of coalminers in the 19<sup>th</sup> century: an explanation of what looks at first sight at any rate as the curious contrast between industrial militancy and political caution. Most politically conscious miners in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century were lib-labs; the new socialist currents hardly touched them. Certainly in the North East - the oldest coalfields and I suppose the best organised before the 1900 lib-lab ideology was strongly rooted, and the militancy of some coal mining area after 1910 does not appear to have been repeated in Durham and Northumberland. It is an interesting fact that coalminers unions do not seem to have been politically on the extreme Left in a number of European countries before the First World War despite their industrial record. To answer some of these questions one would certainly have to look closely at the mining communities, and in many coalfields in Britain this must include the place of the chapel in village society as well as the 'primitiveness' of their religion. We have, in short, to consider the sociology of working-class communities with an historical framework. This last qualification is important. We have, I believe much to learn from the sociologist and the social anthropologist but what they have to take from us is the sense and understanding of history: the absence of which makes much of contemporary sociological writing so very helpful for those seeking to probe the contours of social organisations.

There is a very exciting field of history in which we work and one in which important advances have been registered in the past two decades. The considerable success of the National Society for the Study of Labour History is one index of the real and energetic interest in this subject, and the establishment of local groups, such as the one just established in the North East, is further indication of widespread interest. The richness and variety of local regional tradition in Britain makes it right and proper that regional societies should encourage a deeper interest in their own towns and regions. There is much to do.

John Saville University of Hull

(Mr Saville's paper is read to the group on 3rd December, 1966 at Rutherford College of Technology)

#### THE REVOLT OF THE FIELD IN EAST ANGLIA 1872-1874

In March 1874, when spring sowing was completed, and very shortly after the Conservative victory at the General Election, thousands of agricultural workers were locked out in East Anglia. There had been strikes and lock-outs in 1872 and 1873, but these had not spread like the dispute of '74. Contemporaries thought the Conservative victory had 'more than a little' to do with the timing of the struggle. Most of the unionists involved with members of Joseph Arch's 'National' Union, but a fair proportion were in Bank's Lincolnshire Labour League. Undoubtedly falling agricultural prices from about Christmas 1873 was a partial cause. Between December and April, for example, the price of wheat fell by 6s. a stone in Cambridgeshire; beef and mutton by 2s.

The labourers of East Anglia in 1872 were living on starvation wages, yet they 'stayed out' until June when the N.A.L.U. announced that it 'no longer felt justified in supporting (them) in enforced Idleness'. During these months a sympathetic public including many notable people connected with the Liberal Party raised funds in aid of the labourers.

The colleagues of Joseph Chamberlain used the labours' plight in the seventies in their (unsuccessful) attempt to regain support for liberalism, and liberal support was not only given at a national level. In Cambridgeshire W.H. Hall, a liberal landowner, was among the supporters of unionism, and liberals from the University of Cambridge, such as Sedley Taylor and Alfred Marshall on union platforms speaking on the labourers' behalf.

During the months before the lock-out began, the farmers of East Anglia had organised themselves into the Farmers' Defence Association led, in effect, by Hunter Rodwell Q.C. Reports of membership and meetings of these Associations (and indeed Frederick Clifford's 'The Agricultural Lockout in 1874') show that the struggle was in the last resort, between the very largest owner-occupiers and their labourers. Some landowners made it quite clear that they wanted the tenants to stay aloof. There are no reports of very small employers figuring among the labourers' opponents. The large arable farms of the kind owned by Hunter Rodwell were of course the most labour intensive and therefore more prone to labour disputes.

The struggle of 1872-74 also took on the character of a church versus Dissent contest. Many prominent nonconformists were active on the labourers' side - Charles H. Spurgeon, for example, and (a bizarre touch) Bendigo, once heavyweight champion of all England, now a preacher. Joseph Arch, of course, was a Primitive Methodist, and many of the local leaders were nonconformist lay preachers e.g. John Todd of Cottenham.

The Church of England was overwhelmingly hostile to the labourers and clergyman appear as diehard opponents of unionism in the press and in the defence associations, yet there were a few exceptions: the reverent C.E.T. Roberts of Ely was a union supporter and the Rev. Henry Burgess of Whittlesea (a riot centre in 1816 and a trouble spot during the 'Swing' troubles of the thirties also) was active on the labourers' behalf throughout the seventies.

Most of the labour leaders, as always, were other than farm labourers. A.J. Challise of Sawston was an auctioneer, Day Wiles of Wisbech a toll bar keeper, Harry Gee a coprolite digger, and others were tailors, publicans, plasterers and bakers.

The farmers used not only the lock-out to defeat the unions. Anti-union laws were resorted to and scores of labourers prosecuted, poor relief was refused, and blacklegs used in abundance. The latter were usually coprolite diggers (some of the largest diggings were closed at harvest time), women or Irish, who were said to be in the area 'looking for a harvest' for the first time for many years. More machinery was used and the farmers were able to run their farms with far less labour than most of them employed before '72. The charities were unscrupulously used to reward 'loyal' workers.

The labourers staked everything on the mistaken belief that they would be needed for the harvest but they often resorted to the methods of agitation of an earlier time. Rick burning and machine smashing became commonplace, crops were ruined and blacklegs beaten up.

Certain villages in Cambridgeshire became union strongholds and these villages (Cottenham, Sawston, Whittlesea, and Waterbeach for example) had certain common features: in each there were large farms, a history of trouble over the village charities, a newly created school board - these two things have become involved in the Church versus Dissent squabble - and a leader (like John Todd of Cottenham) who established himself in the struggle over the charities and education. There is some evidence that the labourers felt that education charges, which meant a loss in income, and the provisions of the Agricultural Childrens Act that amounted to a form of compulsory education, and therefore a further loss of family earnings were the final factors deciding them to create unions. These came of course at a time of rising prices. (The Agricultural Childrens Act did not become operative until 1875 but it was being discussed and passed into law during the heyday of unionism in the seventies).

In the village like Histon, only three miles from the union centre of Cottenham, the labourers remained completely apathetic (they did so also in 1816, in the thirties and during the union revival of the '90s). Here none of the features of the union village were present. There was non-conformity, but no Primitive Methodists, no school board and no trouble over the charities. The factory that the village is now famous for was hardly a year old and not a source of alternative employment for many as yet. The farms were not of the large arable occupier owner-occupier type.

The labourers gained nothing from their experience of Unionism. There was henceforth, an increase in piecework in East Anglia, and probably in the number of tied cottages. When agrarian unionism returned, however in the nineties, the leader in East Anglia, George Edwards, was a man who had had his earliest experiences of unionism in 1872-74.

The labourer remained loyal to the Liberal Party. The unions of the nineties were liberal supported and even sponsored; so too with those of the early twentieth century when Sir Richard Winfrey was the force. Shortly after the labourers were forced back to work, the farmers of Cambridgeshire exert themselves within the Conservative Party to reject a 'landlords' nominee as a by-election candidate and chose Hunter Rodwell. This indicated a hardening of attitude, and hard days ahead for the farm workers.

A J Peacock York Educational Settlement  
(Mr Peacock's paper was read on 3rd February, 1967 at Rutherford College  
of technology

ON WRITING TRADE UNION HISTORY - with special reference to the Durham  
Miners' Association 1919 - 1947.

The appearance during the past few years of a number of regional mining trade-union histories has posed a number of interesting questions regarding the most acceptable method of writing trade union history. (1) Previous writers and commentators, with one notable exception (J.E. Williams) have tended to adopt too limited and uncritical an approach to their writing with the result that their studies have neglected many essential aspects of trade union development. One overdependence upon weighty narrative, aimed at telling in the most convincing way details of trade-union negotiations and disputes, have sorely neglected the need for a more analytical and composite account of trade-union activity in all its aspects economic, social and political.

The organisational, financial and political development of the Durham Miners' Association during the inter-war years was, as it always has been inextricable bound up with the changing fortunes of the coal industry, all of which in turn reacted upon the social conditions of the miner. Only by investigating in detail these various strands of activity can one hope to trace and explain, in any meaningful sense the development of the Union's activity during the period. The Durham Miners' demand for nationalisation and their resistance to district wage settlements, for example is only fully understood when viewed in relation to the position of the coalfield as a chief exporting district during a period when the ramification of the trade-cycle were most keenly felt.

Moreover a close study of the coal industry has proved to be the key towards understanding the motives and reactions of leaders and workers alike during the strike periods of 1919-20 and more especially in 1926. The heavy expenditure on relief engendered by the depression in the industry and the subsequent need for retrenchment provides valuable evidence of the Union's negotiating strength as well as the Miner's degree of financial independence in the face of mass unemployment and the generally unsympathetic attitude of the cold owner.

The intricate question of the length of the working day is of particular significance in Durham since traditionally coalfield worked fewer hours than elsewhere. The obvious comparative advantage thus found by Durham is an eminently suitable subject for analysis since the information thus gained goes much further towards explaining the Union's reaction to efforts to increase the length of the working day than could ever be extracted from the bare narrative of events. Only by appreciating the political overtones of the demand for nationalisation; the inability of the coal industry in the area to pay anything but meagre wages out of the proceeds eroded by the loss of overseas coal markets due to the growing competitiveness of the coal substitutes and other coal producing countries and their frustrated attempts at the reorganisation of the industry and the successful implementation of the marketing schemes in the later 1920s, can we fully understand the Durham leaders agitation for reduced hours and increased wages during the 1930s.

The changing market situation for coal, the incursion of the Union into local and national politics, the overwhelming evidence of the appalling social conditions of the mining communities; the Union's relationship with other working-class organisations, and its change in organisation, finance and leadership must all necessarily warrant specific attention since each is able to eliminate and enhance the detail of the other. The temptation arises to refer to these issues only incidentally whenever the details of such conveniently arise in Union minutes or pamphlets without systematically exploring other more obvious and important sources - such as Hansard, local and national newspapers, academic and technical journals and the contemporary writings of the period. Or, in the case of Durham, there is the further temptation to emphasise unduly the role of the changing conditions of the industry to an almost exclusion of other features of the problem. (2)

The comments made so far are not intended in any way to disparage the work done by previous authors but to indicate the most profitable methodological approach along which research can more usefully be undertaken if the position of labour as a factor of production in history is to be truly understood. There are some problems which will always be with us - the scanty and suspect nature of Union records especially those representing rank and file opinion, the bias of newspaper material and often inaccessible or incomplete record of the coalowners' organisations and how to use existing records. If sufficient attention can be given in the future to such various aspects of trade union activity not only will the regional analysis of mining trade union history prove more satisfying to all who are interested but more penetrating investigations may prove invaluable in substantiating and even modifying the existing generalisations of natural history.

Since the Durham Miners' Association figures so prominently in trade-union history and since many of the most interesting questions of regional mining history during the inter-war years still awaiting answer lie within its own experience it would be sheer folly to attempt an uncritical or partisan attitude based upon a limited collection of sources and/or a too limited vision of the nature of trade-union development. Whatever the failings may be of the type of alternative approach outlined above future authors should at least begin to analyse the multifarious nature of labour and its organisation.

W.R. Garside - University of Leeds.

(Mr Garside's paper was read at Van Mildret College on 13<sup>th</sup> May 1967)

1. R.P Arnot - *he Scottish Miners*, London 1955; A.R. Griffin - *The Miners of Nottinghamshire Vol.1 1881-1914*, Nottingham N.U.M. 1956; *Vol.2 1914-44*, London 1962; F. Machin - *The Yorkshire Miners Vol.1 Barnsley N.U.M. (Yorkshire Area) 1958*; E.W Evans - *The Miners of South Wales*, Cardiff 1961; J.E. Williams - *Labour in the Coalfield*; a critical biography - *Bulletin of the Society for the Study of Labour History*, No. 4 Spring 1964 and the replies of A.R. Griffin and H. Frankenberg, *ibid*, No.5 Autumn 1965.
2. Reference might be made to the following: J Saville - *The Present Position of Working-Class History - Yorkshire Bulletin of Economic and Social Research*, Vol.4 No.2, September 1952 p.126, p.128 e.g. the comments of Asa Briggs - *Trade Union History and Labour History - Business History Vol. VIII No.1 January 1966 p.39*.

#### THE LEAD MINES OF THE NORTHERN PENNINES

Lead mining was a considerable industry in the north of England from about the third decade of the eighteenth century until the 1870's and 1880's, when the large scale exploitation of lead deposits in Central and South America made English mines uneconomic. In 1842 some 6,000 men and boys were engaged in the lead mining industry in the Northern Pennines - on Alston Moor, in East and West Allendale, Derwentdale, Weardale and Teesdale. In these isolated dales the miners lived in a 'factory village' type of environment, depending, at least until the coming of the railways, upon the mining companies to organise the provision of essential food supplies. By the nineteenth century an excess of population over the work available gave the companies great power in organising the lives of employees. The threat to enforced migration consequent upon unemployment made miners reluctant to combine against their employers; trade unions were unknown and strikes were few. During the course of the nineteenth century the employers were able to bring about a revolution in industrial management greatly changing the lives of their employees.

The labour force of the companies was divided into four sections. Firstly, and by far the greatest section, there were the actual miners who extracted the ore from the ground. Secondly, there were the washers who dressed the ore at the exits from the mines. In the eighteenth century these two occupations were ill defined; and miners frequently washed their own ore.

In the nineteenth century industrial progress in mechanical means of dressing ore brought about a rigid distinction between miners and washers, at least at the larger mines. The washers were largely youths, aged from ten upwards, who worked on the washing floors until they were eighteen or twenty, when they went into the mines. Thirdly there were carriers who transported ore from the mines to the smelting mills, and pigs of lead from the mills to market in Newcastle or Stockton. Lastly there is the smelters and refiners working at mills on the edge of the lead mining region where there were adequate supplies of wood and coal for burning. Only the first two sections of the labour force are being considered here.

The organisation of ore extraction was based on a system of sub-contract. The miners, normally working in partnership of from four to twelve members, contracted to get ore in a defined part of the mine, to be paid for at so much per 'bing' (8cwt) of dressed ore. Alternatively they were to drive a gallery or sink a shaft at so much per fathom. Prices were fixed according to the richness of the vein or the hardness off the ground. These contracts, known as 'bargains' were renewable every three or four months. In the eighteenth century the miners were paid in theory once a year, in practice when money was available. To tide them over the rest of the year more or less regular subsistence allowances was given. This system allowed the mine owners to control the workings with minimum management, and give the miners a feeling of independence.

While the wording of the bargains in the 'bargain books' remained almost unchanged during the period 1730 to 1870 their interpretation changed considerably. The development of technology particularly in the fields of underground haulage and ore dressing machinery, required the mine owners to exercise greater control over their workmen if the full benefits of the new techniques were to be obtained. The workmen were prepared to sacrifice a great deal of their independence in exchange for more regular payment.

The decisive period of change was the first half of the nineteenth century. Mechanical apparatus for dressing ore was introduced, and miners no longer washed their own ore, but handed it over for washing by others. Subsistence allowances were greatly increased, and were given at monthly or fortnightly intervals. At the same time measures were taken to equalise wages, so that no miner should be either very much more fortunate, or very much more unlucky than the rest. The largest mining concern did this by elaborate system whereby at the end of the year those miners who had made more than their subsistence contributed part of their earnings towards cancelling out the debts of the less fortunate. The second largest concern started to extract ore by the fathom instead of by the bing. Miners were paid so much per fathom, regardless of whether it contained ore or not; it was much easier to ensure equality of payment by this method, which had the additional advantage of not requiring each partnership's ore to be kept separate until the dressing was completed, i.e. before it would be weighed. Lastly, time clauses were written into the bargains forcing miners to work regular hours.

Thus the lead industry, apparently organised in the same way in 1870 as it had been in 1730, went through a profound and fundamental change. While preserving the traditional forms of organisation the lead miners were transformed from free men carrying out work as defined by contract to virtual wage earners forced to work as their employers demanded.

C.J. Hunt University of Newcastle upon Tyne.  
(Mr Hunt's paper was read at Van Mildret College on 13th May 1967)

PROGRAMME FOR 1967-1968

17th Nov. 1967 at Rutherford College of Technology, Ellison Place, Newcastle

7.30 p.m. DR W.H. CHALOMER on

'Middle Class Historians of the Working Class:-  
Webbs, Hammonds and the Coles.'

9th Feb. 1967 at Rutherford College of Technology

7.30 p.m. J.F. CLARKE on

'Labour in Shipbuilding on the North-East Coast 1850-1900'

18<sup>th</sup> May 1968 at Van Mildret College, University of Durham

Afternoon PROFESSOR SIDNEY POLLARD on

'The Trade Unions Response to the Economic Crisis in 1931'

Trade Union leaders of the period will be invited to participate and their names given later.

## A TRIBUTE TO SAM WATSON

When I came in from a walk over Alnwick Moors last Sunday and my wife told me that the Guardian had been on the telephone to say that Sam had died in his sleep, and would I write some words, my first reaction was of rebellion, my second that now and for ever my own youth was ended. The years speeding by never meant so much so long as one could imagine Sam Watson sitting under a tree looking out over the city he loved so much. Now he is gone and there is no strong, vital element to sustain us - or to throw ourselves against.

But so long as his memory lives, so will the spark of youth. I remember as a lad at Dean and Chapter Colliery reading his letters in the 'Northern Echo' signed by Sam Watson, Boldon. I liked his style much better than that of A.J. Spender, who was the great political columnist of that time. Here was a man who communicated. His letters inspired mine, rather odd letters on a variety of subjects under a variety of romantic pseudonyms, a first sign, I suppose of the imaginative writer. The letters I liked, but I had mixed feelings about the man. I have a picture of him speaking in Ferryhill Market Place in the Thirties when I was still a politically ambitious teenager. He spoke fluently without notes and all he said made prose sense and common sense - there were no clichés. He spoke quietly, confident in the penetrating quality of his sharp, slightly metallic voice with its East Coast twang. His eyes twinkled with affection and in the joy of exposition. He was entirely without flourishes and forced ejaculatory tricks of all the other soap book speakers I've ever heard, gently coaxing and guiding the crowd - no, each single member of the crowd - along the line of his own lucid thinking. There was excellence, and because youth always wants to have its fling, and my idea of a fling was such excellence as this, I railed at the injustice of it all. One never could be as good as this. Then as so often in the future I disagreed with his political line, and part of my youthful frustration and despair lay in the knowledge that one would have to be impossibly good to put the other side half as well. Years later when my Fircroft tutor told me that I hadn't the makings of a first-class trade union leader I blazed, then conceded as I thought of Sam Watson. But if this was a negative, there was also a resounding positive in the hope that it might just be possible to be as excellent in another field.

In that the years that followed I got to know other facets of this many sided man. There was a time going to a miners' service at Stanley when he picked me up, sweating in the hot sun having missed the bus, and talking on the way he revealed his deep affection for the chapel. There was the night at Hetton when he sparkled with stories and talked about the dialect. There was another time at Red Hills when his deep sense of history came flooding to the surface, and I who had considered him - well, as practical and with important mundane things - found a scholar with a passion for bringing the past life. He had odd and exciting bits of information stored away at the back of his mind, and a boy's curiosity about things, and he listened eagerly to my own scraps of information and observations, the pink faced clenched like a fist with interest.

Our meetings were infrequent. I was nothing like an intimate friend but what came out in the intersection of his own busy life with mine was more than a deep sense of history. He wanted to know all of everything and embrace every living soul; there was a novelist or playwright hidden away in him. Not only his love for mining folk but his curiosity, fascination and obsession with all sorts and conditions of people kept him in Durham. And of course it was writing that helped him to first make his name. He had the writer's gusto. You could see him lean forward when you related the story of strange, remarkable or noble and unknown people. That Sunday at Whittingham I have been talking to a stone-deaf ex-railwayman, with a wife almost blind. The way we talked was that I spoke to the wife and she wrote the sentence for him quickly in the air, over and over again until he had grasped it. When my wife told me about Sam a picture of the old couple came into my mind. He would have loved that story.

His was a busy life and he had to distance himself, but he was always one for young hopefuls. I think of the lads who came from all over Durham for his class, but there must be also many like myself who walked into Durham hoping that there would be a second-hand book for a tenner, yearning for intellectual and spiritual betterment, who walked all the more proudly for Sam Watson. Into the covered market, into Andrews, and half an hour at the NCLC bookstore on the field, and then the great man himself on the platform, twinkling, in full command and full of the joys of life. He had made it, and so would we, hitching are own wagon to a star. As the hair grew thinner and the eyebrows whiter the youth in him bubbled out more strongly. However much you disagreed with him, you knew that he cared. He was not only Sam Watson the negotiator, Sam Watson the statesman and Sam Watson the advocate but Sam the fellow-writer and scholar and Sam the human being. Well, he is gone. But he will always walk lightly, twinkly, through the days of my youth.

Sid Chaplin.

## LOCAL RECORDS FOR LABOUR HISTORY

One of the major aims of North East Group for the Study of labour History is to encourage an interest in and work on the role played by working men in the industrialization which has taken place in the last two centuries, during which tremendous changes have taken place in the social, economic and political way of life in this country.

In order to facilitate this work, the group, like anybody set up to study the past, must first ensure that records and documents relating to its particular subject, in this instance Labour and industrial history, are preserved. For many years historians of all types have complained about the lack of material available for the study of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the period when this country was undergoing the first major industrialization in the world. More recently this has been partially remedied and it is noticeable that many commercial firms and private individuals have gone out of their way to ensure that bundles of old documents are not destroyed as being useless but are put in the hands of people who may be able to estimate their value. Despite this improvement much valuable material is still being hazarded every year, as witness the recent information that a unique collection of relics of the north east's industrial past is lying in a disused army camp for the lack of sufficient money to create an open-air industrial Museum - a collection which will have to be dispersed among scrap merchants if a home for it is not soon found.

While the Labour History Group cannot hope to provide a home for large industrial relics it does intend to do something to encourage the preservation of manuscript records to be deposited in the various archives which exist in the region. It is hoped to attract the interest of many people, trade union lists and industrialists as well as academic and amateur historians, to the question of the history of working men in the last two centuries and that these people will then be active in hunting out source material which may be available. In particular, while the situation with regard the preservation of older records is improving with the growing interest in labour history in the nineteenth century it is essential not to lose sight of the fact that many twentieth century records are being destroyed.

It is often concluded, in this modern age, when there is a mass of official labour statistics, that the preservation of individual and company records is superfluous. There is, however, much that personal records may do to fill out the skeleton presented by such statistics as the cost of living index. That this is so may be seen from the extracts which are printed in this bulletin from the personal papers of an engineer. There are undoubtedly a large number of working men, during this century, who have kept records of their employment, wages, promotion etc., which would provide interested historians with a valuable and fascinating picture of working life within particular trades, reasons for labour ability and strikes, and other information which official statistics would not possibly

give. It is, therefore, hoped that the Labour History Group will be able to attract into its ranks working men who are interested in the history and development of their class and who may be able to provide such material. The group will, therefore, be very pleased to receive, either at its forthcoming meetings or through its committee members, any manuscript material relating to north-eastern labour and industrial history, which it will insure is deposited in the most relevant of local archives.

As Professor Allen has written above it is one of the aims of the group to endeavour to prevent the loss of personal recollections by means of interviewing a number of people in the north-east who may have interesting and valuable accounts of its industrial past, and preserving this material in the form of tape recordings. The committee of the group will be pleased to hear from local working men who would be prepared to have their memories taken down in a tape recorded interview and from people interested in the study of labour history who would like to take part in the work of obtaining such recordings. The committee would similarly welcome any other suggestions and ideas as to the means by which material on labour history might be preserved.

Quite apart from encouraging the preservation of material on labour history it is important that this material should be used. Without the addition of any further material there is already a vast collection of records in local archives, much of which has been untouched from the point of view of the history of working men. The second and equally important task of the group is, therefore, to encourage the study of labour history in the north-east. To some extent this will be done through regular meetings and discussions, but the annual bulletin, it is hoped, will carry bibliographical introductions to a few sections of labour history on each of its appearances. One of the major problems, even from the academic historian, is finding the material which relates to his particular topic. It is, therefore, obvious that there is a vast amount of local material on labour history, of which even the most interested of workers in the field are unaware. Commencing with this issue the Bulletin intends to do a little to improve the situation. It will endeavour to explain and put into perspective the circumstances of the particular aspect of labour history covered by that section. A brief introduction will be given to each section. In some instances there will be then be extracts from local records to illustrate the particular aspect of labour history and for some of the sections an attempt will be made to provide a bibliography of material available on the subject. Such bibliographies are not intended to be exhaustive but it is hoped that they will interest people in the study of local labour history and that the process of preserving material and making use of it will become cumulative. The editors, therefore, welcome contributions, in the form of introductory comments, extracts illustrating and bibliographical references on any particular field of local labour history, to be used in future bulletins.

D.J. ROWE University of  
Newcastle upon Tyne.

PAPERS OF ROBERT ALLEN (1883-1936) - Tyneside Engineer

This collection of papers, which were very kindly given to us by Mr Allen's daughter-in-law, are the residue of the notes and documents handled by this engineer who was a life-long active trade unionist on Tyneside. The character of these papers show how very helpful it would be to have a more widespread collection and preservation of similar personal collections; the very papers and printed matter retained by these skilled craftsmen over a long lifetime probably have a significance of themselves, indicating what was retained while other pieces were destroyed or discarded.

Robert Allen's father was a fitter who joined the A.S.E. on 28th May 1881, when he was 21 years of age; Robert Allen 2nd (for so it was recorded) joined in May 1904. Both first membership cards are retained and the secretary's name on both is R. Ramsey. Mr Allen held many offices both in the A.S.E. and later in the A.E.U. after the amalgamation was formed; and after 1947 he became secretary of the Amalgamated Engineers' Widows and Orphans Provident Society. He kept a brief personal diary when he commenced work of which the first two entries read: -

'I started to serve my apprenticeship at the Northern Press and Engineering Company's Works December 4th 1898'

'While working a lathe I got my hand caught with the belt fastener November Sat. 2nd/1899 and was under the care of (Infirmary Doctor) for two months.'

There are many further notes on the work he carried out and ships he served on and there is also three drafts of a lecture on his early days at J. P. Rennoldson's.

The following is a synopsis of the material, which is at present held at Rutherford College of Technology.

Personal notebooks

1. Early diary and work record 1901-1923
2. Pages work record 1905
3. New pages Union notes 1920
4. Notes from 1911 Committee meetings
5. Hours record 1936-43
6. Own Union Accounts records
  - (a) Widows and Orphans 1911-14; (b) Widows and Orphans 1915-20;
  - (c) Branch Accounts 1934-7 in a book first used in 1897 lockout.
7. Work prices.

Manuscript notes

1. Outline history of Widows and Orphans Prov. Society (three quarto pp)
2. Three drafts of earlier work at Rennoldsons - Shipbuilders and Eng.
3. Various short miscellaneous items.

Trade Union Accounts Books

There are books relating to 1881-4; 1914-18; 1932-4; 1931-4; 1932-7; 1942-4 and membership lists. Some of this will be available in printed form in Trade Union Annual reports.

### Correspondence

There are miscellaneous items of correspondence.

### Wage Data

1. A note of wage changes on Tyneside (see tables below and graphs)
2. Personal wages account book 1919-1933 some entries 1934.
3. Payslips for various dates - almost complete for 1922.

### Printed Material

There are a number of printed leaflets and booklets as well as a few newspaper clippings, including:- (a) leaflets on engineer-plumbers dispute 1890 (b) Marine engineers wages etc. 1911 (c) Marine School South Shields - classes 1912 (d) Engineers Tyne Conditions 1915 (e) Agreements North East Coast 1936 (f) a few leaflets related to periods 1914-19 (g) personal addresses of candidates for post of secretary Widows and Orphans Soc. 1930 (h) pamphlet 'Mass Murder' (N.U.W.M.)

A fuller account of these materials will be prepared later but the following is a note of wage rate changes as noted by Mr. R. Allen.

### Rise and Fall in Wages of Skilled Workers from 1914 to March 1955

<u>TYNE</u>		£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.	
July 1914		1	17	0		Dec. 1936	3	3	0 1/- War bonus
Feb. 1915		2	1	0		Aug. 1937	3	4	6 1/6 .. ..
Dec. 1916		2	4	0		Nov. 1937	3	6	0 1/6 .. ..
Mar. 1917		2	9	0	5/-	Jun. 1939	3	8	0 2/- Nat. Bonus
July 1917		2	12	0	3/-	Feb. 1940	3	13	0 5/- .. ..
Oct. 1917		2	18	6	12½%	Jan. 1941	3	16	6 3/6 .. ..
Nov. 1917		3	6	4½	5/-	Dec. 1941	4	1	6 5/- .. ..
Jul. 1918		3	10	3¾	3/6	Mar. 1943	4	7	6 6/- .. ..
Dec. 1918		3	15	11½	5/-	May 1944	4	11	6 4/- .. ..
Dec. 1919		4	1	6¼	5/-	Apr. 1945	4	16	0 4/6 On Base rate
Apr. 1920		4	4	11½	3/-	Apr. 1946	5	2	0 6/- Nat. Bonus
Jun. 1920		4	8	3¾	3/-	Nov. 1946	5	7	0 5/- For 44 hour week
Jul. 1921		4	4	11½	3/- Reduction	Oct. 1948	5	7	0 5/- Nat. Bonus
Aug 1921		4	1	6¾	3/- ..	Nov. 1950	5	18	0 N. A. Trib
Nov. 1921		3	18	6½	4½%	Nov. 1951	6	9	0 11/- Increase
Dec. 1921		3	15	0½	3%	Nov. 1952	6	16	4 7/4 ..
Jan. 1922		3	12	6	4½%	Apr. 1954	7	4	10 8/6 ..
Jul. 1922		3	7	0	5/6 ..	Mar. 1955	7	15	10 11/- ..
Aug. 1922		3	1	6	5/6 ..				
Sept 1922		2	16	0	5/6 ..				
Aug. 1927		2	18	0	2/- Rise Time W.				Had 33 rises and 8 reductions
May 1935		2	19	0	1/- War bonus				From 1914 to March 1955.
Jul. 1935		3	0	0	1/- .. ..				
Jun. 1935		3	1	0	1/- .. ..				
Sept 1936		3	2	0	1/-				

These are the figures as recorded by Mr. Allen but in a number of cases the explanation of change is not precise e.g. Jan. 1922 the reduction of 2/6½ is not 4½%.

Attached is a graph showing the movement of the figure in this table.

J.F. Clarke, Rutherford College of Technology

## THE KEELMEN

The keelmen were a body of lightermen who transferred coal, brought from the collieries on either bank of the Tyne (and the other rivers of the north-eastern coalfield) to stocks at staiths on the river banks, in their keels to colliers waiting at the mouth of the river. There were such men employed in this work so early as the fourteenth century, but the coal trade was of no great size until the early seventeenth century. From then on the body of keelmen grew rapidly in size to some 1,600 men on the Tyne at the beginning of the eighteenth century. With this growth came a strong sense of community feeling (emphasised by the fact that the keelmen lived in district communities such as those of Sandgate in Newcastle and at Dunston) and considerable economic power. During the sixteenth century the keelmen had formed themselves into an independent society and in 1699 they founded their own charity and two years later had a hospital built at their own expense for the care of their aged and infirm. Disputes soon broke out between the keelmen and their employers, the hostmen, who were the trustees of the charity, over its management and in 1788, after several earlier attempts, the keelmen obtained an Act of Parliament which regularized and placed the Keelmen's Fund on a permanent footing. It continued as an important charity until 1872 when the Act was repealed and, although no longer existed as a charity, the hospital still stands on the City Road.

The keelmen expressed their economic power in a series of well organised strikes (which on several occasions almost brought the coal trade of the river to a complete halt) during the eighteenth century, for improved wages and conditions, and successfully established themselves as a well-paid labouring group. During the early nineteenth century, however, like many other pre-industrial groups, keelmen were affected by new mechanical inventions, which partially did away with the employment of keels by enabling colliers to be loaded directly at the staiths, and also by the development of railways which also replaced keels as a means of transporting coal from some collieries. The keelmen fought against this decline in their economic position by means of a series of strikes and a well-conducted but unrewarding legal action, aimed at preventing colliers from loading at the staiths. They were unsuccessful in their attempts to restrict the change in the coal trade, but owing to the poor state of the navigation of the river Tyne, which prevented large colliers from proceeding far up-stream, and the fact that keels were a cheaper form of transport than the railway for some collieries, the keelmen remained an important section of the Tyne coal trade into the second half of the nineteenth century.

The following is a far from exhaustive list of the material available on the keelmen and their history. Most of the material centres on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when the keelmen came into the public view as a result of their strikes.

### PRINTED SOURCES

- E.R. Turner, 'The Keelmen of Newcastle', *American Historical Review*.  
XXI, 1915-16.
- W.S. Mitcalfe, 'The History of the Keelmen and their strikes in 1822',  
*Archaeologia Aeliana*, Fourth Series, Vol. XIV, 1937.
- N. McCord 'Tyneside Discontents and Peterloo', *Northern History*,  
Vol. II, 1967.

J.M. Fewster     Four articles on the keelmen. Durham University Journal.  
New series, Vols. XIX AND XXIV.

The following volumes also contain relevant material:

F. Atkinson     The Great Northern Coalfield (Durham 1966).  
M. Dunn         View of the Coal Trade of the North of England (1844)  
W. Fordyce      A History of Coal and Iron (1860)  
J. Guthrie      The River Tyne: Its History and Resources (1880)  
T.H. Hair        Sketches of the Coal Trade (1844)  
R.W. Johnson    The Making of the Tyne (1895)  
Surtees Society (CV) Extracts from the Records of the Hostman's Company  
of Newcastle upon Tyne.  
J. Sykes         Local Records of Remarkable Events (Newcastle, 1833)

Various directories of Newcastle and Northumberland, including Whellan's (Manchester, 1855) and Parson and White's (Newcastle, 1827) have information on the keelmen.

From the late eighteenth century the local newspapers (Newcastle Journal, Chronicle and Courant, Durham County Advertiser and Tyne Mercury) have considerable amount of material on the keelmen, although mainly at the times of various strikes.

#### MANUSCRIPT SOURCES

Newcastle City Archives A number of bundles of papers on the keelmen which relate chiefly to the period 1700-1830. The material consists chiefly of minutes and resolutions of meetings of magistrates and coal-owners in their attempt to break the keelmen's strikes, letters from various individuals with regard to keelmen, accounts of incidents during the strikes and evidence to be used in prosecuting striking keelmen. Also contained are accounts of keelmen's wages and their petitions with regard to particular grievances.

Public Record Office Correspondence between the magistrates and other interested individuals of Tyneside and Wearside and the Home Office, with regard the strikes of 1819 and 1822 is contained in H.O.40/17, 41/5, 41/7, 42/99, 42/196 and 42/197.

Northumberland County Archives. Minutes of the Coal Trade of the Tyne and Wear -nineteenth century- contains accounts of decisions of the trade during the various strikes. Occasional mention of keelmen in other MSS.

North of England Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineers Bell and Watson Collections contain handbills, newspaper cuttings and various comments relating to the keelmen, with accounts and rules of their charity. Bundle Collection material on the keelmen in relation to the various collieries with for which Bundle acted as mining engineer and agent. Miscellaneous Coal Trade papers, 1812-1834 (ZB20) - volume of handbills and addresses of relating to the keelmen.

Newcastle Reference Library. Letters to John Buddle. Seymour Bell Collection relating to the Tyne. Records of the keelmen's Hospital.

Society of Antiquities of Newcastle upon Tyne. Volume containing handbills and songs relating to the keelmen. (Blackgate Library, M.12c17a and M.17.31)

D.J. Rowe, University of Newcastle upon Tyne.

## THE SHIPWRIGHTS

This note is a brief introduction to the following local labour history documents and the workers with which they are chiefly concerned the shipwrights.

The shipwrights are one of the oldest continuous crafts in existence and they have occupied a very important position in North East ports for many centuries, they have been a very significant part of the labour force of Sunderland since the fourteenth century and their privilege of 'an allowance' was traced back by the South Shields historian Hodgson to the times of Elizabeth I. In contrast to the local engineering workers shipwrights organised in trade union at an early stage. The South Shields rules for 1795 are those of a friendly society but the trade union possibilities of this organisation are not difficult to imagine. In 1824 some 400 Shields men were involved in the strike of 17 weeks duration on the issue of apprenticeship and the Webbs noted that the shipwrights of Newcastle were among those groups of workers who in 1825 resisted attempts to re-impose the old rigour of the Combination Laws. The men of the Wear organised in 1833 but the union failed. In 1846 the shipwrights at Sunderland organised their association which maintained a separate existence until 1907 despite the formation of the national union of shipwrights in 1882.

When in 1851 the 'Sunderland Herald' wrote: 'The Tyne shipwright... were pretty well known as close unionists', the leader writer might have added the same of his own town for the census of that year returned 1372 men over 20 as shipwrights and the union membership was nearly 1200, allowance needs to be made in census figures for those whose apprenticeship was not complete and those who was retired from work. But yet he is closely organised men lost their pre-eminence to the iron shipbuilders, (who were members of the Boilermakers Society) with the minimum of industrial strife in terms of strikes or lock-outs.

The shipwrights were very proud craftsmen, who supplied many of their own tools, whose organisation enable them to retain day wage rates when almost the whole of the shipbuilding industry moved over to piecework payments; they probably lost earnings thereby but they retained the pride of their craft. Local employers paid tribute to the character and quality of these men. e.g. Sir George Hunter (trans. N.E. Coast Inst. of Engineers and Shipbuilders Vol. XXIV p.96). They were especially concerned to protect the period of apprenticeship rather than the ratio of apprentices to journeymen. They were especially devoted to the wooden vessel. Sir Westcott Abell, in his final work 'The Shipwrights Trade' (Cambridge 1948) constructs a dialogue between a shipwright and a boilermaker (pp 108-110) there were many such arguments in reality. Some of this emerges in 'Causes of Distress Amongst Shipwrights...' by 'An Operative Shipwright' (Sunderland 1858); this is in the Sunderland Reference Library. A further worthwhile work from the same hand is 'A Defence of Trade Unions in General and the Sunderland Shipwrights in Particular' also in Sunderland library.

Although the shipwrights were organised in local societies up to 1883, they were in contact with each other as was noted by the local press in 1851 and confirmed by their national Secretary to the Royal Commission on Labour 1892-4. In 1855 there was a nationally represented meeting held in Newcastle.

The standing of the organisation of these men was such that in 1858 the local press reported telegraphic message from the Secretary of the Navy seeking workers from the secretary of Sunderland shipwrights. Until the coming of iron shipbuilding many shipyard came into existence by partnerships of shipwrights finance often by timber merchants. Nearly all shipbuilders had served recognised apprenticeships and were proud of their manual skills. The wood yard tended to be a yard of craftsmen.

It is not now possible to present a comprehensive guide to material on shipwrights in the north-east but there is a guide to some of the material in my thesis mentioned below.

#### Articles of Shipwrights Association of South Shields 1795

This printed pamphlet is in the South Shields library (classification L p.334. 7/4) and contains marginal summaries to each clause which are omitted below. Friendly societies were very common in the North East and were probably for some workers a form of substitute for trade unions. The Historian of Wallsend William Richardson recorded that one such society founded at Howdon Panns, mainly for shipwrights, in January 1810 still existed in 1923. The rules reproduced below limited membership strictly to those who had served 'a regular apprenticeship to Shipwrights'...

(sec.II), and while representing fairly typical rules of such Friendly Societies it also included the special needs of shipwright.

#### Working Rules etc. of Tyne Shipwrights 1850

Those printed rules are also in the South Shields library. They show the detailed manner in which the shipwrights set out their working conditions, the close attention to apprenticeship matters and the precise way certain trades are excluded from work tasks the shipwrights considered are theirs (see rules 33 and 34). This rule revision resulted in a dispute and strike on Tyneside where a number of employers unsuccessfully tried to resist seven year apprenticeship regulation. (see local papers Feb. 4th to March 4th 1851 Newcastle Courant and Sunderland Herald).

#### General Laws of Wear Shipwrights 1860

This printed pamphlet located in the Sunderland Reference Library in Vol.4 of their collection of local pamphlets (class: L042/154). These are divided into two parts - general regulations and specific rules to the port. Local port variations continued to be a matter of considerable importance in the north east throughout the nineteenth century, during which time most employers were inclined to respect local custom of the port. There are many similarities with the previous rules but also the local variations e.g. exclusion of politics in general rule 12; in local rule 9 there is special reference to limitations of 'labourers' this was because the Wear men had difficulties with the introduction of Irish immigrants to do certain work, which they wished to retain.

#### Wear Shipbuilders and Shipwright Board of 1853-54

This board was one of the earliest attempts at industrial conciliation in the United Kingdom and was successful in many ways including laying down decisions which were respected at least eight years later (see p.39). This Board has been briefly referenced to in number of works and its final breakdown incorrectly recorded. The close relations of masters and men as well seen in this Board and indeed one of the three chairman William Knott was a local foreman blacksmith - the employers were prepared to accept the arbitration of a workman. This was the precursor of many very successful Conciliation Boards in the North East and the discussion of this Board in the local press is of considerable interest.

There were at this time 45 shipbuilders and about 1500 Shipwrights on the Wear. Many of these points are more fully discussed with reference to my thesis 'Labour Relations in Engineering and Shipbuilding in the North East Coast in the second half of the 19th century'. (Newcastle upon Tyne 1966)  
J.F. Clark, Rutherford College of Technology

Copy of the Articles of the Shipwrights' Association in South Shields - Established in the 16th day of March 1795 for Mutual Relief and also for the Relief of their Widows and Children.

Articles of Agreement, indented, had, made and agreed upon this sixteenth day of March, in the thirty fifth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord George the Third by the Grace of God, of Great Britain, France and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith and so forth and in the year of Our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety five, by and between the several Persons whose Names are hereunto subscribed (that is to say)

We the several subscribers hereof, been willing and desirous to make some provision for ourselves and families in case of sickness, affliction, misfortune, old age or death had entered into a firm league, covenant, promise and agreement to unite and associate ourselves into a society for relief and support of such of us as be affiliated with sickness or accidental misfortune, or overtaken by old age, and also for the relief of our widows and children by the name of 'Shipwrights' Association in South Shields in the county of Durham'.

That the said association shall not be dissolved so long as any five members shall choose to remain and continue in the same; and that due regard shall be had, and care taken to admit only such as are healthful and of good character, and can be prove themselves by certificates, if required under forty five years of age; and that the names of such as the desire to enter, any be taken with their money any one meeting, but not that he or they shall be admitted till the next meeting, when upon inquiry, he or they are found qualified as above.

Section I And that each member shall keep and perform the several agreements and payments hereby, on each member part, agreed to be paid, kept, done and performed and that the number of members of this association, shall consist of so many shipwrights as the majority of this association at any meeting shall think proper; and that each perform upon his admission, shall pay into the fund the sum of two shillings and six pence; and after fifty members shall have entered each person upon his admittance shall pay into the fund the sum of five shillings.

Section II That for the good regulations of this society, Thomas Purvis, George Wilson, John Hendry, Edward Harrison, George Gray, William Stephenson, Robert Forrest, Joseph Davidson William Copley, Matthew Moffat, Alexander Thomson, Henry Arrowsmith, John Huntersdas, James Hendry and Jason Dodds, shall be a committee for managing affairs and funds thereof until the annual meetings in January next and the determination only two or more of such committee shall be binding and conclusive to all the other members, unless be annulled to a majority of the members at any meeting and that no person shall be admitted a member unless he has served in regular apprenticeship to a Shipwright,

and the requisition for his admittance, signed by two of the committee. And the said committee and all future committees do hereby covenant, promise, and agreed to and with each other, that they and each of them shall, will, well, and truly discharge their office according to the true meaning of the rules of this association and apply to the funds and contributions to be raised, to the purposes of thereof.

Section III That a meeting of such of the members as shall be at home, shall be held on the first Monday, in every six weeks, from the date hereof, at the house of Mr. George Wilson in South Shields with good and sufficient usage to the company (so long as he keeps a public house) at seven o'clock in the evening, to transact business of the association, and each member should then pay into the box or fund of the company the sum of ten pence for every twenty shillings he shall then have earned, one halfpenny for every shilling, he shall then have earned per week, month or voyage, which payment shall be made weekly by those who work on the shore - and such members as to go to sea and ship by the month, shall pay at the conclusion of every month and such as a ship by the voyage, shall pay at the conclusion of the voyage or voyages, on the arrival at South Shields: and no member shall proceed on another voyage till the former is paid, upon pain of forfeiting to the fund six shillings for such neglect. And in case of any member shall conceal or deny any part of such earnings, to defraud the company, upon proof being made thereof to the satisfaction of the majority of the members then present, such members offending, shall pay up the money deficient and also forfeit and pay into the box or fund, and the sum of one pound and one shilling for every such offence, or otherwise excluded.

Section IIII And every member, not paying up, what is due from him, to the company as a aforesaid in the space of six months it shall and may be lawful for the majority of the members present, at the first six weeks meeting, at or after the expiration of such six months to exclude and expel such member or members, so in arrears as aforesaid, from and out of this company or association, by writing under their hands to be entered in the book of the company and a two copy thereof, delivered to the party or parties offending, or left for him or them, at his or their usual place of residence, within three days from and after such entry and such member or members so excluded shall forfeit all the money he or they shall have then paid into the fund of the company, for the benefit of the same and shall from henceforth be absolutely discharged from any further payments there etc. and shall be totally debarred from receiving any benefit therefrom. And at the said the first six weeks meeting a clerk shall be appointed (during pleasure) to keep he accounts and transact the business of the association, and each member shall spend two pence present of absent and pay the clerk five pounds per annum, who shall attend for that purpose, of send a sufficient deputy, or forfeit two shillings and six pence to the fund.

#### Section V

That a strong box shall be provided to hold the company's stock, which shall have three different locks and keys, and a key to each lock be delivered to three different members of this association who shall be nominated for that purpose, by a majority of the company, which box shall be committed into the care and charge of the said George Wilson, innkeeper, in South Shields, and the said George Wilson shall enter into and execute a bond with sufficient sureties, in such penalty as the majority of members shall think necessary for the safe production of the same, and the contents thereof, and which shall never be opened or shut, but in the presence of the said George Wilson, his wife, or some person employed by him for that purpose.

#### Section VI

That if any member shall happen to be shipwrecked and the ship lost, such member shall be entitled to receive from the fund of this association, the sum of eight pounds, provided such a member shall have been in this association for the term of two years, or upwards, before the time of such loss, and not otherwise, or in case any member shall belong to any ship which shall be stranded and got off again, the loss which the member has sustained, shall be proved to the satisfaction of the committee, who thereupon shall make a reasonable recompense to the suffering member according to the circumstances of the case, not exceeding eight pounds; and when the recompense to be made, is agreed upon, it shall then be paid as ordered, and if any member or members in the said Association, are heard all found at any time hereafter, finding fault with such sums been settled upon, according to this rule, they shall be fined five shillings; and in order to keep up the said fund, each money as aforesaid, pay into the said fund the sum of one shilling apiece.

#### Section VII

That in any case any member after been a member for two years happen to be taken by an enemy, such member shall receive out of the fund of this association the sum of eight pounds, and shall also receive the sum of six shillings per week, so long as he or they shall be detained in prison by such an enemy, and on payment and in order to keep up the said fund, each member shall pay to the same the sum of one shilling.

#### Section VIII

That if any member or members as aforesaid, shall, through sickness, accidental misfortune, or old age (after being a member for one year) become unable to follow his or their employments, such member or members shall receive from the fund of the company, the sum of seven shillings per week commencing at the end of the first week's illness, during the time of his or their affliction, or for life if unable to make a sufficient endeavour for a livelihood.

#### Section IX

That if any member or members shall happen to die, (after he or they shall have been a member hereof for the term of one year or upwards) his or their widow or widows shall be entitled to receive from, and out of the fund of this association, so long as she or they shall continue a widow or widow the annuity or yearly sum of £10 each, but not to receive this said annual money, till the end of three years from the date of his first becoming a member and then entitled to one year's pay, unless the deceased member shall have belonged to this society for two years or upwards, the first payment to be made at the end of the first year from his decease. And when the fund shall amount to one thousand pounds, the widow of each deceased member shall receive fifteen pounds annually, and any such widow or widow's shall, and may be at liberty to draw and receive from the fund of this association, immediately on the decease of her or their husbands, the sum of five pounds, to be deducted or retained out of her or their first years annuity.

#### Section X

And in case any member or members, having been in this association for the term of one year or upwards, shall happen to die, leaving no widow or leaving a widow, who shall die, the child or children of such deceased member or members shall for so long as the youngest of them remains under the age of fourteen years, received from the fund of this association, the same annuities as the widow or widows would have been entitled to, and in case any such children being orphans shall (though above fourteen years of age) be incapable of getting their livelihood by reasons of lameness, blindness, or other misfortunes, acquired before that age, then such children shall be paid a sum not less than one shilling and sixpence a week, for and during his or her natural life, and in making such payments, regard shall be made to the funds and growing contributions, so that they shall not be exceeded by making a proportionate deduction from all the payments before mentioned.

#### Section XI

That if any member or members shall happen to die, not having been in this society for a term of one year, the money he or they shall then have paid into the box or fund of this association, shall be returned to his widow or descendant, and if no widow or descendant, shall belong to the fund.

#### Section XII

That upon the payment of any such money as aforesaid, each person receiving the same shall pay into the box or fund the sum of one shilling.

#### Section XIII

That the business and affairs of this association (not settled by the committee, or any two or more of them) shall be proposed and carried by a majority of votes, of the members present at such meetings of the company as aforesaid, and if any member or members shall propose to break up the company or association, or to share the money out of the box or fund, or even to borrow money from the fund,

XIII (cond)

without tendering a sufficient security or shall not agree to the determination of the company, or to any matter regularly voted and carried as aforesaid, or shall receive any benefit from the fund unworthily, or shall break these articles, or do any matter of thing, whatsoever, tending to deceive, defraud or injure all or any of the members of this association, shall be excluded or expelled from this association, by the committee for the time being or any two or more of them, and shall forfeit all the money he or they have then paid into the fund of this association.

Section XIV

That if at any meeting any member strike at another member in anger, he shall forfeit the sum of five shillings, and if both or more strikes at each other, they shall forfeit five shillings apiece, and if any member at any meeting of the company, shall swear or talk obscenely, or keeps not his seat and silence when demanded, such member or members so offending shall forefoot sixpence each, to be paid into the fund of this association; and if any member shall know any cause why any person proposing to enter into this association should not be admitted which if divulged, would prevent him; and also if any member shall declare to any rejected or other person what was the cause of his being refused, or who mentioned the same, both a member who shall not divulge the same to the society and the member who afterwards shall make the same known, shall be immediately fined one guinea and upon the denial of paying the said fine, without sufficient reason, to the satisfaction of the society shall be immediately excluded, and the company which he or they have paid into the fund of this association.

Section XV

That if any member shall reflect upon another, for not having paid so much to the box or funds he or any other hath paid such member shall forfeit and pay to the fund the sum of five shillings for every said offence.

Section XVI

That upon the death of any member, the other members at home shall attend his funeral, or pay a fine of the shilling to the fund. That a general meeting of all the members of this association shall be held on the fifteenth day of January in every year, at the house where the box is kept for the time being, at which time a committee of fifteen members, who shall have been parties hereto for the term of one year or upwards, shall be voted and appointed to transact the business of the company for the ensuing year, and the determination of any two or more of such committee respecting the business of the company or association, shall be binding and conclusive to all the other members, and shall not be annulled or reversed but by a majority of the whole members of parties hereto of this association, and such annual meeting shall have power to make bye-laws and regulations, and every member shall then by himself or proxy, pay two shillings and sixpence to defray the expense thereof, and shall also pay up all arrears that day or be excluded.

Section XVII

That in each case any member shall die having no wife or child his next of kin, or such persons as the member may buy will direct, shall be paid sixteen pounds, within the three months provided the deceased was a member twelve months, and complied with the rules of this association.

Section XVIII

That the contributions to be raised, shall be placed out at interest, or in the funds, in the name or names of such of the committee as shall be agreed upon, in truth nevertheless for the purposes of the Association.

Section XIX

That no person (who is not a member of the society) shall be admitted into the society-room, during the time of meeting, but by the consent of the majority of votes then present.

Section XX

That if any member shall come into the society room disguised in liquor, he shall forfeit one shilling.

Section XXI

That if any members shall have the venereal disease, he shall have no benefit from the society during the time of such ailment.

Section XXII

That if any member shall find a patient at any unlawful or unsuitable exercise, not consistent with his or their illness, when receiving benefit from the association, such members evidence shall be sufficient on that affair to the company and they to judge upon it.

Section XXIII

And if any member be notoriously immoral or irregular so as they shall be hurtful to the site association, by the said irregularities such as adultery, theft, murder, fornication, so as such crimes can be fairly proved, such members shall be excluded.

Section XXIV

If any member out of town shall fall sick, such person shall signify the same to the society by certificate, under the hands of the doctor, parson, church-warden, overseers, or other credible neighbours, from the day of the illness, and have the same signed weekly by any of the above mentioned, as long as they receive the benefits of the box; and the said certificate to be sent to the company; members going to sea excepted, who are to be allowed one month from the first warning, and to be sent to the society every fourteen days after, signed by the master, mate or any other credible person on board.

Section XXV

That if any member's wife die a natural death, who hath two years a member in this association, he shall receive the sum of two pounds towards her funeral expense; and if no wife shall receive it for the death of his mother, once and no more for either.

Section XXVI

That in case any member shall be impressed into His Majesty's service, after he has been two years a member of this association, his wife, child or children shall be entitled to three shillings a week, during the time he is in the said service, but if such impressed member shall have no wife, child or children, he shall have the said benefits for his mother, if she is a widow, and have no annuity, estate, income or provision whatsoever.

Section XXVII

If after a free member is impressed he enlists and receives the King's bounty his heirs shall be entitled as before expressed, but if he enters voluntarily, either in sea or land service, without being first impressed, he, and his apparent heirs shall be excluded every benefit.

WORKING RULES, ORDERS AND REGULATIONS OF THE SHIPWRIGHTS OF THE PORT OF THE TYNE.

Revised and corrected September 1850

We, the Shipwrights of this port, taking into serious consideration, that man is formed a social being, and that the Sovereign Ruler of nature has pleased to place us in life dependent upon each other, and in continual need of mutual assistance and support, do severally agree to form ourselves into a Society to aid and assist each other; and do hereby severally and respectively bind and oblige ourselves to observe, fulfil and perform, and keep all and singular the Rules, Orders, Regulations, Clauses, Stipulations, and Agreements herein after mentioned, expressed, declared and contained that is to say:

1. That no one admitted a member unless he can produce a legal seven years indenture, or a few lines to specify he has served seven years as a regular shipwright and such apprentice to enter the society when he has served his time, or at the place where he resides.
2. That we will not countenance the taking of any apprentices after fifteen years of age, and then wages not to exceed ten shillings during the last year of the apprenticeship.
3. That we will not work with anyone that is not a member of the Society, except he be the carpenter of the ship, and if the ship be in dock such carpenter to work by himself and not come to work amongst the men.
4. That if any member or members belonging to this society take any piecework, or solicit for any of any master in this river, he or they shall be suspended during the society's pleasure.
5. That no berths we set off for any work except caulking, but every man to assist each other as far as lies in his power.
6. In Caulking new work the scale for regular day's work for 4 inch, 3 inch and two and a half inch planks from 40 to forty-five feet; for two inch plank from forty-five to fifty feet; and for four decks eighty feet and not to exceed the last mentioned number of feet on any account.
7. In caulking old work the scale to be for a regular day's work 70 feet, and not to exceed it on any account, and 80 feet of sheathing.
8. In caulking old decks the scale to be for a regular day's work 90 feet.
9. When caulking on a Saturday from 8 to 10 feet less to be caulked, all man to cease work at four o'clock.
10. That the remaining wedge money for caulking new ships be for vessels 600 tons and upwards four shillings but below 600 tons two shillings to each man that is caulking; if one set of men caulk both sides of a vessel to be entitled to double riming wedge money.

11. That should any man caulk 40 feet any way at a new ship and not at regular caulking, to be entitled to his riming wedge money, except he leaves of his own account.
12. In caulking new ships where beadles are used the master to find these for the use of the men.
13. That the riming wedge money for caulking 40 feet of new work at an old ship be one shilling and sixpence and ninepence for caulking 20 feet; and should the ship be re-planked from gunwale to keel the scale to be the same as the new ship.
14. That all the men working on a new ship during the time of caulking the deck, the top, or bends have their allowances and when the seam below of the bends, is caulked the allowance to be continued until the ship is finished.
15. All masters to provide an allowance house for the men, likewise pots, and the allowance to be served out twice a day if required, and no man to receive his allowance on board of ships; and any man wilfully damaging or destroying any of the articles belonging to it to be at the expense of replacing them.
16. That anyone going on board of the vessel to caulk in coal ports, that one shilling each to be charged for them, except deck ports are to be charged sixpence each; and no man to caulk ports by the day except he be working at the ship. Raft point and bow ports to be caulked by the day.
17. That for blocking vessels on the shore, each man employed to have a half days pay for every tide employed blocking.
18. That for docking or getting a vessel on the ship, a half days pay will be required, and for a quarter day for undocking or putting a vessel off the ship; and if the men attend and nothing done, a quarter day's pay will be required for attending.
19. In regard to tides' work the men to start work as soon as the water leaves the vessel, and to work until the water puts them off again for a tides work, but if working up with the tide to be a tide and a half a day at high water.
20. That for a tide's work the men to commence work soon as the vessel takes the ground, and to work until low water, but if they continue to work on the shore until the water puts them off, to be a tide and half a day, and should they go up with the tide to be two tides at high water.
21. All work under the floating marks of the vessel to come under the rule of tides' work; the rule for caulking at tides' work to be the same as days' work, provided there is time to do it in; no man to go both tides on one tide except in looking for a leak.
22. In blacking vessels on the shore no sailors to be allowed to black along with the shipwrights.

23. In regard to getting vessels off the strand, the payments to be not less than five shillings per tide with regular allowance and three tights, the tide the vessel comes off, and if the man be three miles from the harbour mouth meat and lodgings to be provided for them.
24. In regard to getting vessels off the strand, should the vessel be washed up to high water mark six hours to be considered a tides work.
25. That for working any vessel on a Sunday every man to receive a double day, and if working at a vessel on the strand on a Sunday and she comes off on that day only four tides to be charged, that is the double tide when the tide is down.
26. That if anyone going away from home to get a vessel off the strand, all days pay will be required until they arrive home again, Sunday is likewise whether they work it or not.
27. That half past eleven be the half day time for leaving or commencing work, except on a Saturday, and then the half day to be half past ten and the three quarter day at half past twelve when, we hath to leave off for any cause.
28. That at the finishing off any vessel, if she cannot be done by 11 o'clock a whole day's pay will be required. Except on a Saturday then to be no half days; at the finishing of any vessel, the men to be told that night when done.
29. That we will not work overtime while there are any men off work belonging to this society, except at the finishing off a vessel and then the quarter day if required.
30. That if any member of this society be discharged from his work and another man goes to his work, he shall forfeit every day's pay as long as he continues at the same work.
31. That if any getting work at home or from home, he shall continue at the said work until his work is finished.
32. That no member be allowed to come from a new ship to an old one, nor while there are any off work, to go from one all ship to another except their work is finishing.
33. That no joiner be allowed to make iron knee moulds, build chain trucks, lay half-deck or forecastle floors, and bulwark round the bows, or build stems up in any new or old ship, or build bulkheads in any old ship when any member or members are working.
34. That no blockmaker be allowed to cut hawseholes out, nor millwrights to put hawse pipes in where any member or members are working.
35. That no member go into any of the docks, yards, or ships, to look for employment after 12.30 pm.

36. Any member going from home to work must carry his contribution card with him, for he will not be allowed to start work if he be found four meetings in arrears.
37. During the winter quarter that is from the 11th November to the 2nd February the meal times half an hour to breakfast and three quarter hour to dinner.

GENERAL LAWS OF THE WEAR SHIPWRIGHTS' BENEVOLENT SOCIETY

Institute 1846 and revised 1860  
Bishopwearmouth  
Printed by J. Huntley, 238, High Street 1860

We, the Shipwrights of the Wear, resident in or near the town of Sunderland, in the County of Durham, who by ourselves, or our respective agents, shall sign and execute these presents taking it into our serious consideration that man is formed a social being, and that the Sovereign Ruler of the World has been pleased to place us in life depending on each other and in continual need of mutual aid and support, do severally agree to for ourselves into a Friendly and Benevolent Society, for our relief in old age, sickness and infirmity; and we hereby severally and collectively agree to observe, fulfil, perform and keep all, and singular, the articles, rules, orders, regulations, clauses, provisos, stipulations, and agreements hereinafter mentioned expressed and declared.

1. That this Society consist of Journeymen Shipwrights. Any Shipwright on entering shall pay the sum of £4 entrance fee (one half to be paid down, the remainder by instalments at five shillings per week, allowing three months from the date of his entry) and contribute one year to the Society at one shilling per month, shall then become a free member. Any young man having finished his apprenticeship of seven years in a shipbuilding yard shall be admitted a full member of this Society on paying five shillings entrance fee, and one month's contribution, providing he applies within fourteen days after the termination of his apprenticeship; but after that period he shall pay the sum of four pounds, the same as any other journeymen on entering this Society. And should any member or members die before they have contributed one year to this Society, the monies they shall have then paid will be returned to their relations.
2. All shipwrights on entering this society must apply to the general committee and produce an indenture or sufficient proof in writing as to their servitude; and should any member propose a man to become a member of this Society, who has not served a legal apprenticeship of seven years, will be fined twenty shillings.
3. That this society shall be properly and strictly governed by one code of laws, and actuated by one spirit of fraternity, and for

convenience shall be divided into separate branches to suit local circumstances, each branch having a local secretary, auditors, and two stewards to conduct the business. And that the stewards be chosen every three months, leaving one of the old stewards in office to give instructions, to the new.

4. That this Society consists of the following Branches, viz.:-  
Sunderland No.1., Sunderland NO.2., Bishopwearmouth, Ballast Hills, Deptford, Southwick, Monkwearmouth No.1., and Monkwearmouth No.2., and no more shall be opened without the approval of a general meeting. Also the secretary of each branch to forward his accounts to the General Secretary every three months, the accounts to be produced by him at the annual meeting.
5. That each branch be provided with a strong box with three locks, each different from the other, to hold the Society's funds, each of the stewards to keep a key (for the time being) and the treasurer who shall keep possession of the box shall have a key also, and shall enter into a bond, if required, for the safe production of the said box, and its contents thereof.
6. That the delegates composing the general committee be collected by their respective branches, one per cent, for the period of six months to meet every Tuesday evening in Sunderland and every Wednesday evening in Monkwearmouth, or as often as the business of the Society requires them, five of whom shall form a quorum and should business be of such importance that the articles do not provide, nor the committee able to determine, in such case the president shall direct the general secretary to summon a general meeting with all possible despatch, at which meeting the business will be discussed, and finally settled by a majority of the members then present by the ballot.
7. That no member shall be allowed to hold any office should he be three months arrears of contributions, levies, etc. to this Society.
8. That the General committee shall hold their meetings where they deem most convenient, the time of the meeting to be from February 14th to October 21st, from half past seven till half past nine, and from October 21st to February 14th from seven till nine in the evening. The chair to be taken a quarter of an hour after the above mentioned time; and all reports or communications received per general secretary shall be read to the committee, they taking the accounts to their respective Branches. Any member of the committee being absent at a general meeting shall be fined sixpence, unless sufficient reason given for his non-attendance.
9. It shall be the duty of the stewards to attend and paid all monies for the relief of members, and for non-attendance shall be fined sixpence, unless sufficient reason be shown for such absence.

10. Should any member reflect on the conduct of another while endeavouring for the welfare of the Society, whether in or out of the branch-room, to the injuries of such member, and cannot, after a proper hearing for that purpose, bring forward due proof of the fact, or shall discourse or repeat any act or speech shall be transacted or said respecting this Society, to the injury of it or any of its members, and in any such case he, the offender, shall pay a fine of five shillings; and any member considering himself aggrieved may call a general meeting for the purpose of redress, on a requisition signed by six members.
11. That in order to prevent fraud, no member shall receive any benefit from this Society should he be three months in arrears in contributions, levies, or fines, unless such member has been unable through want of employment. Any member being out of employment one month, by attending his monthly meeting with sufficient proof of the same, shall have his card marked as such, providing he is not three months in arrears at the time of his unemployment, and shall pay all his unemployment arrears when he obtains employment; and any member being sick one month, by sending his card with a doctor's certificate of the same, shall be exempt from contributing, and his card marked sick, provided he be in compliance at the time of his taking ill, and during such sickness he shall be considered a good member, but should the unemployed or sick neglect to have the card duly marked as above, will be considered in arrears.
12. That to prevent all party contention, the members of the Society will not interfere in matters of religion or politics, or allow any such subjects to be introduced into any of their meetings. Should any member attempt to break this article, he shall be called to order by the president. Should he persist in his attempt, he shall be fined sixpence, and on a obstinate perseverance, a further fine of one shilling over and above the first fine; and should such member still continue his violent and disorderly conduct he shall, he shall be compelled to leave the room.
13. That should any member of this Society go to Sea, he shall make all his payments good up to the time of his going away, and shall appoint someone to pay to him while absent, or leave a promissory note or card with the general secretary, that on his return he will pay up all arrears due to the Society, will be considered a good member, and entitled to all the privileges of this Society; and should any member return home, or to any port in the United Kingdom, he shall forward his arrears to the General Secretary, naming the Branch of which he is a member; but should any member, in either case, neglect paying his arrears more than one month after his return from sea, he shall be fined two shillings and sixpence, and excluded from all benefits of this Society until arrears and fines are paid; should any member suffer shipwreck he should apply to the General secretary and produce a certificate of the same and if the Committee consider the appeal just, he shall be allowed one pound towards purchasing tools, if lost; and should any member enter Her Majesties Service he shall be treated as a sea member; and any member who may lose his tools by fire shall receive the afore named sum towards replacing them.

14. That any member of this Society being two years and upwards in arrears, and has not reported himself as directed in the eleventh article, shall re-enter as a new member, except a member at sea, and he must conform to the thirteenth article.
15. That on the death of a member, his wife, mother or nominee, or whoever the member had appointed, shall receive the sum of ten pounds. At the death of a member's wife, mother or nominee that said member shall receive the sum of three pounds, the remaining seven to be kept in the funds till his death - those sums to be paid once and no more. The nominee when appointed to be above the age of twenty and under forty, but a member's wife or mother to be taken at any age. Two or more members shall not be entitled to the benefit at the death of a mother or nominee; the death gift to be advanced out of the funds of the Branch the member belonged to, and each branch to receive a notice for the proportionate share towards the deceased member, wife or nominee, the nearest kin will be entitled to the benefit, and the committee shall see it properly applied.
16. That should any member of the Society receive an accident whereby he is unable to follow his trade any more, provided such accident is not caused through drunkenness, gambling, fighting or misconduct, he shall receive the sum of thirty pounds, to assist the disabled member in getting in some business to procure a livelihood and that above some be taken out of the Branch funds, and levied on the whole body according to the last quarters report, on making application to the general committee, who shall convene a special committee meeting for the purpose of investigation; should the committee, after having investigated the case, be of the opinion that the applicant is legally entitled to the benefits aforesaid they shall direct the general secretary to summon a general meeting for their approval or disapproval or. The committee shall see that the levy be properly applied. And should any member without his contributions after he has received the aforementioned benefit, he shall not be entitled to any further benefits connected with this Society. Any member permanently losing his eye sight, shall be eligible for the benefit.
17. Should any member returned to his business after he has received the disabled benefit, shall be compelled to refund the full amount received, by instalments at one shilling per working day.
18. That if any member, finding employment independent of the business, and clear of all demand due to the Society shall give notice in writing to the general secretary or committee that he intends to withhold his payments from the Society, and if wishful at any future period to return to the business again, he shall pay half of the admission fee in demand and become a free member of the society.
19. That this society shall not be dissolved so long as six members consider the intents and purposes good, and all persons entitled to benefit or relief testify their accordance with the same; nor shall any division or distribution of stock or funds, or any part thereof, be made amongst the members, otherwise than for carrying out the general intents and purposes of the Society, herein declared; and no member who is not in compliance with the rules of this Society be entitled to vote. Any member proposing, aiding or abetting to the contrary, shall be liable to a fine not exceeding five shillings and not less than two shillings

and sixpence and that no alteration be made to the foregoing rules, but such as shall be warranted by the statutes now in force. And that every member shall yield implicit obedience to the majority; and any member refusing to comply with the decision or lawful proceedings of a meeting, such member defined sixpence, and those rules be binding on every member of this Society. Should any officer or member attempt to deface or alter the true intents or meanings of these rules, or part of them, he shall be fined one shilling for the first offence two shillings for the second and five shillings for the third.

20. That the anniversary of this Society be held on Whit Monday at half past nine o'clock a.m. Chair to be taken half an hour after the above named time.
21. That all members of this Society who may be desirous of obtaining employment in any other port or place, must apply to the general secretary, and enquire into the state of the port or place, if such place or port be in dispute, the general secretary shall give notice of the same should any member act contrary to the notice received, he shall be dealt with as a general meeting directs. And should any member or members go to work in another port, they must comply with the rules or customs of that port; should they violate the rules or customs of that port, they will then be liable to any fine, according to the laws of that Society in whose jurisdiction they are then working.
22. That every member of this Society should consider he has a duty to perform in assisting to consolidate this Society, it is most earnestly requested that every member will assist the committee in the execution of their duty to the utmost of their power, in all the matters tended to the good of the society.

N.B. The foregoing rules shall be binding and conclusive to all intents and purposes on all members of this Society, and that all former rules will become 'nil' after the first day of January 1861 and as every member must have a book of rules at admission, no plea of ignorance will be allowed against any of the penalties contained herein. Any member losing his book of rules can have another by paying threepence.

BYE LAWS TO BE OBSERVED BY THE SHIPWRIGHTS OF THE WEAR.

1. That any member or members of this Society being on partial strike, shall receive half of the current rate of wages per day, for two months, after which it shall be reduced to half of the aforementioned rate. Any member being at work three days or upwards in an established yard, or refusing to accept a job when offered him, his strike money shall immediately cease.
2. That no member shall take upon himself to act for the Society in any manner whatever, should he be applied to by any person for advice, he must refer such person to the general committee or secretary.
3. That in the event of a dispute for wages, members so involved shall receive such sums as a general meeting or committee of management for the time shall decide upon. All members employed in the port shall pay the amount of difference which caused such a dispute into the funds of the Society, for the support of those who may be unemployed; members employed in any other port or non-resident, shall pay half the differences; sea members shall pay two

shillings to every pound earned during the dispute, such differences or monies to be paid for the first day the dispute takes place, or the men cease work, till the termination of same. Any member neglecting to report himself at the time appointed by the committee, shall forfeit that week's payment except such member be from home seeking employment, which must be proved at the time of the application.

4. That should any member or members withhold their payments or any part of them, or neglect to report themselves during a dispute, shall pay the full amount of the levy at the termination thereof, and shall forfeit all benefits connected with this Society until their payments are made good.

5. That if any member or members refuse or leave a job that they have been employed at during a dispute, shall not be entitled to any payment until the job is finished.

6. That if any member or members of this Society shall take any piece-work or solicit for any anywhere where a branch of this Society exists, he or they shall be fined one pound severally, and other members working in the same yard shall call a meeting according to rule 10<sup>th</sup>, who shall decide what steps to take, and if any members loses time according to the sanction of the above mentioned meeting, he or they shall receive one-half of the aforementioned rate, the same to be paid by levies on the whole body.

7. Any member commencing work in the morning previous to the usual time of starting, or leaving the yard before five o'clock, except from the first of February to the first of November, when no man shall leave the yard before half past four o'clock p.m. and that all men be found with six riming wedges. If the men be removed from one side of the vessel to the other, they will be entitled to double wedge money.

8. That if any member or members take their tail and wedge out of the seam, or commence another before all hands are ready, to be fined sixpence each for the first seam, one shilling for the second; and so on for every additional seam except for those who might be placed at the fore and oft ends of the vessel.

9. That no labourer be allowed to carry any prepared material, make stages, lay or assist to lay ways or any other shipwright's work. Any member or foreman allowing labourers to do any portion of the aforementioned work shall be fined two shillings and sixpence for the first offence etc.

10. That should any member be in arrears of contributions, levies or fines, to the amount of one pound, shall pay one fourth down, the remainder by instalments at sixpence per working day. And any man having received notice to attend a general or committee meeting, and refuse or neglect to attend, shall pay threepence for additional notice received after the first. All monies taken by the committee are made tangible when received. Any member being six months in arrears must pay the same at the branch room on the night specified on his card.

11. All members must produce their card of membership on entry to a general meeting, and that two members be chosen out of the general committee as doorkeepers. Any member of the committee refusing to comply when duly elected be fined sixpence.

12. That a general show of cards take place throughout the river on the first Monday in each month, and that two members be appointed to inspect the same, and report those four months in arrears to the general committee of the district they are working. Any member changed his job must produce his card of membership previous to commencing work.

13. Any member being requested to move or moor a vessel after being launched to be paid tide's work.

14. That on Saturdays it is considered the half day completed at eleven o'clock a.m., and three quarter day at two o'clock p.m.

15. That this society do not countenance the taking of apprentices above the age of fourteen years; those taken under the prescribed age shall not enter upon this servitude until they attain the age of fourteen years; and that all apprentices must be initiated in the Society's book on entering a shipbuilding yard.

16. That after the 29th June 1855, all apprentices receiving above ten shillings per week in their seventh or last year of servitude shall pay an entrance fee of ten shillings to every additional shilling received above the sum allowed.

17. If any member of this Society be found working with an apprentice that has left his master by mutual consent or otherwise, and cannot produce a certificate from this Society, will be fined two shillings and sixpence.

Append to the Rules were three awards by the Court of Arbitration Awards which is outlined in next document.

1. Regulation of tides Work, this decision was composed of 13 clauses given by W.Mordey & W.Knott on 15 Apl. 1854

2. Caulking Scales. 26 February 1853 (Wm. Mordey Esq. in the chair)

Decks.....	130 feet
Over the side 2½ inch.....	65 "
3 inch.....	55 "
4 inch.....	50 "
5 inch.....	45 "
6 inch.....	40 "

and other thickness in proportion.

- N.B. 1. Quarter less if squaring is required.  
2. First stage to be made previous to caulking.  
3. Butt ends to be cut out previous to caulking.  
4. One sixth less to be caulked on Saturdays.  
5. No caulker to leave the yard before five o'clock.

Signed: J. Pile S.B.Sec  
          T. Harris S.W.Sec

4. A Scale of Time. 20 Oct. 1853 W.Mordey & W.Knott

21 Oct to 20 Nov 6.30 a.m. - 5.30 p.m.  
21 Nov to 20 Jan 7 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
21 Jan to 14 Feb 6.30 a.m. - 5.30 p.m.

Breakfast half hour  
Dinner three quarters of an hour.

WEAR SHIPBUILDERS & SHIPWRIGHTS COURT OF REFERENCE AND ARBITRATION.  
1853-1854.

On Saturday evening 29 January 1853 shipbuilders and shipwrights met together in the lecture room of the Lyceum, Lambton Street, Bishopwearmouth in the words of the "Sunderland Herald" - "to consider whether a better understanding between masters and men could not be established" the result was the signing of an agreement to form a joint Board on 19 February. The following extracts from the local press present the principles of the Board:

Unanimously resolved: "That a committee of reference, composed of shipbuilders and shipwrights, with a chairman mutually elected, to which any questions of dispute, either between an individual master and his men or the whole body of builders and shipwright respectively, be referred, with a view to their amicable adjustment, and that this meeting recognises the principle that the interests of employer and employed are combined, and cannot be separated without disadvantage to both parties." (Sunderland Herald Friday 4 Feb 1853, p.5 col.2.)

1. 'That the shipbuilders and shipwrights each appoint a committee of nine members to form a Court of Reference and Arbitration'.
2. 'The second proposition was the appointment of a chairman to decide on the deliberations of the Court of arbitration'.
3. 'That all disputes, alleged reasons, partial or general, on all projected alterations affecting the shipbuilder and shipwrights should be referred to this Court of Reference and Arbitration, with a view to amicable adjustment, without the intervention of strikes or interruption to business'.... 'It was then carried unanimously that the decision of the Court should be final'.
4. 'The fourth proposition was that the proceedings of the Court should be open to all members of the trade on river ..... 'It was then\* proposed that two men from each yard should be allowed to be present'.
5. 'The fifth proposition was that no expression of approbation or disapprobation be allowed from the representatives sitting in the Court - was carried out without discussion.

'Another proposition fixed that the meeting should commence at 7 o'clock and conclude at 9 o'clock, and also defined the utmost limit of the address of each speaker..'

'It was, moreover agreed that each party should appoint a secretary to keep a record of the Court summon meetings etc. Upon the question of expenses, agreed that each party should pay in equal proportion'.

(SUNDERLAND HERALD Friday 11 Feb p.5  
cols. 3 & 4)

Agreed 'In all cases where an equality of voting existed the other chairman be called in, when the case could be reheard in the presence of members of the court, who would give no decision, but leave the question in dispute to the three chairman, the majority of whom should decide, and their decision to be final'. (SUNDERLAND HERALD Friday 25 Feb. p.5 col. 5.).

\* after it was pointed out in discussion that there was no hall capable of taking 1500 shipwrights.