

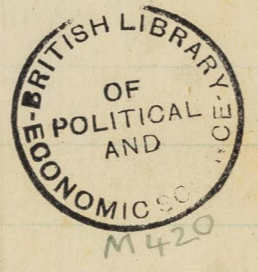
Census Return 1891.

1) Furrier, Skinner	6212
2) Tanner, Fellmonger	1164
3) Currier, Leather goods maker & dealer	8288
4) Parchment, Vellum Manufacturer	75
<hr/>	
	15739

3) includes Bag frame maker, Coffer bag, dressing case maker, leather purse, spectacle case & portmanteau maker.

vid 251-4

R COLL 11
B 95



London Soc of Skiners. p 48.
Grounder 49.
Neutral Curriers
Vellum Parchment Soc 50.

Leather Trades.

Name		Pages.
H Hawksworth	Pocket Book & Fancy Leather Case Makers Society	3
G. Oliver	50 Yalding Road Bermondsey (Description of Trade)	8420
	Summary of Article on Tanning from Bermondsey Paper	11
H Preece	Leather Trades Union Interview	13
G. Regan	Sec. United Society of Curriers	14
E. G. Fitzpatrick	Furriers' London Trade Union	23
T. Sandilands	Fur Skin Dressers.	26
	Trade Unions. List of	2
J Roberts	Spanish Leather Dressers.	33
J. T. Morrison	Saddler & Harness Makers.	36
John Wey	Patent Leather Dressers.	43
A. B. Hunt	Spanish & Morocco Leather.	44
	Light Leather Shavers Trade Soc.	
	See form. (140 Albert Rd)	
	United Tanners Soc (see form).	
	Portmanteau & Trunk makers Soc (see form).	
1. J. F. Stanton	59. Stockdale Rd Stewards Rd. Portmanteau mkr.	see p 44. with Soc.
2. William	Pkt Mkr & Fancy Leather. see p 44.	
3. Fred Jones	Leather bag.	
4. St. Nobis	millband mkr.	
5. JH. Saborn	Tanner.	
6. Men Gay	Italian Furrier.	
8. Strikes in the	Tanning trade	

Black Saddles. Bald faced stag. Workshops ⁽²⁾
 Finsbury. } F. Whisker
 } 16. Leopards
 } Bow.

Collar makers. will s.d.

Flashes & Purse-makers Soc.

Striking-out Society.

List of Trade Unions & Societies.

Name	Meeting house.	Secretary
United Society of Journeymen Carriers of Great Britain & Ireland	The Woolpack, Bermondsey SE.	Geo. Regan.
London Soc. of Grounder President Mr Jackson	50. Elved Road	Mr Jenko. 314. Southwark Park Road. SE.
London Soc. of Skinners	Crown & Cushion, Page's Walk Bermondsey. SE.	Mr Bolton
Anal. Leather Trades Union Established 1890. Broke up Oct. 1892.	Temperance Hall, Station Rd. Bermondsey. SE.	H. Preece. 16 Grange Walk Bermondsey. SE.
Mutual Society of Carriers		Mr Richardson, 8 Paris Walk Bermondsey. SE.
United Tanners' Society	Crown & Cushion, Page's Walk Bermondsey. SE.	
Leather dressers' Union No. 1	Black do do	W Wallace
" " No. 2	The Crown, Long Lane.	Mr Hunt
Shavers Society No. 1	Crown & Cushion, Page's Walk.	works at Benj's
	2.	Leeds.
Pocket Book & Leather Case Makers' Trade Soc. London	Session's House Hotel Clerkenwell Road. E.C. Monday. 8.30.	H. Hawksworth. 145 Offord Road. Finsbury. N.
Portmanteau & Trunkmakers Trade Soc	Angel. High Street, Bloomsbury	W. Hyde. 22 Thornhill Green Finsbury. N.
Anal Trade Soc. of Fancy Leather Workers	White Swan Inn Whitefriars Street. EC.	
London Journeymen Furriers' Trade Union	The Windmill, Tabernacle St Finsbury. E.C.	E. Fitzpatrick.
Fur skin dressers & Dyers	Hospital Tavern. 288 Whitechapel Road. E.	Mr Sandilands.
Furpullers Union (Women)	Mr Herbert Burrows 193. Bow Road or Miss Augusta Brown can give information	
United Vellum & Parchment Makers of Great Britain	Crown & Cushion, Page's Walk SE.	
Patent Leather Dressers' Union	The Conqueror Hero, Upper Grange Road, Bermondsey. SE.	Mr Brooks.

July 24. 1893

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Pocket Book & Fancy Leather Case Makers'

Trade Society. Secretary H. Hawksworth,
45 Offord Road, N

Meetings are held at the Sessions House Hotel,
Clerkenwell Green on the second & fourth Monday in each month.

Established March 1834.

Called at the meeting house by appointment & found the Executive Committee. After explaining the objects of the Enquiry, they gave me a copy of the last Balance sheet & the Rules & promised to answer the questions on the printed form; also to give some information as to fair & unfair houses.

The Rules, which were revised in 1891, state the objects of the Society viz to provide relief for members out of work; insurance against loss of tools by fire; the payment of death benefits & the adoption of "salutary trade regulations".

Management is by an Executive Committee of six free members. The members serve ~~three~~^{six} months and three are elected at each quarterly General Meeting. The Committee is responsible to the General Meeting of members, held on the 1st Mondays in Jan^y, April, July & October. Members are fined 6^d if not in attendance when the roll is

Have sent Union form but
no list of fair & unfair houses 14.VIII.93

called before commencing business & at the conclusion of these meetings. The President serves six months, elected at April & October meetings. Three Trustees & three Auditors are also elected in April & serve one year. Each trustee holds the Bank book & vouchers for four months of his term & at the end of the 4 months his books are audited by the Secretary & other two trustees. The Secretary, elected annually conducts all the routine work of the Society & is paid £8.8 - per annum. The other officers are paid from 6^d to 4^d per attendance & fined a similar amount if absent without a reasonable excuse.

Conditions of Membership. Candidates have to attend the Executive Committee meeting & be proposed by two free members. After paying half the entrance fee {the applicant would become a 'probationary member' for 12 months during which period his only privilege is that of entering his name on the unemployed list. He would be finally accepted or rejected at the Quarterly meeting held previous to the end of his probation.

Entrance Fees. Age 21 yrs & under 30 - 2/6^d
30 " 35 3/6
35 " 40 5/-

None Only those who have been excluded for non-payment are admitted after age of 40 & then only within 6 months of exclusion &

after paying a fine of 10/-

Honorary Members. Any member of 10 years standing, who by reason of age, affliction or other infirmity cannot earn more than 15/- per week may become an Hon. member. A member employing a journeyman or apprentices must become an Hon. member and a member accepting a situation as foreman may be compelled to become an Hon. member. These Hon. members have no voice or vote in the business of the Society.

Contributions. 5/- per quarter; books to be cleared on quarterly rights or fined 2^d. Honorary members pay 4/- per quarter except those placed on Hon. list through age etc who pay 3/- per quarter. Burial allowance is the only benefit for Hon. members.

Benefits. Unemployed. These have to give in writing the cause of leaving last situation + sign the unemployed book daily before 3pm. If free, they are allowed 12/- per week for not more than 10 weeks in 12 months. A member losing his place thro' neglect or mis conduct forfeits all relief. Loss of Tools. by fire - Executive ~~of~~ can grant any sum not over £2. if application is made within 14 days of

6

the fire. Funeral Allowance. If member dies during second year of membership £5 is paid to his representative & a further sum of £1 for every years ^{membership} until a maximum of £15 is reached. At the death of his wife a member may receive half the sum to which his widow or other representative would be entitled on his death.

Strike Allowance. In the event of a dispute, the Executive Committee have power to treat with employers. If they fail a special General Meeting may call out the workmen who would then receive ~~25/-~~ 25/- per week while the dispute lasted.

Trade Disputes. Members are forbidden to ask or accept employment vacant by a dispute between employer & employed. "This line of action must be loyally adhered to by every member without any reference at the time to the merits or demerits of the dispute."

Shop Delegates are appointed in connection with the shops (one in each) to collect members' subscriptions.

Financial Condition. The statement for the year ending February 18th 1893 shows that the income slightly exceeds the expenditure ~~but only by a little~~. It is summarized on the next page.

Summary of Cash Account from Feb 20/92 to Feb 18/93.

To Balance Feb 20. 1892 £ 443.7.11.	Unemployed Benefit	33.14.-
Contributions 66.9.9	(9 members: three have full 10 weeks)	
Fines 3.5.7	Death Benefit (2)	16.-.-
Enhance Feb 1895 1.18.2	Secretary's Salary & fees for other officials	16.12.2
Interest on Investment + Bank % 11.2.5	Sub ^s to Pension Society	3.3.-
	Other Expenses	10.18.10
		80.8."
	Balance in hand Feb/93	
	Bank - 224.9.6.	
	Cash 200	445.15.10
	With Sec ^y 21.6.4	
	& Auditors	£ 526.3.10
		£ 526.3.10

There were 79 members on Feb 18th 1893.

Sent Union Form filled in 16.viii.93.

G.E.A. July 31/93

Mr Geo. Oliver. 2 Sergeants Inn Fleet Street E.C.

and. 50 Yalding Road. Bermondsey.

Called by appointment. Mr Oliver, who has been 17 years in the leather trade, but is now in the office of the Liberation Society, said he would give any information he could. He also holds some office at the Bermondsey Radical Club near Grange Road. After giving the names of some of the Unions he entered on a resume of the trade summarized as under:

The leather trade is divided into two branches: the heavy & light trades.

The Heavy Trade is that in bulllock hides and horse hides and roughly corresponds with the manufacture of leather such as used for the soles of boots.

The Light Trade is concerned with goats, sheep & similar skins and corresponds with the manufacture of leather as used for shoe "uppers"

The heavy skins are dressed principally with oak bark gambier & extract of hemlock: the light skins usually with alum and salt.

He then described the light trade, tracing the

skin until it ~~was~~ had become the finished product.

Light skin Trade. Description of processes. After the animal is killed the skin (sheep or goat) is sent to the fellmonger who is a skilled artizan. He lays the skins out with a layer of lime between the ~~two~~ insides of two skins, it thus acts on the skin without touching the wool. After a time the lime's action has affected the skin so that the fellmonger can pull the wool. As he pulls the wool off, he sorts it ~~into~~ according to quality sometimes into five or six different kinds.

The skin then goes to the leather manufacturer who for some purposes splits it. He then has to destroy the lime in the skin; this is done by putting it in a solution, the best being one in which dog's dung is the chief ingredient. [There is a considerable trade in this commodity. men collect it & sell it at 1/2 per pail to the leather manufacturer. A large quantity is also received from the various kennels & hunting establishments.] This rendered the skin soft by removing the lime & it is then ready for the tanner. If it is to be made up as mack kid it would be tanned in alum & salt; ~~salt~~ if for bookbinding or the tan^{coloured} glove it would be tanned in the ordinary way. The tanning only takes a few hours.

Mr B. says that Messrs Beverington & Son use 1000 eggs per day in this way. The eggs are broken into tins & the yolks caught in the broken shells. The glair or white is used in the finishing process.

After the skin is taken out of the tanning liquor it is dried in a hot stove & becomes very hard. The grinder then takes it in hand; softens it and cleans the flesh side of the skin by rubbing it. The dyer then receives it & dyes it whatever colour is required & he then passes it on to the finisher who polishes it, gives it the 'grain' etc.

The only difference between the dressing of these skins & calf skin is that the calf calf skin is put into the lime, except French calf which is dressed with yolk of egg, flour, alum & salt. The yolk of egg is found to give a suppleness to the skin that nothing else will do.

The following is a list of workers, through whose hands a skin may pass :-

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. Fellmonger | 5. Pewerman |
| 2. Skinner | 6. Tanner |
| 3. Lime jobber (or labourer) | 7. Grinder |
| 4. Flesher | 8. Dyer |
| | 9. Finisher. |

Thinks that the labourer in the skin yard is the worst paid individual under the sun. Some men work from 6 am to 6 pm at Beverington's Tan yard for 20/- a week.

Trade is leaving Bermondsey. Some leather is imported now & the tanning trade is going to the north - Leeds & Warrington.

Summary of an Article published in the Bermuda
Ratepayers' Chronicle by Simon the Tanne (G. Oliver) July 1891.

Tanning usually applied to the manufacture of heavy
hides as used for sole leather, machine belting, harness &c
When the hide reaches the tanner, he soaks it in a
solution of lime for a few days - this loosens the hair
The hide is then placed on a crescent shaped block
called a 'beam' & then the "unhairer" pushes the hair off with
by means of a long knife with two handles. It is a laborious
occupation requiring some care. The hide is then placed
upon another beam, the flesh side being uppermost;
the "flesher" with a large very sharp two-handled knife
tears off the first film & any flesh that may have been
left by the butcher when skinning. Great skill is
needed to tear off sufficient without damaging the
hide. If the hide is intended for sole leather, the
sides & neck are cut off & tanned in inferior
liquors. The remaining part is called the "butt"
& makes the best leather. A number of these
butts are placed in a pit of weak tan liquor
& shifted day after day into stronger liquors
for several days until they are put into the strongest
liquor where they remain until tanned. Formerly

when only oak bark was used it took one to two years according to the substance of the hide to make good leather. Now it is done in three to four months.

After the hide is tanned it passes to the shedman who attends to the drying & finishing during which process it is scraped & rolled with heavy weights.

Machinery for unhairing and fleshing has been only a partial success but some inventions have reduced the amount of labour in the shedman's work.

Lads used to be apprenticed to the trade & were taught all branches but now men only learn one skilled branch & that sometimes by favour of the master who promotes a labourer.

Wages. In full & good work (an unusual thing) the fleshers & unhairers earn 35/- a week; shedmen without machinery about 30/- a week. Labourers' wages are generally 23/- per week but where piece work has been introduced they will earn about 30/- a week

Mr H. Preece. 16 Grange Walk, Bermondsey. S.E.
Late Secretary of the Amalgamated Leather Trades Union

The Amalgamated L.T. Union was started in 1890 and broke up in October 1892. Jealousy was the cause. A Mr Daybourne tried to get the Secretaryship; he led a strike and brought all the men out. They had previously won the 9 hours day. Had 2500 members at one time.

The trade was going from Bermondsey; Leeds was the chief competitor taking heavy & light work; Warrington took the light work only.

There were a large number of Societies connected with the trade but all were weak. An endeavour to combine them had been made but it failed. He was going to try again. Amongst other Societies having members in London he mentioned the following:

- Leeds Society of Skippers
- Birmingham Society of Skippers - headquarters at Lincoln.
- Mutual Society of Curriers - See Mr Richardson. Had only 13 members a short time ago.

Mem In the paper lent by Mr Oliver there was an account of an open air meeting held in Bermondsey Square ^{about} in July 1891 by the Leather Trades Union to celebrate the conclusion of a nine weeks strike at Whitmore's Tannery, The Grange, Bermondsey. It was settled by arbitration, Mr A. Lafone M.P. & Dr Cooper being arbitrators. Men regarded the result as a triumph for themselves & Mr Preece in his speech claimed that the men had gained a 40% rise of wages. Mr Daybourne was a speaker.

Aug 1 1893 14

United Society of Journeymen Carriers of Gt Britain & Ireland.
Gen. Secretary. Mr. Geo. Regan. The Woolpack. Bermondsey St. 58

Mr Regan gave me a copy of the General Rules; a copy of the Report for the quarter ending June 24th 1893 & the two Lists of Prices for Carriers' work viz for Boot Work - accepted May 1873; for Coach, harness & saddle work revised 1877. These lists give the ^{piece} prices for various classes of work & the 'boot work' list a short definition of the work that is included in the prices. See documents in pigeon hole marked A to D.

Constitution. By the General Laws the country is divided into six provinces: Bristol, Birmingham, Scotland, London, Manchester & Wellingboro'. Each province has power to make local laws ^{but} if not opposed to general laws & levies a contribution at the rate ~~to~~ it thinks necessary to defray cost of local management. The Executive for General Management is located in London & consists of a President, Secretary (who is Secretary of the London Province also) & two Committeemen, the latter are elected ~~annual~~ quarterly & the President & Secretary annually.

Benefits. These are (1) Out of work (2) Sick pay & (3) Emigration allowance and 30 old members may also receive Superannuation.

members "on Tramp" + other out of works can claim other minor benefits
e.g. a loan of 10/- for books after being 'out' for 6 weeks; Subsistence
money ($\frac{1}{6}$ per day) ^{is advanced} until the following Saturday ^{when a man has obtained} ~~or obtaining~~
_{also a loan} work.

Contributions for Local fund is fixed at 3^d per week for evening quarter.

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Unemployed benefit is 10/-, 8/-, 6/- + 5/- per week, each rate for 13
weeks; after which a member must work + pay for 13 weeks
before he can receive the 5/- rate ~~and~~; another 13 weeks for the 6/-
rate + so on. Sick pay at same rates may be drawn for
6 weeks in a year but a man must work at least 20
weeks before being entitled to receive sick pay again. A "gift"
of £3 is made to the representatives of deceased members or
pensioners. Emigration allowances of £3 are given to
those going to North America + £6 to those proceeding
to other British possessions. Money is paid to a shipping
agent + this aid can only be received once. The qualification
for the pension of 4/- per week are that applicants must be 60
years of age + have been paying members for 25 consecutive years.
Members with greatest number of years' standing take precedence.
Members with 30 years' service are eligible for pension;
irrespective of age if disabled.

Contributions are $\frac{1}{3}$ per week to general fund, out of which, the
above benefits are paid. Contributions are not enforced from
members over 60 years of age but if they pay 2^d per week, they
will be eligible for pension. Members owing 10/- (contribution fines)
are "placed on probation" for 13 weeks after clearing the books,
e.g. their rate of benefit is reduced $\frac{1}{6}$ per week for that period.
If arrears exceed £2, the man is not regarded as a member.

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An Unemployed member when leaving a shop and having finished his work so far as it is ready, his shopmates will calculate how long the remainder will take to finish & the man will have to pay contributions for such time & benefits will commence at the end of the time certified.

Any member leaving his shop without giving notice to his employer or leaving work in an unfinished state cannot receive benefit until he bring a certificate or clearance and if he obtain work in another, the Secretary shall, if complaint be made give notice to the town or shop stating how the man left his previous place and he shall be fined 10/- or other penalty as the Provincial Executive determine.

Members out of work are given a check book with duplicate & vouchers in which is entered the amount he is entitled to receive. When receiving benefit he signs one check & leaves it with the paying Secretary, who signs the duplicate. This book has to be produced to the Secretary of at any town he visits 'on hamp'.

Strikes & Disputes. If a dispute takes place it must be brought before the Executive of the Province, who will if important enough submit it to the Province by circular. If it is not settled thus ~~or~~ or if it is likely to affect the funds seriously, a statement must be

laid before ~~the~~ all the Executives, who will take the opinion of their provinces. This decision will be final. No "turn-out" (the word "shike" is not used once in the rules) is permitted without first obtaining the advice & approval of the London Executive. Dispute pay. A member leaving work by order of the Union is entitled to 12/- per week for 8 weeks or if married to 14/- + 4/- per week for each child under 13 years old. If out of work 8 weeks, he becomes entitled to 'out of work' pay. Any officer discharged from his work thro' anything connected with his office is entitled to £1. a week until he obtains employment.

The London Province includes. Barnet, Bury, St Edmunds, Ely, Spewick, Stowmarket, St Ives & Chichester. and During the quarter 242 had their names on the London books but of these 11 were in arrears over £3 reducing the number of members to 231. This compares with 53 less 5 left = 48 on the books of the other ~~two~~ towns of the province.

At the end of the quarter the membership of the London Province is returned thus: In work 255; Out of work 13; Sick 1 = 269

Financial. The income of the Province for the Quarter ending June '93 was as follows:

General Account	£ 501. 15	£ 250. -
Local	38. 8	£ 640. 5
		<hr/>
Expenditure -	General Account	£ 202. 14
	Local	31. -
		<hr/>
		£ 233
	Balance in hand - June.	£ 407

Total Membership of Society on June 24th

	In work	Out of work	Sick	Total
London Province.	255	13	1	269
B'ham "	248	26	5	279
Bristol "	26	6	-	32
Manchester "	168	15	-	183
Scotland "	220	21	4. Plus 3.	248
Wellington "	68	1	-	69
	<u>985</u>	<u>82</u>	<u>10.3.</u>	<u>1080</u>

United Society: Income for Quarter - £ 793.

Expenditure " 614

Surplus £ 179

Balance in hand at June £ 6762

Compare census 1891 with 1871 on the question of deduction of men in trade.

Mr Regan says that the trade is being reduced especially in London. ^(Currying) He attributes it to the importation of dressed leathers from France, Germany & Belgium. They seldom dress a calf skin now. "They (the foreigners) beat us practical at that". The number of men in the trade is declining now. Only about half as many as 20 years ago. This would apply to the whole trade as well. Machinery accounts for part of the displacement.

Talking of the comparative merits of various firms, MR gave the following opinions:

Bad Messrs Conolly - Charlton Street Coach curriers. never employ Society men. Pay below standard rates.

Messrs W R Shaw & Son. Wild's Kent Bermondsey. Was a Society house. Had a dispute about prices; now non-society - pays low rates.

Castles Palmer & Co. Grange Road, etc. Was ^{market street etc.} fustelless before Mr Palmer died. did not take advantage of the men. There was a dispute on some points. Firm now struck off list of Government contractors.

Messrs Whittard, Crisp & Co. was a first rate firm - light goods line. Has recently transferred ~~all~~ its work to a sweating master and gives him a certain price for them ^{skins}. May be only an experiment.

Messrs Bevington & Sons Neckinger Mills. There is not a worse firm. All their work is done thro' ~~the~~ sweating masters. Used to be a good firm. Were always good to curriers, but they don't dress anything now.

Good. Messrs Dixon & Taylor, Tyer's Gateway. Bermondsey.

Tanners. Most of these men are labourers; only skilled men are the *beam men & unhairers.

* flesher

1865 Strike. Mr W^m Jeffery, 78 Brighton Road, South Croydon. induced Mr Samuel B arrow to give the 2/- advance & then the other masters had to follow him. The men held a meeting after the strike at which Mr Jeffery presided & was presented with a testimonial by the men Mr Jeffery should be seen. He knows the trade well especially the market, buying etc. Use my name as an introduction G.H.

August 10/93

(20)

Second Interview with Mr G. Oliver 50 Yalding Road.

See pages 8-11

After some general remarks, Mr O. said that Mr. E. Benson of 1 Stork's Road, Bermondsey should be seen. He is President of the National Skinners Society, works at Beverington & Sons, could give evidence as to their condition & probably introduce us to some. [In writing to Mr B. use Mr O. as an introduction Mr Oliver is going away until the 28th instant but if he can be any use will be glad to see Mr Duckworth].

He then gave a few notes about his own connection with the leather trade. In 1865, he led a successful strike for the tanners' labourers, gaining an increase from 20/- to 22/- per week. Soon after the men obtained another 1/- rise & in a short time saved £200 or £300. They then wanted to fight. Mr O. discouraged the idea but it was adopted & a memorial sent to the masters, asking for an answer in 7 days. Mr Oliver & 4 others were discharged for signing this memorial (He was getting £3 a week) and the movement failed. He then got a labourers' place at £ 23/- a week but was forced to leave in a fortnight. He was then taken by a piece master, who said his name should not appear but this man was forced to discharge him. After took a Coffee house and the men gave him a benefit which realized £ 35 -

After this time the men gradually withdrew from the Union until in 1872 there were only 160 men connected with it. These shared out the £200 odd, which the Union had dissolved it. Each man had about 30/- & they gave almost £15.

Many of the tanners labourers are Devonshire or Somersetshire men and in the skilled parts of the trade nearly all are countrymen. This is due to the fact that in the country the men are apprenticed and taught the skilled part of the work. They then come to London and get work as skilled workmen.

Distinction between Curriers & Shavers.

Both work in ²light goods or split hides & use a double handled ^{knife.} Currier takes the leather from the tanner. He first of all takes off the rough that the tanner has left on; then he greases the skin with dubbin or oil and shaves it again.

The Shaver shaves light goods, Spanish leather, goods dressed in alum & salt. These skins are not greased; they are used for chair coverings and bookbinding. The work is more delicate than that

of the currier & the chauer get higher wages.

Grounds does not shave the skin but rubs it with pumice stone and scrapes it with a blunt knife. (The currier & shaver knives are very keen). Most of this work is on soft skins for glove work - the leather is too soft to shave.

August 3/93

Journeyman Furriers
London Trade Union

Interview with Mr E. G. Fitzpatrick, Secretary,
The Windmill Tavern, Tabernacle St. Finsbury, E.C.

This Society numbers about 150 financial members. The men are very migratory; they go to Paris or New York & there is an understanding that when a man shows his card at the Societies in these places, he is recognised ~~as a member~~ and pays into the Society where he is. On his return to London, he is re-admitted to his Union without entrance fee if he has a clear card.

The Rules (in pigeonhole marked F) are printed in English and German. The Objects of the Union are defined as the raising of funds for the support of members out of work or on strike "under certain restrictions", the protection and general interest of the Trade & the regulation of the relations between workmen and employers.

The Union is governed by an Executive Council of 17 members, consisting of President, Vice President, English Secretary, Foreign Secretary & 12 Committee men half English & half Foreign. There are also two Trustees

and a Treasurer, each of whom must be members.

Contributions - 3^d per week and 2/6 entrance fee; also 1^d per month for secretaries. Free after paying 12 months subscriptions. The case of members 13 weeks in arrears will be brought before the Council & members 18 weeks in arrears ^{are} excluded.

Out of work Benefit is usually given in a lump sum. ^(by amount) The funds for this purpose are raised by means of a concert.

Shop strikes are forbidden except by sanction of the Union obtained by a ballot of the members.

List of shops.

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| <u>Good.</u> | International Fur Stores, | Regent St. W. | Employ about 10 men. |
| | Poland. | Oxford Street. | Very good firm. |
| | Nicholay ? | " Street. | |
| <u>Fair.</u> | Sugden | Aldermanbury. | 10 or 12 men |
| | G. Smith & Son | Walling St. | 3 men |
| | Revillon | Queen Victoria St. | |
| | Alhansen & Co. | Carters Lane. | About the largest. |
| <u>Bad.</u>
All piece work. | Wagner & Co | Golden Lane | "Greatest Sweating Den" |
| | Koenigsberg | Commercial St. E. | |
| | Louis Victorson | Barbican | |
| | Præger | Jewin Street. | "Very bad sanitary conditions" |
| | | | |

Piecework. There are some shops working piece work, mostly Jewish. Some of these stop some of the workers' earnings for coals, gas, etc - 5%. Have just won a case against Rubinstein for making this illegal deduction. [Gulldhall Aug 2192. See Daily Chronicle] This was the case of a man working in the shop. The employer has given notice of appeal. This decision does not touch the custom of wholesale houses deducting 2½% or 5% from the agreed price when buying from the Chambermasters.

Fur Sewing Machines. Jewish women have taken to working these machines in the East end. They are used in the West end but there is a greater proportion of hand work in this part of the trade.

[For other information ^{see} see Union Sheet.

Mr Fitzpatrick is willing to give any information he can. Write to him at the Windmill. He will also get some furriers to give information if wanted]

Fur skin Dressers Union.

Used to consist of 3 branches.

Falling away of the Dyers.

Founded in 1889.

Numbers of members.

Proportion of Union & Non Union men

August 28th

G.H.D.

T. Sandilands. Secretary to the Fur skin Dressers Union. at the Hospital Tavern, Whitechapel Road. (Private address. 41. Barnby Street West Ham).

The Union used to consist of 3 branches.
1. Dyers 2. Unhairers 3. Pelt side.

The Dyers who are the highest paid & most reg. - ularly employed in the Trade have fallen away & having been allowed to get 12 mths subscription in arrears they were finally expelled.

This society was founded in 1889.
There are 800 men in the trade (including dyers of whom there are 400).
370. Unhairers & Pelt side men belong out of a possible 400.

Among the Unhairers there are no non unionists
Pelt side — — — — — 30 — — — — —

Union & Non Union work
together.

Relations good.

No boards of arbitration

Hours.

Wages.

Unionists & Non U. work together in some shops,
the majority of shops do not employ
union men

Relations bet masters & men are good except in
the little shops employing 4 or 5 men.
There are no boards of arbitration, in cases of disputes
a deputation in each shop is advised &
the union makes allowances where it may
be thought that men have been dismissed
for having had a hand in a deputation (see rules)

The Fur Side (No 2) work from 8-7. and
as later

The Pelt side (No 3) work when they like for the
skins are not always ready for them
sometimes they are not ready until the
afternoon in which case the men will
work on till 10 or 11 at night.

Wages. (a list of prices for every species of skin
was given).

50¢ is a fair average week's wage in
the Busy season which lasts 4 or 5 months
for Unhairers (No 2).

The wages of the Pelt side are very uncertain

Regularity.

Seasons.

Busy.

Slack.

Overtime.

All are out of work together.

A man may get 5/- today & nothing to morrow
in a busy week he gets about 50/-

Regularity. For the last 4 years Nos 2 & 3 have
not succeeded in making more than
4 months regular work in the year.
This is owing to the Behring sea trouble
& the scarcity of sealskins.

November to January are always busy some
houses may be busy until May but then
others will be slack.

May to November is the slack time.

The end of Oct. or beginning of Nov. begins
the busy time because then come the
seal skin sales. Every nation sends her
buyers here

Overtime is usual among the Belt side men for
reasons given under Hours.

but Fur side men never work later than
7. Their hours are from 8-7. this is
the customary day.

In slack times all the Fur side & Belt side men
are out of work together, a man might
perhaps get a day per week.

Alternative trades

Shifting

Training

Conditions of admission

Mr. Sandilands himself has been a builders labourer, plumber & painter's help, he knows men who turn to Painting, Building, Dock work, costermongers or anything.

The Belt side is Shavers & Fleeters, shave cross-wise, the leather shavers shave straight, so that they cannot interchange.

Men shift from employee to employer according as one house may be busy or not.

Training used to be by apprentices, the Belt side had to serve 7 years before they were considered to know their business.

The Fur side can be learnt with a 3 months apprenticeship

Now none is learning the business, the Union considers there are many more men than there is work for, they will not allow anyone to be apprenticed.

In the ordinary way men are taught by being put to work with experienced men at the age of 18.

All Fur skin Drivers over the age of 18 are eligible must be proposed & seconded by 2 members.

Chief houses in trade.

The chief houses in the Fur Trade are.

Nestlin	employing	160	of Nos 2 & 3.	} in busy times.
Rice	---	90	---	
Smith	---	31	---	
Wisconsin	---	22	---	

Drink.

Journey men unhairers live chiefly in Bernardsey & Keystone.

There is a great deal of drinking especially among the belt side men: among the unhairers there has been a marked decrease thanks to the Union a fact wh. the masters so far I said, acknowledge.

The average heat in the drying room is 170°. This makes people wish to drink. The men must go in & out several times during day, to hang up their skin & see how they are getting on.

Masters buy from merchants.

The masters live by the orders they get from the merchants rather than from the skin which they buy themselves.

Dying.

Foot tubbers' German.

Process of dressing a
seal skin.

a merchant will send his skins to be dressed by one house & then to another to be dyed.

The great secret lies in the dying: only one man in each house is supposed to know it.

One house pays \$1000 a year to one man merely for his secret, he retired from business & they bought his plant for \$400 & now pay him this annuity besides (Olsen was the name he gave?).

The Germans are the chief foot tubbers' & dyers. There are a great number of small masters, all Germans & Jews who get over other young Germans called Greeks & pay them \$7 or 10¢ per week & give them their lodging.

The following is the process: this is a seal skin next go.

1. Blubbered is the skin is rubbed over on the skin fur side with a blunt knife & the blubber is squeezed out.
2. Washed in hot soda water.
3. it is stretched over a large iron hoop

Dressing a seal skin.

1. hung up to dry, in the drying room (see by boys)
2. Soaked in cold water.
3. Is laid hair downwards on floor of hot room to dry the hair only, the pelt must be left damp.
4. The hairs are punched out by blunt edged knife or beam.
5. Placed in hoop again to dry.
6. Pelt damped but fur must be left dry.
7. Leathered i.e. the pelt is battered (ground) & then put into tubs or machines which work the grease in & make pliable leather of the pelt.
Small work is leathered by foot tubbing in grease & sawdust.
8. Shaved (crosswise).
9. Cleaned in revolving tubs by sawdust.
10. Dyed
11. Shaved to make pelt white where it has become black from the dye.

G.A.

October 3/95

Interview with Mr Jos. Roberts, Secretary of
The Spanish Leather Dressers Benefit Society
60 Wansley Street, Walworth R^d
S.E.

Established 1801 - Registered 1832.

An old Society: originated by men engaged in
the Morocco leather finishing, they only being eligible.
It was then known as the Finishers & Shavers Society.
Has since been widened in scope so as to take any person
working in the leather trade. Have balance sheets as far
back as 1852.

Contributions & Benefits. Used to be 8^d per week + 1^d for
management or 9^d in all. At that time they laid by
money so quickly that the benefits were raised & the
contributions reduced 1^d per week. Sick pay rose from
16/- to 18/- per week & funeral benefit from £12 to £14
for a 10 years member & over 14 years membership
£18. About 1860 when valuation was made
compulsory the Society found it was not solvent so
contributions were raised to 9^d again for those under

25 years of age :

25 years & under 31	- 10 ^d per week
31 " to 33	- 11 ^d " "
33 " to 35	4/- " "

Entrance fees were also fixed

under 22 years of age	- 2/6
" 25 "	5/-
" 28 "	7/6
" 31 "	10/6
" 33 "	15/-

Sick Benefit is now 18/ for 26 weeks; 10/6 for another 26 weeks and 4/ a week during the time illness continues. A member can only draw full sick pay for one six months in two year. At Deaths members get £12, £14, or £18 according to length of membership. Members wife £12.

Superannuation. Members 60 years of age & with 30 years membership may be allowed 5/ per week but at present no new applications can be entertained until after the valuation in 1896. There are now 6 annuitants. They seem to have been lax in regard to this as two of the annuitants are not qualified by age. They were incapacitated by illness & the members voted the annuity out of sympathy - one has drawn it for 6 years already.

Membership has varied. In 1876-170; in 1878-174 (highest now (1893) 120. Difficult to get new members: the young men join the Oddfellows. There are several strong Lodges in Bermondsey.

Funds. average £13.17.9 per member. Superannuation

and Burial Fund amounts to £1640. Money is invested with National Debt Commissioners & in House property.

Trade Sectional jealousy. In reply to questions, Mr R said that the various sections of the trade will not mix. In this Society men belonging to most of the branches are found. They come to the Club Room to pay their subscriptions but when they go down stairs to have a drink, they separate into their little groups; shavers with shavers; fustians with fustians etc.

Trade is bad & undoubtedly leaving Bermondsey. Many places had been closed entirely of late years (eg. ^{Chesmore} Powell) & others were not employing nearly so many hands.

[Mr Roberts gave the addresses of three other secretaries who were members of this Society]

London Saddle & Harness
Makers.

Organized.

Membership.

As they do work together

42
Drawing Rooms coachmen used also always
to order new harness. Mr. M. went to look
at the last but only noticed 20
out of 400 carriages with new trappings
as is the worst sweating firm in London.

London Saddle & Harness
Makers.

Organized.

Membership.

As well as do work together

42
For Drawing Rooms coachmen used also always
to order new harness. Mr M went to look
at the last but only noticed 20
out of 400 carriages with new trappings

Jenkins is the worst sweating firm in London.

Patent Leather Dressing
Society.

Founded

20. 17. 93.

G.H.D.

John Evey, Secy. Patent Leather Dressing
Society. 11 Bramcote Road. S-Bernardsey

Founded. 1868. when there were 130.
1893. 84 members, in trade altogether

Only 12 Non Unionists.

The numbers are so low now owing to de-
-preciation of Trade & migration of
men to the colonies.

Unionists & Non Unionists do not work together
The relation bet Employers & men are good
the employes have met the men very
fairly. They get on a side now -
There are no recog. boards of arbitration.

To become a member you must be a skilled man
or an apprentice: further you must
be proposed & seconded.

* NB. The printed title on the contribution card given was
"London New Friendly Soc of Spanish, Morocco Leather
Finishers"

Boots & mill bands carriers -
Spanish & Morocco Leather
Dressers.

the full number for whom there can al-
ways be work. The men shift from
the several divisions of the Trade.

Divisions of Trade.

Skins used.

Oct 25

E.H.D.

written to with U. from 20.1.94.

A.B. Hunt 48 Alma Road, Bermuda St.
Sect No 2 Soc. Spanish & Morocco
Leather Dressers Soc.

Instituted 1868.

101 members out of a possible 101. ∴ 101 are
1 App to 7 men the fully number that can be
employed by certain given hour
it is no use having more men if there is
only working for 101.

In extra busy times - never busy all together

Peate grain. Winter season. (Bookbinders)
Morocco grain. Summer.

Dull
Bright grain

Plains

Calf & hide for book covers & ledgers.

Cape goat - for hardware book & furniture

Goat: sheep. Persian sheep: skins (split sheep)
Goat is much stronger than sheep
for the leather Trade you must be bought up lot

Process

The Intricacy of the Leather Trade

Nos 1 + 2 Society

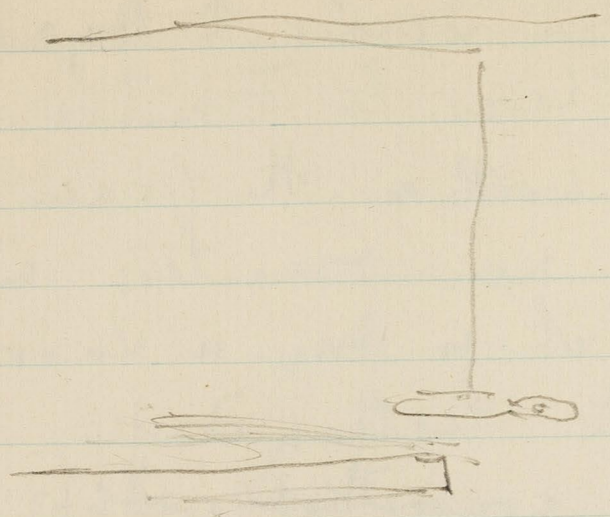
Benefits

you can hardly be taught it
 Skin goes from Tanner to Dyer, Dyer to
 Beaver, Shaver to Finisher who puts
 the fancy work on the grain.
 Same amount of men & masters in the Trade
 the best of it is done in London since
 It's a marvel the leather Trade, its that pe-
 culiar, you've got a job before you,
 men wont learn another once they have
 got a secret, the masters dont know
 how the things are got up & the
 men wont tell them.

No 1 has about 120 they work with a certa
 no of shops.
 Nos 1 + 2 never in termix unless things are
 very bad, probably will be amalgamated
 soon.

Tramping Benefits: allowed 7/6. for each Town
 they go to.
 Subscription 6. week.
 Out of work - 8/- to 12/- accordy how long a man has
 belonged.
 Death £10 for member £10 for 1st wife
 A good deal of drink 15 - 2nd - -

Graining.



Hours.

Rents.

Or Instruments.

Fluffing perishes the skin.
Rare bit of Besmudgy or pagilits;
Nancy Gony.

Some piece & some day: it amounts for the month
about the same thing.

Mr. Bent is in favour of Piece work. The a
man works fairly; it is justice to the
man & to the master.

6 AM - 7 PM is general run.

1/2 hr breakfast

15 m. - lunch.

1 hr. Dinner

1/2 hr. tea.

D.M. 1-2 on Saturdays.

av. camp 30/- 30/- to 4/-.

Rents in Alma Road. 12/- to 14/-

6 room wash-

12/6. loc. -
hms.

small piece of garden.

Thinks it a shame that blocks shd be built

giving the children no yard to run about in
must go into the streets. Learn all

Kinds of language.

He will send the list of questions filled

in by Saturday Oct 28.

He asked if this enquiry was likely to do anything for the workman & on being told of the volumes in London Labour said 'Oh if that is the same chap as did those then it is certain to do some good.'

16. VII. 94.

H. Preece - 11 Orange Walk Besnadsey.
12. London Soc of Skiners. ^{about} 180 members.

Skinnering like all the wet trade are leaving London.
& skiners travel all over the country.
Members of the London Soc. do not travel
so much as other skiners.

The Nat Soc of Skiners does not exist.

London Soc of Grinders. numbered last year
about 120.

United Vallum & Parchment makers. have now moved
to Mitcham. (Jm. Gibbs & Roberts)

Loosley is the only firm (in Marlboro' Road)
doing any business in London.

many of the parchment makers & skiners
would put themselves down as fixers.
where they wd slave in the heavy goods
they would fix in the light.

London Soc of Skiners - have a price list but it is
not strictly enforced.

10/- ow. 13 wks. / Dat admit day work wage but a jobbing
12/- sick. 13 - / 6/- is reg rate all round for day work.
5/- ow 13 /
6/- sick. 13 - / (according to old custom)

A man U do not work together: man must belong to either Birmingham Leeds or
London. The Leeds Soc admit day work in practice.

Skinner deal with no heavy leather.
founded. 1861. out of work. if sub. & levies.
Friendly with masters.

Grounders 10f on. 8 wks. } on strike
of - 8 - }
no sick
no death
no other form of Benefit

Have a price list & enforce it generally. They
are strong in the shops. But they are not
progressive. Nothing propagandist about them.
They work their way up (chiefly in the
country or with men who work at home)
Men don't work so much at home as they used to.
7¹ wk & levies.
U & Non U do not work together

Mutual Carriers - 17 members founded. 91.
(Sec. Richardson. Ancient Britn. Wills Rents
Bermudsey)

