INFORMATION TO USERS

This material was produced from a microfilm copy of the original document. While the most advanced technological means to photograph and reproduce this document have been used, the quality is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original submitted.

The following explanation of techniques is provided to help you understand markings or patterns which may appear on this reproduction.

1. The sign or “target” for pages apparently lacking from the document photographed is “Missing Page(s)”. If it was possible to obtain the missing page(s) or section, they are spliced into the film along with adjacent pages. This may have necessitated cutting thru an image and duplicating adjacent pages to insure you complete continuity.

2. When an image on the film is obliterated with a large round black mark, it is an indication that the photographer suspected that the copy may have moved during exposure and thus cause a blurred image. You will find a good image of the page in the adjacent frame.

3. When a map, drawing or chart, etc., was part of the material being photographed the photographer followed a definite method in “sectioning” the material. It is customary to begin photoing at the upper left hand corner of a large sheet and to continue photoing from left to right in equal sections with a small overlap. If necessary, sectioning is continued again — beginning below the first row and continuing on until complete.

4. The majority of users indicate that the textual content is of greatest value, however, a somewhat higher quality reproduction could be made from “photographs” if essential to the understanding of the dissertation. Silver prints of “photographs” may be ordered at additional charge by writing the Order Department, giving the catalog number, title, author and specific pages you wish reproduced.

5. PLEASE NOTE: Some pages may have indistinct print. Filmed as received.

Xerox University Microfilms
300 North Zeeb Road
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106
JOBE, Brock William
THE BOSTON FURNITURE INDUSTRY, 1725-1760.

University of Delaware (Winterthur Program), M.A., 1976
History, modern

Xerox University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
THE BOSTON FURNITURE INDUSTRY
1725-1760

by
Brock William Jobe

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Early American Culture.

June, 1976
THE BOSTON FURNITURE INDUSTRY
1725-1760

by

Brock William Jobe

Approved:

Benno M. Forman
Professor in charge of thesis on behalf of the Advisory Committee

Approved:

James C. Curtis
Coordinator of the Winterthur Program

Approved:

Dean of the College of Graduate Studies

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
PREFACE


During the second quarter of this century researchers turned to more specific topics. Japanning, a popular form of painted decoration in eighteenth-century Boston, was the subject of three excellent articles: "A Pedigreed Lacquered Highboy," "American Japanned Furniture," and "The Early Boston Japanners." The first, an invaluable study by Esther Fraser of a japanned high chest made by John Pimm, appeared in *Antiques* in May 1929. The second, written by Joseph Downs for the *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* of March 1933, coincided with a major exhibition of japanned furniture at the Metropolitan Museum. In the third, published in *Antiques* in May 1943, Esther Brazer summarized the results of several years of research on the individuals who practiced the craft of japanning in Boston.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
During the years 1925 to 1950 the most important, and most prolific, contributor to the scholarship on Boston furniture was Mabel Swan. Her articles ranged from an account of the furniture owned by the patriot John Hancock (Antiques, XXXI [March, 1937]) to a discussion of coastwise cargoes of New England venture furniture (Antiques, LV [April, 1949]). For this project, however, her most helpful contribution was a two-part article entitled "Boston's Carvers and Joiners, Pre-Revolutionary and Post-Revolutionary" (Antiques, LIII [March and April, 1943]). In every publication she presented newly discovered material of great worth. Though some of her findings have been recently revised, any serious student of Boston furniture must begin with her many treatises on the subject.

In the past two decades several individuals, notably Richard Randall and Benno Forman, have taken a fresh, more scholarly approach to the study of Boston craftsmen and their products. Randall's accomplishments have included carefully documented papers on cabinetmakers George Bright (Art Quarterly, XXVII [1964]) and Ebenezer Hartshorne (Antiques, LXXXVII [January, 1965]) as well as a detailed investigation of inexpensive William and Mary style "Boston Chairs" made for export during the first half of the eighteenth century (Old-Time New England, LIV [Summer, 1963]). In addition, he analyzed and illustrated many documented pieces of Boston furniture in a most impressive catalogue, American Furniture in the Museum of Fine Arts Boston (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1965).

Benno Forman has specialized in the study of furniture in the Seventeenth Century.
and William and Mary styles. His most significant contributions have been "Urban Aspects of Massachusetts Furniture in the Late Seventeenth Century," Winterthur Conference Report 1969: Country Cabinetwork and Simple City Furniture (Charlottesville, Virginia: The University Press of Virginia, 1970) and "Boston Furniture Craftsmen 1630-1730" (unpublished manuscript, 1969).

This thesis was undertaken in the summer of 1971 as a continuation of Mr. Forman's study of Boston artisans. Its purpose was to describe the cabinetmaking, upholstery, and chairmaking trades in Boston during the years 1725 to 1760. Because of an abundance of contemporary records, this thesis was confined to a documentary account of the furniture industry; a thorough examination of the furniture of the period was reluctantly left for another study.

In May of 1972 the Colonial Society of Massachusetts sponsored a conference on Boston furniture. Portions of this thesis, chiefly the Introduction and Chapter I, were presented at that time and, together with seven other conference papers, were published in Boston Furniture of the Eighteenth Century (Boston: Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1974). This landmark volume offered new information and perceptive insights into such topics as japanned, blockfront, and bombé case furniture as well as carving styles of the Chippendale period (c. 1755-1788) and the woods used in New England furniture.

Numerous public and private resources were consulted for this project.

Town records, consisting primarily of vital statistics and minutes of town and
selectmen's meetings, proved extremely helpful. Most of these have been transcribed, edited, and published in a series of thirty-nine volumes entitled *A Report of the Record Commissioners of the City of Boston* (Boston: Rockwell and Churchill, City Printers et al., 1876-1909). Robert Seybolt's compilation of town office holders (*The Town Officials of Colonial Boston 1634-1775* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1939]), extracted from these records, provided a convenient source of information on Boston craftsmen.

A vast collection of county records has survived and is housed today in both the "old" and "new" buildings of the Suffolk County Court House on Somerset Street, Boston. While it was impossible because of lack of time to examine all county documents covering the period of this project, many key records were investigated, notably: probate materials for the years 1725 to 1765; deeds of Boston chairmakers, turners, and chair caners; cases of the Inferior Court of Common Pleas for the years 1730 to 1733, 1740 to 1743, 1750 to 1753, and 1760; and cases of the Superior Court of General Sessions involving Boston chairmakers, turners, and chair caners.

A little-known but highly significant source for this study was a collection of household and shop inventories prepared after the Great Fire of 20 March 1760. The blaze, the most devastating of the century, destroyed 174 houses, 175 shops, and left 220 families homeless. Town leaders requested each victim to list his losses. Relief funds, raised from neighboring colonies, churches, and private individuals,
were then dispersed to the sufferers in proportion to the values of their inventories. Among the claimants were nineteen furniture craftsmen. The lists of their losses provide a rare glimpse of the shop contents of a large number of active artisans.

The Great Fire documents were divided into two groups, probably early in this century. The first lot, reprinted in volume twenty-nine of the Report of the Record Commissioners of the City of Boston, is owned by the city. The second lot is the property of the Boston Public Library and is located in their manuscripts and rare book room.

The business papers of Boston merchants were another major primary source for this project. Among the most useful of these were the Hancock Papers and the Abbot Papers, both on deposit at the Baker Library, Harvard University. The former collection includes an assortment of documents pertaining to the careers of Thomas Hancock, John Hancock, Peter Faneuil, and Daniel Henchman. The latter is an extensive assemblage of business accounts of one individual, Samuel Abbot of Boston and Andover.

By far the most complete picture of the furniture trade in Boston came from the shop records of Thomas Fitch and Samuel Grant, two upholsterers, and Nathaniel Holmes, a cabinetmaker. The Fitch and Grant materials consist of ten volumes of account books, letterbooks, and receipt books spanning the years 1702 to 1771. They are scattered throughout five Massachusetts libraries: the American Antiquarian Society, the Massachusetts Historical Society, the New England Historic
Genealogical Society, the Bostonian Society, and the Boston Public Library. The Holmes accounts, on the other hand, are a collection of loose bills and receipts kept by Holmes from 1725 to 1774 and now preserved among the Boum Papers at the Baker Library.

All dates appearing in the body of the thesis are in Old Style. However, for the period before 1752, 1 January is used as the beginning of the year rather than 25 March. Thus a date of 10 January 1728/9 becomes 10 January 1729. The original spelling of manuscript material is retained in all quotations; however, superior letters have been brought down to the line. Monetary values are listed in Old Tenor unless otherwise stated.

Many persons have assisted me in the course of this project. Benno Forman, my faculty advisor, first interested me in Boston furniture and throughout the past five years has ably directed my studies to fruition. His enthusiasm for the subject and his warm personal friendship have made these years enjoyable and enlightening.

Thanks are also due to the following individuals: Jonathan Fairbanks and Wendy Cooper of the Department of American Decorative Arts and Sculpture of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Harriet Ropes Cabot, Director of the Bostonian Society; Robert Lovett and Eleanor Bishop, Librarian and Assistant Librarian, respectively, of the Baker Library; and Richard Cheek. In addition, I would like to thank Mr. and Mrs. Sumner Babcock for kindly allowing my wife and me to stay
at their home during the summer of 1971 while completing two months of research in the Boston area. Finally, no person deserves greater thanks than Barbara Jobe. She has lived with the project since its inception, assisting with the research and criticizing the text. Her help and encouragement have been valued in every step of this undertaking.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PREFACE</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS</td>
<td>xi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION: THE BOSTON FURNITURE INDUSTRY 1725-1760</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. THE CABINETMAKING AND UPHOLSTERY TRADES</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. THE CHAIRMAKING TRADE</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>The Town of Boston in New England by John Bonner 1722</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Detail of Bonner Map Showing Area Between Union and Prince Streets</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Detail of Bonner Map Showing Area Between Comhill and Battery March</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Detail of Tall Clock Showing Pillars and Balls</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Camp Bed</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Table</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Desk</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Interior of Desk-On-Frame Showing Pillared Drawers</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>High Chest</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>High Chest</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Bureau Table</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>High Chest</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Bed Valance</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>A Harlot's Progress</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Bed Valance</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Before</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Trade Card of Samuel Grant</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Easy Chair</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Detail of the Back of an Easy Chair</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Fragment of a Bed Curtain</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Armchair</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Pair of Side Chairs</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Armchair</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>Mrs. Andrew Oliver and Son</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>Side Chair</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>Side Chair</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>Side Chair</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION: THE BOSTON FURNITURE

INDUSTRY 1725-1760

The Artificers in this Place Exceed Any upon ye Continent And are here also Most Numerous as Cabinet Makers, Chace & Coach Makers . . . Watchmakers, Printers, Smiths, &C.¹

In 1750 James Birket, a traveller from the West Indies, found Boston filled with craftsmen. To him, their number surpassed that in any other American town. Today, as one passes through museums and historical societies, he is likely to agree with Birket. Hundreds, if not thousands, of pieces of furniture made in the Boston area during the eighteenth century have survived. Their makers are, for the most part, unknown. However, the quantity of objects attests to the activity of many craftsmen. This study is concerned with these men -- their number, their opportunities for work, their homes, and the economy in which they operated. Such information provides new insights into not only the men themselves but also their furniture.

Between 1725 and 1760 approximately 127 joiners and cabinetmakers,² 36 chairmakers, 23 upholsterers, 16 carvers, 12 turners, 9 japanners, and 2 chair caners worked in Boston. These 225 craftsmen comprised a total larger than that of any other American town during this period. Philadelphia, Boston's nearest competitor, contained about thirty percent fewer craftsmen.³

¹Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
An increase in shipbuilding during the early eighteenth century provided abundant work for many of these craftsmen. Queen Anne's War (1702-1713) had proved especially profitable for local merchants. Their desire to enlarge the home fleet and the willingness of foreign entrepreneurs to purchase Boston vessels created jobs in every branch of the furniture industry. For example, Samuel Grant, an upholsterer, often supplied chairs and stools for the cabins of newly constructed ships. Joseph Ingraham, a local carver, completed the carved details for five ships during 1739. His bill of over £300 included £30:5:0 for an "11 foot Lyon for ship Dragon." Such accounts are typical for carvers and suggest that they were far busier with shipwork than with furniture. Joiners often outfitted the interiors of vessels. Two such craftsmen, Daniel and Joseph Ballard, were often involved in civil litigation and were forced by the courts to account for their work. According to one law suit, Joseph Ballard constructed paneling, cupboards, chests, lockers, cornice moldings, window sashes, and "ye hen & goose coop" for a ship. Other joiners provided similar services, sometimes building tables and desks in addition to performing finished carpentry work.

Besides shipwork, merchants offered cabinetmakers and chairmakers the opportunity to export their goods in vessels bound for Nova Scotia, the coastal ports of New York, Philadelphia, and Charleston, or the West Indies. That craftsmen took advantage of the mercantile activity is demonstrated by the statements of Plunkett Fleeson, a Philadelphia upholsterer. In 1742 he advertised chairs "cheaper than any made here, or imported from Boston." Evidently, hundreds of Boston chairs
were flooding into the area because two years later Fleeson chastised "the Master Chair Makers in this City . . . [for] Encouraging the Importation of Boston Chairs." Even in 1762, when Philadelphia cabinetmakers were beginning to produce their finest furniture, Ebenezer Call asked his brother in Boston to have chairs made by a Mr. Lampson and shipped to Philadelphia.

In addition to ship construction and an export trade, the merchants themselves were excellent clientele for craftsmen. Though occasionally importing furniture from England, local merchants usually relied on Bostonians for their home furnishings. Samuel Abbot, who began his mercantile career in 1760, kept an "Accompt of Household Furniture." In it he noted the purchase of his household goods for the next thirty years. With the exception of four Philadelphia (Windsor) chairs and two looking glasses, all of Abbot's furniture was made in Boston. Chairmakers Henry Perkins, William Fullerton, and George Bright provided mahogany tables and chair frames. John Forsyth, William Gray, and Ziphion Thayer upholstered these chairs and furnished bed mattresses, pillows, curtains, and window cushions. Adino Paddock, a coachmaker, billed Abbot £40 (Lawful Money) for a chaise "Carved Gilt & Laced" while John Gore, a successful japanner, painted and framed a coat of arms for £2 (L.M.). Such complete documentation is nonexistent for the first half of the eighteenth century. However, individual references to purchases by Daniel Henchman, Matthew Bond, and other merchants suggest that they, too, primarily patronized local craftsmen.
Figure 1

The Town of Boston in New England by John Bonner 1722.
Drawn by John Bonner, engraved by Francis Dewing. Copperplate engraving, first state; H. 16 13/16 inches, W. 23 inches (engraved surface only). (1. N. Phelps Stokes Collection, Prints Division, The New York Public Library.) See also figs. 2 and 3.
The homes of furniture craftsmen were located throughout the city. Samuel Wheeler, a chairmaker, lived on Orange Street near the neck of land leading to Roxbury. Thomas Luckis, a carver, owned a portion of a home almost two miles away on Lynn Street in the North End (fig. 1). Many lived in craftsmen’s districts either in the North End between Union and Prince Streets or in the South End between Cornhill and Battery March (figs. 2 and 3). John Brocas, John Corser, Samuel Ridgway, and Job Coit resided on Anne and Union Streets. A block away on Back and Middle Streets were the homes of cabinetmakers Nathaniel Holmes, Thomas Sherburne, James McMillian, Thomas Johnson, and William Johnson. In the South End on Battery March lived at least five chairmakers. Occasionally these individuals owned their dwellings, but as the century progressed more and more men chose to rent houses, portions of tenements, or just rooms. Indeed, evidence suggests that middle-class property-owning craftsmen of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries were gradually replaced by increasingly wealthy merchant-craftsmen and poor journeymen.

Boston furniture makers worked in an economy based on commodity and credit exchange. Foreign coin did not circulate in the city and even the paper money printed by the Massachusetts government was scarce among craftsmen. As a result, a type of bartering system prevailed where workmen traded small amounts of cash, goods, services, and notes of obligation in lieu of money. A note written by William Randle, a japanner, is typical of the latter form of exchange. On 15 July 1724 he promised to pay “Mr John Greenwood or order Forty five Pounds on or
Figure 2

Detail of Bonner Map Showing Area between Union and Prince Streets. (I. N. Phelps Stokes Collection, Prints Division, The New York Public Library.) See also figs. 1 and 3.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
Figure 3

Detail of Bonner Map Showing Area between Cornhill and Battery March. (I. N. Phelps Stokes Collection, Prints Division, The New York Public Library.) See also figs. 1 and 2.
before the first day of April next, it being for Sundry Prints of ye City of New York
Bought & Received of him." 17

In this economy, personal trust played an important role. No man wanted to
sell goods to another unless he believed that he would eventually be repaid.
Artisans especially needed good credit reputations because of the many items
required in their work. Cabinetmakers turned to merchants and ship captains for
imported lumber and to braziers and shopkeepers for imported brassware, tools,
nails, and glue. Furthermore, in an urban environment, they depended on
victuallers and innholders for food and drink. To succeed in such an atmosphere
required hard work and reliable connections within the craft and the community.
Apprenticeship and kinship ties were the easiest ways of securing these connections.
In both, masters and fathers provided assistance for younger men to begin their
careers. For this reason, successive generations of families followed the same trade
and became trusted members of the community. The Coit family, comprised of Job,
Sr., and his three sons, worked as cabinetmakers. The Perkins family included five
chairmakers in two generations. The most extended family, the Frothinghams of
Boston and Charlestown, contained sixteen woodworkers in four generations. 18
Some craftsmen married into the families of furniture makers. Ebenezer Clough,
a Boston joiner, married Elizabeth Welch, the daughter of a Charlestown joiner.
Robert Davis, a Boston japanner, married the daughter of William Randle, another
local japanner.
These complex kinship ties may have contributed to the general conservatism of Boston furniture when compared to that of Philadelphia. The prolonged use of stretchers or the continued appearance of Queen Anne style furniture in the 1760s and 1770s could have resulted from traditional family training.

Family ties not only provided security for Bostonians who trained locally as apprentices, but also made it extremely difficult for immigrants to break into the furniture industry. Between 1730 and 1760 no inventory of an immigrant craftsman's estate exceeded £100 while those of several native workmen surpassed £2000. Family connections by no means insured success, but they seem to have been at least a prerequisite for the attainment of wealth in the furniture industry.

Boston's faltering economy after 1740 further decreased the immigrants' opportunities. A drop in population during the thirty years prior to the Revolution reflected the deteriorating condition. As the Reverend Andrew Burnaby stated in 1760, "The province of Massachusetts-Bay has been for some years past, I believe, rather on the decline. Its inhabitants have lost several branches of trade, which they are not likely to recover again." Growing competition from other coastal ports, the Molasses Act, and high local taxes created little need or attraction for additional craftsmen.

The best example of the immigrant craftsman's problems is Charles Warham. Born in London in 1701, he travelled to Boston sometime before 1724. The young cabinetmaker, who had apparently completed an English apprenticeship,
discovered hard times in his new home. Numerous court cases reveal that he was unable to pay for food or rent. Without any means of solving his dilemma, Warham evidently became a poor risk to his creditors. In 1731, he sold his household possessions and moved to Charleston, South Carolina. On 2 November 1734 he advertised in the *South Carolina Gazette* "all sorts of Tables, Chests, Chests-of-drawers, Desks, Bookcases &c. As also Coffins of the newest fashion, never as yet made in Charlestown." He purchased lots for his home and shop on Tradd Street and during the ensuing years established a prominent cabinetmaking trade in Charleston. As a result of his newfound prosperity, he turned later in life to land speculation. In 1776, for example, he offered for sale 5000 acres of South Carolina real estate. He died on 20 July 1779, leaving a substantial estate. Debt-ridden in Boston, a city glutted with craftsmen, Warham succeeded in Charleston where demand for his work was far greater.

In contrast to this immigrant, several of Boston's native sons prospered in the furniture industry. Chapter I will focus on a cabinetmaker and two upholsterers whose family ties coupled with business acumen enabled them to succeed in their professions.
FOOTNOTES: INTRODUCTION


2 In this study no distinction is made between joiners known to have made furniture and cabinetmakers. For more information on the use of the two terms in colonial Boston, see Benno M. Forman, "Urban Aspects of Massachusetts Furniture in the Late Seventeenth Century," Winterthur Conference Report 1969: Country Cabinetwork and Simple City Furniture (Charlottesville, Virginia: The University Press of Virginia, 1970), pp. 17-20.


5 Daybook of Thomas Hancock, 27 May and 29 December 1738, Baker Library, Harvard University.

6 Boston, Massachusetts, Suffolk County Inferior Court of Common Pleas, 21 December 1741 (hereafter Suffolk Common Pleas).

7 Ibid., 18 January 1750.

8 For example, see Daybook of Peter Faneuil, 11 May 1732, p. 389, Baker Library, Harvard University.


It is possible that these chairs may also have been of Boston origin, since the term "Philadelphia chair" was a generic one for any type of Windsor chair.

In this context, "Laced" could either mean "diversified with streaks of color" (A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles, 10 vols. [Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1905], VI, part I, 71) or be an abbreviation for "lacquered."

See accounts between Henchman and William Downe, a Boston upholsterer, 24 January 1743, Domestic Bills, XV, Hancock Papers, Baker Library, Harvard University. See also accounts between Bond and Thomas Gibbons and Lanier Kenn, two cabinetmakers in partnership, Suffolk Common Pleas, 15 December 1733.

The chairmakers were Isaiah Audebert, Stephen Fullerton, John Perkins, Joseph Putnam, and John Trevett.


Boston, Massachusetts, Suffolk County Superior Court of General Sessions, docket 21711.


The only records documenting immigration into Boston between 1700 and 1760 are ship impost records for the years 1715 and 1716. These incomplete records list the names of eight newly arrived joiners and cabinetmakers from London, Bristol, Ireland, Barbados, Long Island, and North Carolina. Obviously, many others ventured to Boston, but unfortunately their names rarely appear in town records. A Volume of Records Relating to the Early History of Boston Containing Miscellaneous Papers, XXIX (Boston: Municipal Printing Office, 1900), 229-242.

Andrew Burnaby, Travels Through the Middle Settlements in North-America in the Years 1759 and 1760, 2nd ed. (1775; rpt. Ithaca, New York: Great


22 Warham purchased goods from Samuel Gardner, a Boston shopkeeper, on 9 October 1724. See Suffolk Common Pleas, 14 December 1730.

23 Ibid., 22 March 1731, 28 August 1732.

24 Ibid., 3 March 1733.

25 Quoted in Burton, Charleston, p. 126.

26 Ibid., pp. 126-127.
CHAPTER I: THE CABINETMAKING
AND UPHOLSTERY TRADES

The cabinetmaking and upholstery trades were large complex crafts employing hundreds of individuals in eighteenth-century Boston. Some men, particularly immigrants like Charles Warham, found it impossible to succeed in the town. Others, capitalizing on local kinship ties and their own business skills, established comfortable livelihoods for themselves and their families. Thanks to the discovery of the business papers of three such men, the operations of some of Boston's more successful shops can be analyzed. These craftsmen are Nathaniel Holmes, a cabinetmaker, and Thomas Fitch and Samuel Grant, two upholsterers.

The career of Nathaniel Holmes, a cabinetmaker, is illustrative of how men with strong local kinship ties manipulated the credit economy to their best advantage. Holmes was born in Boston on 29 December 1703. His father, Nathaniel, Sr., had worked as a joiner and mason during the late seventeenth century. Young Nathaniel was only eight when his father died, and presumably his mother apprenticed him a few years later to one of Boston or Charlestown's many cabinetmakers. By 1725 he had opened his own cabinet shop near the Mill Bridge in Boston. Three years later he married Mary Webber, the daughter of a lumber dealer and sawmill owner, a connection which obviously served his best interests,
and during the next decade expanded his cabinetmaking business by employing workmen from the Massachusetts Bay area.

In 1735 Holmes purchased a distillery on Back Street and for five years prospered through the production of both rum and furniture. At the same time he began to hire vessels to carry his goods up and down the coast. His rum business and carrying trade proved so profitable that after 1740 he abandoned his cabinet-making operation. To complement his distillery, Holmes built a sugar baking house in 1748 and for the next twenty years shipped sugar, molasses, and rum on his own sloops and schooners to Newfoundland, the Middle Colonies and the South. When he died in 1774, he left an estate valued at almost £4000 (Lawful Money) which included land and houses throughout Massachusetts and Maine. He owned dwellings on Back, Charter, Middle, and School Streets in Boston as well as a farm in Malden and land in Falmouth and Kennebeck. Holmes succeeded far better than any other cabinetmaker in Boston. His biography indicates that a craftsman could become wealthy, but only by changing occupations could he amass a great fortune.

Fortunately, surviving documentation permits a detailed analysis of Holmes’s furniture business. During the 1730s Holmes served as a merchant-middleman for numerous craftsmen in Boston and surrounding towns whom he supplied with food, clothing, brassware, lumber, and glue. In return, they constructed furniture which they delivered to Holmes who then sold it to ship captains for export or to private customers in Boston.
Holmes employed ten joiners and cabinetmakers, only four of whom worked in Boston. Robert Lord, Richard Woodward, and Thomas Johnson lived in Boston. Woodward, in fact, boarded with Holmes. Another local cabinetmaker, Thomas Sherburne, helped Holmes manage the business in 1736 and 1737. John Mudge and Jacob Burdit resided in Malden, a small village on the Malden River, north of Boston. Thomas and Chapman Waldron lived in Marblehead, a coastal settlement about sixteen miles northeast of Boston. James Hovey worked for Holmes for nine months in either Plymouth or Boston. The home of Timothy Gooding, Jr., the last of Holmes's workmen, has not been located. The majority of these men were between twenty-one and twenty-eight years of age, suggesting that Holmes was responsible for aiding them at the start of their careers, when they needed credit to purchase household and shop goods.

Holmes dealt with three turners, two bed bottom makers, and a japanner, all presumably of Boston. The turners, John Underwood, Daniel McKillister, and Daniel Swan, produced lathe-turned legs, drops, finials (called flames in the accounts), pillars, and balls which were later used by the joiners to embellish their furniture. Pillars and balls were produced in sets and probably used in the upper portion of tall case clocks as columns and finials, respectively (fig. 4). The bed bottom makers, William Bulfinch and Elias Thomas, laced canvas to bed frames made by Holmes or his workmen. A typical cloth bottom is illustrated in The Cabinet Dictionary by Thomas Sheraton (fig. 5). Holmes's japanner, William Randle,
Figure 4

Figure 5

performed an assortment of services, including the gilding of pillars for a clock and the japanning of a pedimented high chest.

The personal papers of Nathaniel Holmes reveal that these fifteen craftsmen constructed 338 pieces of furniture for their employer between 1733 and 1739. Unfortunately, only a portion of the business is documented in the bills and receipts. We have no information, for instance, on how much furniture Holmes constructed himself. Nor do we have complete accounts for each craftsman's work. The total number of objects probably far exceeded those recorded in the papers.

Tables and desks constituted the great majority of their work. Of the documented objects, 62 were desks and 225 were tables. Many were simple utilitarian pieces of furniture made of maple or pine (fig. 6). However, these craftsmen also made elaborate card and tea tables as well as veneered desks with inlaid stringing and stars. On 15 June 1738 John Mudge billed his employer £3:3:0 for a "Larg Sedor desk with a star ar.d scolup dros, no well rume, Lap beeded and pilor dros." Such a desk probably resembled one made by William Parkman of Boston in 1739 (fig. 7). "No well rume" indicates that insufficient space was available for a concealed well, a feature often found in New England desks of the William and Mary style. "Scolup dros" may refer to either the shell carved drawers of a desk interior or the small arched drawers above the pigeonholes. The reference to pillared drawers describes the narrow document drawers with applied pilasters, seen on many Boston eighteenth-century desks (fig. 8).
Figure 6

Table. Eastern Massachusetts, c. 1730-1760. Maple and white pine; H. 25 1/2 inches, W. 31 inches (open), D. 31 7/8 inches. (The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum.)
Figure 7

Figure 8

Holmes's workmen constructed 16 desks and bookcases and 16 chests of drawers. To decorate these large pieces of furniture, they often applied carved or inlaid shells. In 1733 William Randle was paid for gilding two carved shells, probably for a high chest (fig. 9). Four years later Richard Woodward charged Holmes eighteen shillings for "putting in a Shell" and one pound for "Setting 2 Shells." These later references document the difficult and expensive task of inlaying strips of wood in a radiating pattern (fig. 10). String inlay was an even more common decorative motif. John Mudge constructed "a Case of dros and tabell stringed" in October 1738 and a month later made "a Case of drawers soled ends and stringed." The earlier reference suggests a matching high chest and dressing table with string inlay. The latter may refer to a veneered high chest with solid sides decorated with stringing.

Holmes's workmen enumerated only twelve other pieces of furniture in their bills. In 1737 Richard Woodward constructed wall brackets and a bureau table (fig. 11). His Boston colleague, Thomas Johnson, made a tea chest and frame, a tankard board, and a double chest of drawers. None of Holmes's craftsmen working outside the city produced similar one-of-a-kind items.

These workmen charged Holmes for the amount of labor involved in making or assisting on a piece of furniture. A standard cost was often set for each form. Tables, for example, were priced according to their length. Richard Woodward charged eleven shillings per foot for tables in 1736. A year and a half later he
High Chest. Boston area, c. 1730-1750. Walnut and white pine; H. 89 1/2 inches, W. 43 3/4 inches, D. 22 inches. (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Mrs. Russell Sage, 1909.) This chest has carved and gilded shells, probably similar to the type of work performed by William Randle for Nathaniel Holmes.
High Chest. Eastern Massachusetts, c. 1730-1750. Walnut and white pine; H. 86 1/8 inches, W. 43 3/4 inches, D. 23 1/8 inches. (The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum.) This chest is decorated with inlaid shells, probably similar to those set in by Richard Woodward.
Bureau Table. Boston area, c. 1730-1750. Walnut and white pine; H. 31 1/4 inches, W. 33 3/4 inches, D. 19 3/8 inches. (Gore Place Society, Waltham, Massachusetts: photo, Richard Cheek.) This bureau table decorated with string inlay is representative of early bureau tables made in Boston during the 1730s and 1740s.
demanded an extra shilling per foot, no doubt reflecting inflation in colonial
Boston. The price of desks also varied according to size. John Mudge charged
£2:10:0 for his standard desk and £1:1:0 for a smaller version. Any ornamentation
increased the cost. For a desk with pillored drawers, Mudge added two shillings
to his standard sum. Veneering, a popular form of decoration on Boston furniture,
increased the cost of construction. In 1734 Mudge built both solid wood and
veneered chests of drawers. The price of the former amounted to £3:2:0 while the
latter was £4:0:0. Occasionally the accounts refer to other details such as
fringing, inlaid stars and shells, bracket feet, and toes. These motifs varied
greatly in price and probably were custom ordered.

Often a single object entailed the work of many craftsmen. According to
the Holmes papers, a veneered high chest, similar to that made by Ebenezer Hards-
borne (fig. 12), required the work of five men. Holmes himself supplied the lumber,
brassware, and nails to a cabinetmaker who constructed the case. A turner furnished
the cabinetmaker with drops, flame finials, and columns for the front of the chest.
After the case was completed, a highly skilled craftsman inlaid the star and may
have carved the two shells. Finally, a japanner put on the finishing touches by
gilding the shells.

In summary, the papers of Nathaniel Holmes provide much important data
on the cabinetmaking trade in the Boston area during the third decade of the
eighteenth century. Although no extant furniture can be traced to Holmes or his
High Chest. Made by Ebenezer Hartshorne, Charlestown, 1739. Walnut and white pine; H. 90 inches, W. 41 1/2 inches, D. 21 1/2 inches. (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Julius Knight Fox Fund, 31.432.)
workmen, the accounts attest to the quantity of their output. Hopefully, examples will be found, so that we may some day more accurately judge the skills of these men and the characteristics of their work.

No discussion of the furniture industry could be complete without considering the role of the upholsterer. During the eighteenth century the upholstery trade was deemed the most lucrative and prestigious craft profession. Its members not only made and sold bedding, bed curtains, and upholstered furniture, but also imported all types of textiles and dry goods for resale. Thomas Fitch and Samuel Grant were two of Boston's wealthiest upholsterers. A study of their careers demonstrates the reasons for their success as well as the activities and products of the upholsterer in colonial Boston.

The son of a local cordwainer, Thomas Fitch was born on 5 February 1669. His father died when he was only nine. Apparently his mother apprenticed him to a Boston upholsterer, perhaps Edward Shippen, an eminent English-born merchant-upholsterer who moved to Philadelphia about 1698. Fitch later corresponded frequently with Shippen and often sold goods in Boston for his Pennsylvania friend. In 1694 he married Abiel Danforth, the daughter of the Reverend Samuel Danforth of Roxbury. During the following years he established a highly profitable upholstery business and became a respected man in the community. He held numerous public offices including selectman, moderator, town auditor, and representative to the General Court. His daughters married men of high standing.
Martha married James Allen, a prosperous merchant, and Mary wedded Andrew Oliver, later a lieutenant governor of the colony. When Thomas Fitch died in 1736, he left a personal estate of £3388:8:11. He also owned several houses in Boston and thousands of acres in many newly established towns in Massachusetts.15

Fitch trained Samuel Grant in the upholstery trade.16 Born in 1705, Samuel was the son of Joseph Grant, a local boat builder.17 He married Elizabeth Cookson in 1729 and they raised six children over the next twenty-five years. Like his former master, Grant held several important town positions. Between 1747 and 1757 he served as town selectman, in 1768 as town moderator. At his death in 1784, he gave the bulk of his estate to Moses Grant, his only surviving son.18

Fortunately for historians of the decorative arts, several volumes of the account books and letterbooks of Thomas Fitch and Samuel Grant have survived.19 With these documents it is possible to focus on the lives of two Boston upholsterers during the years 1720 to 1740. Fitch established an extensive trading network throughout the colonies, specializing in the distribution of English textiles. In addition, he sometimes imported other goods which might sell well in the colonies. In a letter to a New York merchant he stated that "besides all Sorts of Upholstery goods as rugs blankets quilts ticks broadstrip &c, " he also offered for sale "a Parcel of Ironware and nails."20 Further correspondence shows that Fitch sold spectacles, penknives, candlesticks, stockings, caps, clothing materials, and other dry goods to merchants in every coastal port from Halifax to the West Indies. To transport these goods he owned shares in several ships.
In addition to his mercantile pursuits, Fitch operated an upholstery shop where he or his workmen produced beds, bolsters, mattresses, curtains, and furniture. Some jobs were done for his clients in their homes. In 1724 he charged George Cradock £0:1:6 for "puting up a bedsta & Curts." A year later Fitch completed the wallpapering of a room for John Jekyl. The cost was £2:12:9 for seventy-eight and a quarter yards of binding, papering tacks, and labor. Jekyl had purchased the paper himself and employed Fitch only to hang it.

The great majority of Fitch's patrons were wealthy merchants, lawyers, and physicians of Boston, Newport, and New York. The list included John Read, Esquire, of Boston, Edmund Quincy, Esquire, of Braintree, Isaac Lopez of Newport, and William Beekman of New York. For such a prominent clientele, Fitch made every effort to provide fashionable furnishings. He sometimes wrote to his friends in England for patterns for bed hangings. In 1725 he instructed John East, an upholsterer in London, to "Get your best draughtsman to draw a few of ye newest fashion'd & pretty neat airy Val:ts [Valances] headcloths headboards & Testers and a comish [comice] or two: and ye figure of a counter pane if they are in fashion." Several times in the next five years, Fitch requested additional patterns. In an illuminating letter on the taste of Bostonians, he asked East "to send me a pattern or figure of Fashionable Valance & the figure of a headboard & headcloth done by some ingenious workman to be put on a flat headcloth & as the fashion I think is very plain, he may send some with a little more work, our people too generally choosing them somewhat showy."
Bed Valance. Salem or Boston, c. 1720-1740. English cheyney, W. 12 1/2 inches. (Essex Institute, Salem, Massachusetts.)
Figure 14

Fitch's letters explain the close similarity between English and American bed hangings. An example at the Essex Institute (fig. 13) resembles the end of a valance illustrated in a scene from *A Harlot's Progress* by William Hogarth (fig. 14). Another valance originally owned by the Robbins family of Lexington, Massachusetts (fig. 15), relates to an English example, also engraved by Hogarth in the two prints, *Before* and *After* (fig. 16). Such comparisons demonstrate the attempts of American upholsterers to follow English designs. Using imported fabrics and patterns, they were able to copy the most recent fashions in London.

Fitch occasionally collaborated with English upholsterers on elaborate bed hangings. A letter to Silas Hooper, a London merchant, in December 1725 records the joint efforts of two men on different continents to complete a set of hangings:

Now I desire Yo to apply to some Upholder that's a neat Workman and get him to Match this Camblet very exactly with enough of it only for one sute of outside Vallane and to Cover one set of Cornishes, and make up the outside vall and Cover the Cornishes handsomely and fashionably, and cover the head board, wood head Cloth and Testr. with some ... Satten and make the inside Vall thereof, Let the whole be of a good Air or fancy for a room 10 feet high, and trim'd with the same lace of the Inclosed pattern El packaging up for me full Enough of the Same binding and breed suitable to finish ye Curtains bases and base moldings here.²⁵

Fitch intended to use this set of hangings as a model for another "sute of the Same which I shall wholly make up here."²⁶ Such lengthy correspondence suggests the importance of bed hangings in the eighteenth century. For Boston's gentry they provided a symbol of status as well as comfort. Feather mattresses weighing up to sixty pounds, curtains with over thirty-five yards of expensive worsted material, and
Figure 15

Bed Valance. Boston area, c. 1730-1760. English harrateen; W. 13 inches. (Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities.) According to family tradition, this valance was owned by the Robbins family of Arlington and Lexington, Massachusetts.
Figure 16


Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
elaborately carved high-posted frames made beds the most costly objects in the colonial home. Fitch succeeded in business by capably serving an elite clientele. Evidence indicates that his apprentice, Samuel Grant, sought to do the same. In 1728 Grant had completed his indenture and was working at the Crown and Cushion in Union Street (fig. 17). Fitch helped him to begin business by selling him upholstery materials on credit. Of additional importance were the contacts that Grant had made while under his master's guidance. After his apprenticeship he patronized a London upholsterer used by Fitch, employed the same chairmaker to make bedsteads and chair frames, and sold goods to many of the same persons. After his master's death in 1736, Grant, in effect, inherited both the business and reputation of Thomas Fitch.

The scale of his activity, however, never reached the magnitude of his master's enterprise. Grant never developed the extensive export trade which characterized Fitch's career. Perhaps increasing competition from Newport and New York merchants impeded his chances of success in the coastal business. More likely he simply lacked the capital to finance a complex mercantile operation.

Grant rarely imported his textiles directly from English merchants. Whereas Fitch had dealt with as many as five London factors at one time, Grant requested upholstery from only one man and, in this case, the orders were small. Without a far-reaching export trade, Grant had no means of repaying English merchants with
Trade Card of Samuel Grant. Attributed to Thomas Johnston, Boston, 1736. Restrike of copperplate engraving; H. 4 inches, W. 6 3/8 inches (engraved surface only). (American Antiquarian Society.)
goods marketable in London. Fitch had sent furs from New York, tar from the Carolinas, logwood and sugar from the West Indies, and whalebone to his factors in England. He also collected bills of exchange from merchants in other areas which helped to pay for English textiles sent to Boston. Grant, on the other hand, conducted a small export trade along the Atlantic Coast. His only major commodity for shipment to England was beeswax. Consequently, he was forced to rely on merchant-middlemen in Boston for most of his goods. During the year 1732, he purchased upholstery materials, garlits (a coarse linen), and calicoes valued at £1597 from Charles Apthorp, a leading local importer. He also dealt with James Allen, Fitch's son-in-law and a wealthy merchant, Jacob and John Wendell, two brothers in business together, and Samuel Cary, a ship captain. In repayment for textiles, these men accepted furniture and the services of an upholsterer. Between 1728 and 1740 Grant delivered 141 chairs to the Wendells, 214 to Apthorp, and 400 to Peter Faneuil, another prosperous importer. Most of these chairs were packed into boxes, loaded onto ships owned by the merchants, and sold at distant ports. Some were used to furnish ships' cabins, while others were requested by the merchants for their own homes or those of relatives and friends. In 1732 James Allen ordered a bed, couch, easy chair, and twelve leather chairs for delivery to his brother, Jeremy Allen. 29

Grant's success as an upholsterer depended on his relationship with local merchants. From 1728 to 1740 his services were constantly in demand and, as a result, he never became a risk to his creditors. He profited by purchasing large
quantities of textiles at wholesale prices and reselling them in small lots at higher rates. His charges for labor were minimal when compared to the costs of materials. On 12 July 1731 he billed Jacob and John Wendell for two easy chairs. The frames for each cost £1:17:6; the curled hair, feathers, linen ticking, and webbing for the understructure cost £2:5:8; the outer material and binding were £3:1:6; and the labor was £1:16:0. The labor charge amounted to only one-sixth of the total. The labor charge for a pillow, mattress, or bolster was even less. Grant billed George Rogers £12 for feather bedding which cost only £0:5:0 to make.

Besides describing the business activities of Thomas Fitch and Samuel Grant, the account books provide insights into the popularity, appearance, and style of textiles and furniture. English worsteds were by far the most common textiles used in home furnishings. During a four-year span between 1723 and 1732, Grant used cheyney, a coarse-grained or ribbed worsted, for about ninety percent of his curtains and chair coverings. Ten years later harrateen, another worsted closely related to cheyney, superseded it. From 1738 to 1742 harrateen was employed for sixty percent of his furnishings. Cheyney dropped to about thirty percent during the same period and after 1742 disappeared almost altogether.

Today it is difficult to distinguish between these two fabrics. They are part of a group of heavy worsteds which include camlet and moreen. During the eighteenth century both were often decorated with watering, waving, and figuring (figs. 13 and 18). In watering, the cloth received a special preparation with water
Easy Chair. Boston area, c. 1740-1765. Walnut, white pine, and English harrateen or moreen (original); H. 48 inches, W. 33 1/4 inches, D. 34 inches. (The Brooklyn Museum, Henry L. Batterman, Maria L. Emmons, and Charles Stewart Smith Memorial Funds.)
and then was passed under a hot press to give a smooth and glossy surface. Waving was done by rolling the cloth under an embossed cylinder to create a rippling design. Figuring was simply the stamping of flowers and figures onto the fabric by means of hot irons. These impressed patterns can easily be seen on the back of an easy chair at Bayou Bend (fig. 19) and on a fragment of a bed curtain at the Essex Institute (fig. 20). Both examples are red or crimson, the most common color named by Grant; blue, green, and yellow followed in popularity.

Boston upholsterers often covered their chairs in leather. Fitch and Grant used Russian and New England leather. The first, imported into this country through England, was common during the early years of the eighteenth century, but by 1725 had become difficult to obtain. On 26 June 1727 Fitch wrote to a Colonel Coddington in Massachusetts that he had "no Russian leather Chairs nor other, nor Leather to make them of. Russian Leather is so very high at home that It wont answer, If I had any they would Certainly be att Your Service. I think Mr Downs has New England red Leather, but there's no Russian in Town." After 1730 Boston craftsmen turned primarily to New England leather. This material was usually made of seal or goat skins. Grant imported hundreds of seal skins which he sold to Joseph Calef, a local tanner. The skins were dyed black or red, cut into the shape of chair seats, and returned to Grant.

The account books of Thomas Fitch and Samuel Grant are most helpful in describing the styles of chairs made in Boston between 1720 and 1740. On 4 May
Figure 19

Detail of the Back of an Easy Chair. Boston area, c. 1750-1770. Mahogany, maple, and English harrateen or moreen (original); H. 45 inches, W. 33 inches, D. 26 inches. (The Bayou Bend Collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.) For an overall view of the chair, see American Art: Furniture, Painting, and Silver in the Bayou Bend Collection (Houston, 1974), no. 89.
Figure 20

Fragment of a Bed Curtain. Salem or Boston, c. 1750-1770. English harrateen or moreen. (Essex Institute, Salem, Massachusetts.) According to family tradition, this curtain was owned by Daniel and Sarah Saunders of Salem who were married in 1770.
1720 Fitch charged Isaac Lopez £16:2:0 for "12 carved Russian Leather chairs & 1 elbow [chair]." The reference to carving suggests that these were in the William and Mary style. The large elbow chair may have been similar to an armchair in the Winterthur Museum which still retains its Russian leather upholstery (fig. 21). In 1724 Fitch began to sell crooked-back leather chairs without carving. These chairs, probably resembling a pair in a private collection (fig. 22), were often called Boston chairs and remained popular items for export during the following two decades.

Furniture in the Queen Anne style was introduced during the late 1720s. On 14 October 1729 Grant sold an upholstered chair of red cheyney, described as "New fashion round seat." Such a chair was probably related in form to an example attributed to New York (fig. 23). The round seat reflected an increasing emphasis on the curved line, a chief characteristic of the new style. In 1730 Grant recorded the sale of a couch frame with "horsebone feet." Apparently the term referred to a cabriole leg, perhaps with a notch near the bottom of the back of the leg resembling the indentation just above a horse's hoof. On 22 January 1732 Grant charged the mercantile firm of Clark and Kilby £12 for "6 Leather Chairs maple frames horsebone round feet & Cusn Seats." These chairs presumably had cabriole legs, pad feet, and slip seats. It seems likely that they also had straight stiles, curved crest rails, and vase-shaped splats or banisters, as they were often called. Grant, in April 1732, billed John Breck, a cooper in the North End, for "8 Leathr Chairs horsebone feet & banister [er] backs." Such chairs, no doubt,
Figure 21

Armchair. Boston area, c. 1710-1725. Maple, red oak, and Russian leather (original); H. 35 1/8 inches, W. 24 inches, D. 27 1/2 inches. (The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum.)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
Figure 22


Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
Figure 23

resembled one illustrated in a portrait of Mrs. Andrew Oliver and Son (fig. 24) by John Smibert. This important painting of the daughter of Thomas Fitch was completed only two months after Grant first mentioned the term "banister."

Many examples of these Queen Anne chairs have survived. One with a history of ownership in the Boston area (fig. 25) is related in the shaping of the crest rail to Mrs. Oliver's chair. In later versions of the form, the crest dips in the center to form a yoke (fig. 26).

Between 1732 and 1740 Grant continued to produce leather-backed William and Mary chairs, upholstered armchairs with cheyney and harrateen coverings, and Queen Anne chairs with solid splats. Occasionally embellishments were added to these forms. In 1733 Grant sold some chairs with claw feet. A year later he first produced ones with compass-shaped seats (fig. 27). Throughout the later period, however, he presented no radical changes in style, evidence of the continued popularity of earlier forms in Boston.

This survey has focussed on Boston furniture craftsmen of the early eighteenth century and the objects they produced. In an industry with hundreds of workmen, many practiced specialized professions. Japanners, for example, were able to concentrate on the decoration of furniture and looking glasses, a very sophisticated specialty which required a large and wealthy clientele. No other city offered similar opportunities for specialization. Furthermore, as the Holmes accounts reveal, close contacts existed between rural and urban artisans in the
Figure 24

Mrs. Andrew Oliver and Son. Painted by John Smibert, Boston, 1732. Oil on canvas; H. 50 1/2 inches, W. 40 1/2 inches (excluding frame). (Collection of Andrew Oliver, Jr., Daniel Oliver, and Ruth F. O. Evans: photo, Frick Art Reference Library.)
Side Chair. Boston area, c. 1730-1750. Walnut and maple; H. 44 1/2 inches, W. 19 1/4 inches, D. 21 1/2 inches. (The Bayou Bend Collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.) This chair is identical to one in a private collection with a history of ownership in the Boston area.
Figure 26

Side Chair. Boston, c. 1735-1760. Walnut; H. 40 3/8 inches, W. 20 3/8 inches, D. 16 1/2 inches. (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Herbert Edes, 36.21.) According to family tradition, this chair was owned by John Leach (1724-1792) of Boston.
Figure 27

Side Chair. Boston area, c. 1735-1760. Walnut and maple; H. 39 3/4 inches, W. 21 1/2 inches, D. 16 1/4 inches. (Yale University Art Gallery, Mabel Brady Garvan Collection.)

According to family tradition, this chair was owned by Edward Holyoke, President of Harvard College from 1737 to 1769.
Massachusetts Bay area, raising the question of how to discriminate between country and city cabinetwork. When men received materials from Boston, they may also have been given designs or patterns from their employer. Holmes provided sets of veneers to his workmen in Malden. These items, already cut into certain shapes, could easily have been used to build a standard chest or desk which differed little from Boston furniture. Perhaps with the discovery of more documented furniture from Boston and its environs, we may know how these rural examples compared with their urban counterparts.

The papers of Thomas Fitch and Samuel Grant attest to the importance of the upholsterer in colonial Boston. Both men supplied not only expensive and fashionable furnishings to wealthy patrons throughout Massachusetts but also cloth, metalwares, and a wide variety of other dry goods to shopkeepers and country traders. Their careers demonstrate the close connection between the merchant and upholstery trades. The study of eighteenth-century upholsterers, however, is just beginning. Much more data is needed on the less affluent workmen in Boston, Salem, Portsmouth, Newport, and other New England towns, before we can understand how Thomas Fitch and Samuel Grant compared in their craft activities and level of success with others in the upholstery trade.

Most importantly, this study has documented the genesis of the Queen Anne style in Boston. Grant first recorded the production of a chair with a round seat in 1729 and one with horsebone feet in 1732. In the same year, William Randle billed
Nathaniel Holmes for japanning a pedimented high chest, the earliest reference to the new style in case furniture. The initial creations of horsebone feet and pedimented high chests were to flower in the following years into the sophisticated Queen Anne furniture for which Boston craftsmanship is famous.
FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER I

1 For information pertaining to Holmes's life, see George Arthur Gray, The Descendants of George Holmes of Roxbury 1594-1903 (Boston: David Clapp and Son, 1903), pp. 16, 23-30.


3 Bill, Thomas Atkins to Nathaniel Holmes, Boston, 16 March 1748, Bills, VIII, Bourn Papers, Baker Library, Harvard University.

4 The inventory totalled £3885:0:3 (L.M.). Boston, Massachusetts, Suffolk County Registry of Probate, docket 15727 (hereafter Suffolk Probate Records).

5 The following information is based on accounts between Holmes and John Mudge, Jacob Burdit, and Mary Jackson, 55.523-525, 55.674.2, Joseph Downs Manuscript Collection, Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum Libraries, and two folders of bills and receipts in the Bourn Papers, Accounts Current 1727-1738, VI, and Bills 1728-1759, VIII, Baker Library, Harvard University.

6 Birth records have only been found for Johnson, Mudge, Burdit, and Sherburne, all of whom were born after 1703. Woodward was called Holmes’s apprentice in 1735 and must have been in his early twenties when hired by his former master. Bill, Jerem'ah Townsend to Nathaniel Holmes, Boston, 1 February 1739, Accounts Current, VI, Bourn Papers, Baker Library, Harvard University.

7 Thomas Sheraton, The Cabinet Dictionary (London: W. Smith, 1803), plate XV.

8 Bill, John Mudge to Nathaniel Holmes, Malden, Massachusetts, 6 January 1738, 55.524, Joseph Downs Manuscript Collection, Winterthur Libraries.

9 A desk at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, has small arched drawers above the pigeonholes and a concealed well in the desk interior. See Richard H. Randall, Jr., American Furniture in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1965), fig. 55.
10 Bill, Richard Woodward to Nathaniel Holmes, Boston, 12 December 1737, Accounts Current, VI, Bourn Papers, Baker Library, Harvard University.

11 Bill, John Mudge to Nathaniel Holmes, Malden, Massachusetts, 6 January 1738, 55.524, Joseph Downs Manuscript Collection, Winterthur Libraries.

12 This is one of the earliest references to an American bureau table. According to Nancy Goyne Evans, the form did not become popular in New England until after 1750. Evidently Woodward constructed an elegant table, for he charged Holmes six pounds, a sum equivalent to that for a large desk. Bill, Richard Woodward to Nathaniel Holmes, Boston, 12 December 1737, Accounts Current, VI, Bourn Papers, Baker Library, Harvard University. See also Nancy Goyne Evans, "The Bureau Table in America," Winterthur Portfolio III (Winterthur, Delaware: Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1967), pp. 25-27.

13 Toes probably refer to the unusual adaptation of the Spanish foot seen on the japanned high chest made by John Pimm and now in the Winterthur Museum. Similar feet appear on dressing tables at Historic Deerfield and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

14 For genealogical material on Fitch, see Ezra S. Steams, "The Descendants of Dea. Zachary Fitch of Reading," New England Historical and Genealogical Register, LV (July, 1901), 289, 291.

15 Fitch's immense estate was never completely settled. He owned land in forty towns in addition to all of Gallops Island. Suffolk Probate Records, docket 6868.

16 In a letter of 20 October 1725, Fitch described Grant as "my Young man," a phrase often used for an apprentice. Letter, Thomas Fitch to Silas Hooper, Boston, Letterbook of Thomas Fitch, Massachusetts Historical Society.

17 For genealogical information on Grant, see W. Henry Grant, Ancestors and Descendants of Moses Grant and Sarah Pierce (Lebanon, Pennsylvania: Sowers Printing Company, n.d.), pp. 3, 9-10, 12.

18 No inventory was taken of Grant's personal property and real estate. In his will he left £466:13:4 (L.M.) to his grandson, John Simpkins, £400 (L.M.) to his granddaughter, Mary Thatcher Simpkins, and cancelled the debts owed to him by his son-in-law, John Simpkins. The remainder of the bequest went to Moses Grant. Suffolk Probate Records, docket 18314.

19 The author is aware of ten volumes which span the first seventy years of the eighteenth century. See Letterbooks of Thomas Fitch, 1702-1711, American
Antiquarian Society; 1714-1717, New England Historic Genealogical Society; 1723-1733, Massachusetts Historical Society; Account Books of Samuel Grant, 1728-1737, Massachusetts Historical Society; 1737-1760, American Antiquarian Society; Receipt Book of Samuel Grant, 1731-1740, the Bostonian Society; Petty Ledgers of Samuel Grant, 1755-1762, Boston Public Library; 1762-1771, Boston Public Library.

Letter, Thomas Fitch to Isaac De Riemer, Boston, 7 August 1704, Letterbook of Thomas Fitch, American Antiquarian Society.

Account Book of Thomas Fitch, 22 May 1724, p. 281, Massachusetts Historical Society.

Ibid., 11 September 1725, p. 351.

Letter, Thomas Fitch to John East, Boston, 6 April 1725, Letterbook of Thomas Fitch, Massachusetts Historical Society.

Ibid., 8 December 1731.

Ibid., Thomas Fitch to Silas Hooper, Boston, 15 December 1725.

Ibid.


The upholsterer was John East. See Account Book of Samuel Grant, 11 April 1735, p. 383, Massachusetts Historical Society. The chairmaker was Edmund Perkins. See Account Book of Thomas Fitch, 15 January 1725, p. 312, Massachusetts Historical Society; Account Book of Samuel Grant, 12 February 1730, p. 35, Massachusetts Historical Society.

Account Book of Samuel Grant, 4 February 1732, p. 132, Massachusetts Historical Society.

Ibid., 12 July 1731, p. 106.

Ibid., 19 July 1737, p. 590.

Harrateen had been in limited use in Boston from at least 1726. Thomas Fitch commented on the new fabric in that year, when he wrote to a patron in New York: "I concluded it would be difficult to get Such a Calliminco as you propos'd..."
to Cover the Ease Chair, and haveing a very Strong thick Harratine which is vastly more fashionable and handsome than a Calliminco I have sent you an Ease Chair Cover'd w [i] th sd Harrateen w [h] i ch I hope will Sufe You." Letter, Thomas Fitch to Madam Hooglandt, Boston, 9 March 1726, Letterbook of Thomas Fitch, Massachusetts Historical Society.


34Letter, Thomas Fitch to Colonel Coddington, Boston, 26 June 1727, Letterbook of Thomas Fitch, Massachusetts Historical Society.

35Account Book of Thomas Fitch, 4 May 1720, p. 84, Massachusetts Historical Society.

36Account Book of Samuel Grant, 14 October 1729, p. 29, Massachusetts Historical Society.

37Ibid., 21 November 1730, p. 65.

38This notch is often seen on Boston furniture of the Queen Anne style. See, for example, a japanned high chest in the collection of the New Haven Colony Historical Society. Elizabeth Rhoades and Brock Jobe, "Recent Discoveries in Boston Japanned Furniture," Antiques, CV (May, 1974), 1032-1091.

39Account Book of Samuel Grant, 22 January 1732, p. 131, Massachusetts Historical Society.

40Ibid., 29 April 1732, p. 145.
CHAPTER II: THE CHAIRMAKING TRADE

Chairmaking is a branch generally confined to itself as those who professedly work at it, seldom engage to make cabinet furniture.¹

Thomas Sheraton, writing in The Cabinet Dictionary in 1803, defined a distinction between crafts that had evolved in Boston and other major American towns during the preceding century. Throughout most of the seventeenth century turners and joiners had constructed chair frames, stools, forms, and settees. By 1684 chairmakers, combining the talents of both craftsmen, had begun to work in Boston.² Their appearance marked a growing specialization among artisans in the town. While turners and joiners had pursued a wide variety of tasks, only one of which was the production of chairs, chairmakers focused on the fabrication of seating furniture and bedsteads.

After 1700 increasing numbers of chairmakers established shops in Boston.³ Many of these men began their careers as joiners and then turned to chairmaking. Edmund Perkins, Sr., one of Boston's most prominent craftsmen, was identified in public records of the early eighteenth century as a joiner. After 1735, however, he was consistently called a chairmaker. Other workmen moved from a general background in turning to the more specific field of chairmaking.
Morris Griffen, for example, was described in 1737 as a turner but by 1752 had become a chairmaker. 4

Between 1725 and 1760 a total of fifty individuals, twenty-two percent of the furniture-making population, worked as chairmakers, chair caners, or turners in Boston. Though the group represents a segment second in size only to joiners and cabinetmakers, little is known about their activities because of a lack of surviving manuscript material. A large body of business documents describes the activities of Nathaniel Holmes, enabling us to examine the cabinetmaking industry in detail. 5 Similarly the position of the upholsterer is amply documented by the ledgers and letterbooks of Thomas Fitch and Samuel Grant. 6 Unfortunately no turner’s or chairmaker’s account books have been discovered. Only the biographies of the craftsmen themselves, gleaned from public records, genealogies, and scattered manuscript materials, hint at the production and economic inter-relationships of these important members of the furniture industry. The remainder of this chapter includes these biographies and a few general remarks on chairmaking and turning in Boston between 1725 and 1760.
No. 1 John Alcock was probably the son of Milam and Elizabeth Alcock (no. 2). He married Hannah Walker on 9 October 1733 and, two months after her death, married Mary Souther on 29 May 1749. His documented working dates as a Boston chairmaker span the years 1740 to 1766. He resided on Orange Street in the South End and apparently achieved little success at his trade for he often mortgaged his home as collateral for small debts.

No. 2 Milam Alcock, the son of John and Constance Alcock, was born on 8 August 1680. He was married three times: to Elizabeth Gent on 2 November 1704, to Mary Hodgden on 17 April 1712, and to Esther Androse (Andrews) on 2 October 1716. He lived on Ann Street in 1726 and on 1 September 1734 became a member of nearby Brattle Street Church. In 1737 he served as clerk of the market. A year later Thomas Hancock paid him £9:7:0 for making twenty-two side chairs and three "Elbow" chairs, and for bottoming a set of chairs.

No. 3 Isaiah Audebert, the son of a Boston perukemaker, was born on 6 December 1724. He married Sarah Pattin on 7 August 1751 and a year later was working as a chairmaker. Between 1758 and 1764 he served in his only official town post, engineman with fire engine number four. His home and shop, located on Milk Street and Battery March, were destroyed by fire in 1760. His lumber, tools, and partially finished furniture, including "5 Dozn. of Black Walnut feet," "three Marlborough Chairs," and "Seaven Mahogany Chairs," were consumed in the blaze. Audebert successfully overcame his losses and, in 1766, purchased a
house and shop on Summer Street, only a short distance from his former location. He died in January of 1769. Joseph Putnam, a chairmaker (no. 34), was appointed one of three executors of the estate and George Bright, a cabinetmaker, assisted in taking the inventory. The estate, valued at £407:8:5 (L.M.), contained the following woodworking materials:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 hold Fasts 4/</td>
<td>£ 0: 8:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a Turkey Stone 4/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 hand Saws 10/</td>
<td>1: 3:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 frame Saws 13/4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bow Saw 3/4</td>
<td>0:19:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron Cramp 16/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plains, Chizzels &amp; Molds 20/</td>
<td>1: 3:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glue pot 3/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wooden Screw 6/8</td>
<td>1: 0:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Benches 13/4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron pot 4/</td>
<td>2: 4:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work not finished 40/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screw Key 1/</td>
<td>0: 2:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tool Chest 1/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood Ax 2/8</td>
<td>0:10:8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horse 4/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheelbarrow 4/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wooden Screw 6/8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Benches 13/4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron pot 4/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work not finished 40/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screw Key 1/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tool Chest 1/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood Ax 2/8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horse 4/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheelbarrow 4/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>521 feet Maple Board @ 3/9</td>
<td>0:19:6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>556 feet Mohogany Do [@$] 6d</td>
<td>13:18:0 19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No. 4 John Bobb, a turner, was sued in 1742 by a Boston feltmaker for failing to repay a note of £26. No additional information on Bobb has been discovered.

No. 5 George Bridge married Anna Crump on 10 August 1721 and Sarah Earle on 27 December 1723. He was identified as a turner in a court case of July 1724. In 1732 he billed a Boston tobacconist £18:16:0 for molds, mallets, handles, blocks, a "Rammer," a "Standing Tobacco Press," and "an Engine for cutting Tobacco." Like many of his fellow craftsmen, he attempted to supplement his turner's income with outside work. In 1733 and 1734 he sought permission from the Boston selectmen to operate a tavern; however, both times his petitions were denied. He was still working in Boston in December 1736 when he advertised in The Boston Gazette that he had removed from Wentworth's Wharf to the Sign of the...
Marlborough’s Arms in King Street, "where all sorts of Turner’s and Press Work is done reasonably."  

No. 6  John Bright, born about 1631, may have immigrated to Boston early in the eighteenth century. His name first appears in 1723 in the records of Christ Church, the Anglican establishment in the North End, where he and his wife presented their son Peter for baptism. During the next decade Bright served intermittently as clerk of Christ Church. He was probably working as a chairmaker by 1723. In 1734 he sold maple and walnut chair frames to Samuel Samber, a local upholsterer. He prospered in the trade and by 1735 had amassed sufficient wealth to purchase two houses and land near Fort Hill in the South End. After his wife’s death, he married Elizabeth Pierce on 14 October 1740 and Sarah Batt on 21 February 1747. During the 1750s his health gradually declined and, as a result, he retired from his trade. In an account of 1760 he was described as a man "whose misfortune it is to be Aged, blind & lame." The Christ Church records state that on 12 September 1766 "Mr Bright was Buried aged 85." 

No. 7  William Crockford worked as a turner in Boston from at least 1737 to 1756; during these years he rented a shop from John Clarke, a Boston physician. He married Susanna Sherrod about 1741 and they had one child, William, born in 1742. During the early 1740s Crockford lived in a dwelling owned by John Clarke; however, by 1748 he and David Lenox, a local cabinetmaker, had moved their families into a house on Back Street in the North End. There Crockford resided until his death in July 1756.
Crockford was a versatile, skillful, and successful craftsman. Numerous accounts and a superb inventory of his shop goods survive to document his varied career. He completed the turned work for the ships Woodstock and Friendship in 1738. Between 1749 and 1754 he performed a number of small jobs for his landlord John Clarke. He mended furniture, repaired the shop floor, and made grates for the barn door. He also constructed for Clarke two ladders, a mahogany tea table, a wig stand, four ladles, a cover for a jar, an assortment of handles for pruning knives, salvers, axes, pestles, and rakes, "10 Twisted Banisters for your Garden Gate," "a Sett of Standers & Bars Turned & Twisted for a Slay," and "a pair of Runners for Ditto."

Crockford probably devoted much of his time to turning stair and garden banisters. His inventory, recorded on 31 July 1756, listed among his shop goods "Sundry Patterns of tumd Bannisters & other Things" and among his unfinished stock twenty unturned and seventy-seven turned banisters. His major furniture-making endeavors were limited to turning table tops, tea boards, bed posts, and pedestals. Chairs, on the other hand, were not identified in the inventory of his shop and, in all likelihood, he rarely produced them.

The appraisers of Crockford's estate, unlike those of most craftsmen's estates, carefully noted all of his working materials and tools. The inventory thus offers an uncommonly vivid picture of a Boston turner's shop at the middle of the eighteenth century. It listed the following:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Rate</th>
<th>Total Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>A lot of Turning Tools</td>
<td>13 in a Lott</td>
<td>8d</td>
<td>£0:08:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 Lott Do</td>
<td>13 Do</td>
<td>8d</td>
<td>£0:08:08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 Doz Tuning Tools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:04:06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1 Doz Do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:04:06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>16 Tuning Tools</td>
<td>@ 3d</td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:04:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>16 Do</td>
<td>3d</td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:04:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>12 Do</td>
<td>2d</td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:02:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>12 Do</td>
<td>2d</td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:02:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>12 Rasps &amp; Files</td>
<td>12d</td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:12:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>12 Do</td>
<td>12d</td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:12:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>13 Do</td>
<td>2 1/2d</td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:02:03 1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>13 Do</td>
<td>2 1/2d</td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:02:03 1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>4 Augres</td>
<td>13d</td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:04:04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>4 Do</td>
<td>13d</td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:04:04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>7 Bitts</td>
<td>6d</td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:03:06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>15 Mandrils</td>
<td>6d</td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:07:05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>16 Do</td>
<td>6d</td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:08:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>26 Screw Tools</td>
<td>12d</td>
<td></td>
<td>£1:06:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>1 Foot Laith, 35 Chocks, &amp; 18 Bitts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3:05:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>1 Reeming Bitt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:12:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>7 long Bitts</td>
<td>@ 2/</td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:14:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>10 Gouges</td>
<td>4d</td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:03:04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>9 Chizells</td>
<td>3d</td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:02:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>1 Bundle Rings, &amp; Ferrils</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:02:06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>3 Dozn. Ferrils</td>
<td>@ 4d</td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:01:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 Hold fasts</td>
<td>4/</td>
<td>1 Hatcht &amp; 2 Frows</td>
<td>£0:06:03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20 Mortar Turning Tools</td>
<td>@ 8d</td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:13:04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Rate</th>
<th>Total Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 fine frame Saw</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:09:04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 Iron frame Do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:04:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 Frame, &amp; 2 Saws</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:02:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1 Frame Saw</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:04:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1 Saw Plate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:04:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1 Steel Plate Handsaw</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:05:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1 Tennant Saw</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:05:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1 Do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:04:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>1 Douftail Saw</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:04:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>4 small Saws</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:02:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Spook Shave</td>
<td>1/4d</td>
<td>2 Glue Potts</td>
<td>£0:05:04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 pr Cannipers</td>
<td>7/</td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:08:06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 pr Compass</td>
<td>1/6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>3 Tapers, &amp; 3 Boring Bitts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£0:03:06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item Description</td>
<td>Cost</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Hammers, &amp; pr Nippers</td>
<td>0:02:06</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 pr Screw Taps, &amp; Bitts @ 4/ &amp; 3 odd ones with them</td>
<td>2:04:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Large Wheel, &amp; Cranks</td>
<td>1:01:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Small Do</td>
<td>0:12:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Large Laith, 4 Poppits, &amp; 2 Rests</td>
<td>1:12:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 small Laith</td>
<td>0:13:14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Nest with 7 Drawers</td>
<td>0:02:08</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 large pr Dividers 2/</td>
<td>0:02:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Squares, 3 Tap Borers, 1 Shave</td>
<td>0:05:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Mallet, 1 Rule, &amp; Beek Iron</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Plains 6/ 2 Candlest [ick]s 1/4</td>
<td>0:17:04</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Benches</td>
<td>0:12:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Collars, &amp; 1 Brass Do</td>
<td>1:04:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Pins, &amp; 4 Boxes for Screws</td>
<td>2:00:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sundry Engine Tools, in a Box</td>
<td>0:04:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 large Mandrills</td>
<td>0:02:10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Maple Bannisters @ 2d</td>
<td>0:02:04</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Beach Do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Joiner Stock 12d Suny. Pts. sma: Wood 6/</td>
<td>0:07:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brass Screws, &amp; 2 Iron Rests</td>
<td>0:04:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 pr. Screen Handles @ 8d</td>
<td>0:06:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Bow handles for Hatters @ 6d</td>
<td>0:02:08</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Lemmon Scoops @ 4d</td>
<td>1:05:08</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 Chaffendish Handles @ 2d</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44 1/2 Ivory</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 1/2:0:0 Lignum Vitae @ l:4 p Ton</td>
<td>1:00:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sundry Teeth &amp; Pieces of Ivory</td>
<td>0:08:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sundry Hammer Handles, Screws, &amp; Jack Wheels</td>
<td>0:06:08</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sundry File, &amp; Saw Handles, &amp; Pins</td>
<td>0:08:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sundry wooden Cocks, &amp; tumd Pins</td>
<td>0:08:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Maple Desk</td>
<td>1:00:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea Board, &amp; 2 Bottle Stands</td>
<td>0:05:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Lignum Vitae Mortars</td>
<td>1:10:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Sugr. Mallets, &amp; 5 Choklate Pulls @ 8d</td>
<td>0:07:04</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Rockett Moulds @ 2/8d</td>
<td>0:02:08</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 1/2 Dozn. Jack Wheels @ 6/ ps</td>
<td>1:19:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sundry Patterns of tumd. Bannisters &amp; other Things 20/</td>
<td>1:00:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sundry Pts of Speckd. Wood, Box &amp;c</td>
<td>0:02:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Dozn. &amp; 8 Bannisters untumed</td>
<td>1:11:06</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Dozn. &amp; 10 turned Do</td>
<td>1:15:10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
James Dodge, in a bill of 20 March 1758, charged Samuel Abbot, a prosperous Boston merchant, £2:10:0 (L.M.) for “12 new maple frames & flag bottom Chers.” A year later he sold a set of six maple chairs to Abbot.

Additional information on his career as a chairmaker has not been found.

Stephen Fullerton, born on 19 September 1731, presumably learned the chairmaking trade from his father, William Fullerton (no. 10). He and his brother William, Jr. (no. 11), were two of Boston’s poorer, and probably rowdier, artisans. In 1748, at the age of seventeen, Stephen was twice tried in Suffolk County Superior Court on charges of burglary. He had begun working by 1758.

Two years later fire destroyed his rented home and shop on Battery March and Milk Street. He lost many of his household possessions as well as thirty-three chairs in the shop, including two roundabout chairs and a “Table Chair.” His most serious loss, however, was 1000 bundles of flag, valued at £50, which he had stored in the house. He continued to work during the 1760s without substantially improving his standard of living. He failed to pay his province, county, or town taxes in 1766, 1767, or 1768; in 1770 he was sued for not discharging an insignificant debt to a Boston baker for biscuits. In the same year he mortgaged a small piece of land on Temple Street in the West End. The deed of mortgage identifies his wife as Susanna; however, it is not known when they were married or when either Stephen or Susanna died.
No. 10  William Fullerton, Sr., was the son of Alexander and Mary Fullerton of Boston. He was born on 2 July 1702, married to Mary Crowell on 30 December 1725, and during the next two decades raised six children, two of whom became chairmakers (nos. 9 and 11). After his wife's death about 1735, he announced intentions to marry Deborah Harmon of York, Maine in 1738, Lydia Coit, the widow of Job Coit, Sr., in 1742, and Mercy Jewett of Gloucester in 1743.

Fullerton had begun to work as a chairmaker by 1730 when he sold two dozen chairs, a great chair, and a child's chair to John Winchester, a Brookline gentleman. He continued in the craft until his death sometime before 20 March 1750.

No. 11  William Fullerton, Jr., the son of William (no. 10) and Mary Fullerton, was born on 30 November 1727 and married Mary Browne in 1750. He worked as a Boston chairmaker from at least 1751 when he was sued by a Cambridge turner until 1766 when he was sued by a Boston gentleman. Apparently he achieved little success in his trade and, like his brother Stephen (no. 9), remained throughout his life in the lower economic strata of Boston society. Often unable to pay his rent, he moved from dwelling to dwelling and by 1760 had settled in a house near his brother's on Fort Hill in the South End. Unfortunately the Great Fire of that year swept through his home destroying most of his household and shop goods. In an inventory of his losses, written on 8 April 1760, he lumped together his shop materials: "to Stuff and Tools and Work Done £120:0:0."
No. 12 Gee was identified as a chairmaker in an account book of Daniel Rea, a Boston tailor, who on 7 January 1741 sold him a "Great Coat."55 Gee's purchase followed an account between Rea and Edmund Perkins, a local chairmaker (no. 29), suggesting that Gee served Perkins either as an apprentice or journeyman. No additional information on his career has been discovered.

No. 13 Benjamin Goold, the son of a Boston cooper, was born on 30 June 1736, identified as a turner in 1758, and married Mary Peck on 26 June 1760.56 He inherited several pieces of property on Cow Lane in the South End from his father and grandfather and part of a house, land, and wharf on Battery March from his uncle. During the second half of the century Goold periodically sold or mortgaged portions of his property, keeping only a small home or part of a home on Cow Lane for his own residence.57 Neither the 1780 census nor city directories list him; however, on 22 December 1801 Esther McLeary, widow, Edward Hill, housewright, and Edward Hall, Jr., chairmaker, were ordered by the Suffolk County Probate Court to administer the estate of the late Benjamin Goold, turner of Boston.58 There is no record of a will or inventory of Goold's estate.

No. 14 James Graham married Mary Monett on 6 April 1758, rented a shop on Mackerel Lane in the South End which was burned in the devastating fire of 20 March 1760, and married Jane Freeland on 25 December 1760.59 From 1761 until 1771 he leased a shop from John Clarke, the Boston physician who owned a number of tenements in the center of town.60 Graham seems to have had a versatile
career. In 1762, 1763, and 1764 he was identified as a chairmaker, often performing small jobs ("Glewing a chare," "mending a Chair") for John Clarke. However, in 1784 he was called a cabinetmaker and in 1789 and 1796 a retailer. He still resided in Boston in 1798.

No. 15  **Morris Griffen** was born about 1704 somewhere outside of Boston. He was married three times: to Mary Allen on 1 November 1733, to Martha Pierce on 5 February 1745, and to Sarah Jones on 17 July 1747. He served as town watchman between 1 May 1746 and 1 May 1747. In an account of 1737 he was called a turner but in his obituary notice of 11 January 1752 was identified as a chairmaker.

No. 16  **Jabez Hunt**, the son of Thomas Hunt (no. 17), was born on 5 April 1698, married Hannah Brown in 1745, and died in 1762. He inherited tools and shop goods from his father and ostensibly continued in the family trade of turning and brushmaking. However, because of a substantial bequest from his mother, he was also able to pursue other interests. He joined the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company in 1727, serving as fourth sergeant in 1729, clerk's assistant in 1729 and 1731, clerk in 1732 and 1733, and lieutenant in 1743. He occupied the town offices of hogreeve in 1724, constable in 1730, clerk of the market in 1738, scavenger in 1739, 1745, and 1751, and was excused from the position of collector of taxes in 1751. In his will, written 6 August 1762, Hunt requested that his personal estate be sold and the proceeds given to the poor of Boston. He
presented the family home on Union Street to Stephen Whiting, Jr., and William Whiting, sons of Stephen Whiting, Sr., a Boston japanner. A brief eulogy in The Evening Post summarized his career as follows: "Capt. Jabez Hunt, [died] Wednesday, Dec. 22, 1762, in sixty-fifth year. He was a gentleman noted for his strict virtue and military accomplishments, whereby he was very serviceable to the regiment of militia in which he was an officer upwards of twenty years. His life was much desired, and his death is much lamented."  

No. 17 Thomas Hunt became one of Boston's most successful craftsmen of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Born in Boston about 1651, he married Mary Fitch, the sister of the affluent merchant-upholsterer, Thomas Fitch, and by her had ten children between 1681 and 1700. After his wife's death in 1703, he married Mary Francis, a widow, on 12 September 1704. Hunt and his brother Jabez purchased a dwelling on Union Street in 1679 and for the next fifty-five years their home served as an area landmark. In 1723 during a violent February storm, Jeremiah Bumstead recorded in his diary that "ye tide rises in Union Street as high up as Mr Hunt's house -- in ye Middle of ye street." 

Hunt held numerous town offices: tithingman in 1681, constable in 1684 and 1687, and hogreeve in 1685. He worked as a turner and brushmaker from at least 1679 until his death in 1734. In his will, written 29 June 1734, he left to his only son, Jabez (no. 16), his clothes, bed, negro, tools, and "all that belongs to my Calling or occupation in the Shop & Cellar." An inventory of Hunt's
estate, taken on 29 August 1734, included "Sundries in the Shop £41:9:0" and "Shop Tools £30:0:0." The total value of the estate was £1042:2:0.77

No. 18 James Johnson was working as a chairmaker in Boston from at least 1732 to 1734.78 He may have been related to John Johnson, a Boston turner working in the late seventeenth century.79

No. 19 Edward Lamb was identified as a chairmaker in a suit of 1741 in the Suffolk County Inferior Court.80 Further information on his career has not been found.

Nos. 20 and 21 John Lane, an emigrant from London, advertised in The Boston Gazette of 31 August - 7 September 1730 that he "Canes and Bottoms both New and Old Chairs, after the best manner, over against Dr. Cooke's in School Street."81 Apparently he did not make chairs but only caned them. In an account of 27 September 1732 Lane charged John Palmer £2:2:0 for "Bottom[ing] 5 Cane Chairs & Varnishing them" and Peter Faneuil £4:13:2 for "bottoming 7 ditto & 1 New one & Varnishing."82 After his death in 1737, his widow Sarah continued to carry on the business.83 On 17 July 1738 she married John Goodwin and in a newspaper advertisement of 23-30 June 1740 announced that "Sarah Goodwin, living in School Street, Canes Chairs, Couches, and Stools, with the utmost Fidelity and Dispatch."84 Even as late as 7 April 1756 she was still employed in caning chairs at her home on School Street.85
No. 22  Henry Leonard, a turner, was sued in 1743 by Joseph Lawrence, a gentleman of Boston, for a debt of £50. Additional information on Leonard has not been found.

No. 23  William Love was working as a chairmaker in Boston in 1733.

No. 24  John McClure was identified as a chairmaker in 1760. He is probably the "John McCluer" who rented a dwelling from John Clarke in 1755 and from William Wheeler in 1758 and 1759.

No. 25  Daniel McKillister, presumably a Boston turner, sold twenty sets of flame finials and five sets of "balls" to the cabinetmaker Nathaniel Holmes in 1738. Nothing further is known of his career.

No. 26  Samuel Mattocks was firmly rooted in the craft society of Boston. His great-grandfather and grandfather had been successful local coopers, his father a tailor. Born on 17 December 1688, Samuel was apprenticed to one of Boston's many chairmakers and presumably had begun to work on his own about 1710. He married Admonition Tucker on 11 September 1712 and by her had four children between 1713 and 1721. After her death, he married Sarah Cross in 1723 and Mary Spooner in 1728. He served in two town posts: hogreeve in 1721 and clerk of the market in 1722.

Mattocks was identified as a chairmaker in 1720 when he purchased a shop and other buildings on Anne Street from John Clarke. The property adjoined
a wharf and a pair of houses owned by his father where it is likely that young Samuel resided.

During the 1720s Mattocks supplemented his craft income through inn-keeping. His second wife Sarah had operated an inn on Anne Street prior to their marriage and with the assistance of her husband continued to do so until her death about 1727. He petitioned the town selectmen for permission to sell "Strong Drink" at the inn in 1723 and during the mid-1720s purchased rum by the barrel from Thomas Amory, a local distiller.

Mattocks maintained his chaismaking shop during this period and after his second wife's death returned to it full-time. In 1729 The Boston News-Letter announced:

RAN away on Tuesday Night last, from his Master Mr. Samuel Mattocks Chair maker, at the Sign of the Cross at the North End of Boston, an Irish Man Servant, Named Thomas Fennel, about 20 Years of Age, of middling Stature, dark colour'd Rusty Hair, Pock broken round face.

Mattocks died sometime before 20 April 1739. In a deed of that date his daughter referred to him as "Samuel Mattockes late of Boston chaisemaker." This is the only known document calling him a chaismaker and not a chairmaker.

No. 27 Thomas Odell is better known today as a counterfeiter and a forger than as a chairmaker. Described by Samuel Sewall as "a very dangerous person," he was convicted of issuing false bills of credit in 1705, sentenced to a year in jail, and ordered to pay a fine of £300. Shortly afterwards he created a public sensation.
when he escaped from prison, perhaps with the aid of his friend Edmund Perkins, Sr.
(no. 29). Odell was eventually taken back into custody, served his term, and was released.

Little information has survived pertaining to his chairmaking career. His work in the furniture industry can be documented between 1712 and 1728. He probably did not achieve great success for he often moved his shop from one location to another. In 1720 he rented a dwelling on Water Street near the head of Oliver’s Dock; by 1727 he had shifted to a town-owned shop on the south side of the Town Dock. On 23 January 1728 he was ordered by the selectmen to vacate the second shop, probably for failure to pay his rent. Nothing is known of his later activities.

No. 28 Richard Orr was identified as a turner in a suit of 1738 in the Suffolk County Inferior Court of Common Pleas. He was probably a young man at the time for in the same year he married Susanna Brown.

No. 29 Edmund Perkins, Sr., progenitor of a prosperous family of chairmakers, was born in 1683, married Mary Farris in 1709 and Esther Frothingham in 1722, and died in 1762. He fathered nine children: Henry, William, and Mary by his first wife; John, Esther, Edmund, Samuel, James, and Susannah by his second. All told, four of his sons (nos. 30-33) followed their father’s profession and his daughter Esther married John Trevitt (no. 44), a chairmaker.
Perkins seems to have been a well-known, well-respected, and colorful craftsman. According to one of his grandsons, he "excelled in wood carving, was extravagantly fond of wrestling, boxing and fencing . . . [and] had great power over animals, particularly horses and dogs . . . . His work-room was filled with the heads of moose, bear and deer that he had killed, and with the skins of snakes and fishes." He was a friend of Peter Pelham and Richard Copley, the father of John Singleton Copley, and supposedly travelled with the artist Joseph Blackburn to the Merrimac River to fish for salmon.

Perkins possessed a free-spirited, even rebellious, attitude and according to one account was considered the black sheep of the family for it. In 1709 he was indicted for stealing and for passing counterfeit money. The court acquitted him of the first charge but found him guilty of the second and levied a fine of £30. In another instance, also early in his career, he was accused of assisting a friend to escape from jail. No doubt, through these and similar acts he gained a reputation for defiance and recklessness.

Perkins had begun working by 1712 when he sold six chairs and a great chair to Daniel Henchman, a Boston stationer, and for the next fifty years he continued to make all types of chair frames and bedsteads. Two local upholsterers, Thomas Fitch and Samuel Grant, employed Perkins over a period of several decades. Their patronage, and probably that of other Boston upholsterers, is most important in accounting for Perkins' success as a chairmaker. Between 1730
and 1740, for example, Grant paid Perkins the following sums for work:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Range</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 August 1729 - 12 February 1730</td>
<td>£105:06:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 February 1730 - 19 February 1731</td>
<td>127:08:6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 February 1731 - 5 February 1732</td>
<td>166:01:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 February 1732 - 26 December 1738</td>
<td>726:01:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 December 1738 - 24 December 1739</td>
<td>376:10:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 December 1739 - 27 July 1740</td>
<td>235:11:8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Perkins' shop must have been a busy and productive establishment. In addition to himself and his sons, he trained at least one other apprentice (Peter Jent), hired a journeyman, and owned a negro during the 1730s. His home and shop were located in a brick dwelling on Mackerel Lane which he had purchased in 1713 from the heir of Edward Shippen, a seventeenth-century Boston merchant-upholsterer who had moved to Philadelphia about 1690. In 1758 Perkins bought an adjoining house for £700, giving him, by craftsmen's standards, a substantial accumulation of property.

Disaster struck in 1760. An elderly man of seventy-seven with a successful career behind him, he lost both of his houses, "Sundry Shop Tools," a turning lathe, three work benches, and his household goods in the Great Boston Fire. In November 1760 he sold his burned-out real estate to John Erving to recoup his losses. The town also provided some monetary relief for his plight. At this time Perkins probably moved into the home of his son Henry. He died about
1 January 1762. The inventory of his estate amounted to £40:13:11 (L.M.) and included only a holdfast and two pump handles for shop goods. Because of the reimbursement from the town and Erving’s note for his property, the estate of Edmund Perkins remained solvent and over £200 (L.M.) was distributed to his heirs.

No. 30 Edmund Perkins, Jr., born about 1728, probably learned the chair-making profession from his father (no. 29). He had started to work on his own by 1755, constructing chairs, bedsteads, and bed cornices for many of the same upholsterers who had patronized his father. His shop must have been near to, if not part of, the family home on Mackerel Lane for his list of losses from the Boston Fire of 1760 followed that of his father in the town records. Only shop goods appeared on the list:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One Pannel Saw</td>
<td>£6:00:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Turkey Oyle Stone</td>
<td>6:15:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Rise [Raised] Teaster Finishd</td>
<td>6:00:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Sett Cornishes Finishd</td>
<td>5:10:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Wallnot Round About [Chair]</td>
<td>7:10:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two Waistcoats</td>
<td>8:00:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornish Plains &amp; Number of Other Tools</td>
<td>10:00:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>49:15:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3:10:0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Perkins did not marry until after his father’s death. With a one-ninth share of the estate assured, he married Hannah Lamont about 1762. He continued to work as a chairmaker until 1773; however, he never amassed the wealth that his father or several of his brothers had gained. He died in July of 1773, leaving an estate valued at only £6:9:3 (L.M.).
No. 31 Henry Perkins, the eldest son of Edmund Perkins (no. 29), was born on 20 August 1710 and married Mary Kilby, the daughter of a Boston baker, on 9 February 1737. He began to work as a chairmaker during the early 1730s and by 1739 had taken on an apprentice to assist in the trade. His business seems to have been a highly successful one. Like his father, he performed a variety of tasks for Samuel Grant, a Boston upholsterer. On 15 February 1739 he received £142:11:0 from Grant "for work" and on 26 December 1739 was paid £158:3:0 for "chair frames." 

By 1742 Perkins had accumulated sufficient capital to purchase a house on Queen Street from the executors of the estate of his late father-in-law Christopher Kilby. This residence, sitting on a large triangular lot measuring 140 feet by 126 feet by 56 feet, remained his home for the next forty-one years. John Gore, a japanner and color merchant, briefly shared the house with Perkins but by 1747 had bought a house of his own.

Perkins' wife died in the early 1740s and about 1745 he married Grace Thaxter of Hingham. The ensuing years brought new responsibilities, both public and private, for the chairmaker. He was chosen to serve as constable in 1743, but declined the post and paid the mandatory fine. In 1752 and 1760 he accepted the position of scavenger and in 1755 joined the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company, advancing to the rank of third sergeant in 1757.
Throughout this period Perkins rented a shop near the home of his father on Mackerel Lane. Unfortunately he, like his father and brothers, suffered severe losses in the Great Fire of 1760. Lumber, tools, and furniture valued at over £690 were destroyed. An inventory of the damages clearly reveals that his shop was one of the largest in the town at that time. In addition to maple, walnut, and mahogany appraised at £305 and twenty-three chairs, a dumb betty, and close stool appraised at £199, he lost the following tools and shop goods:

- 6 tenent Saws 1 Cumps Ditto £28:00:0
- 2 fraim Saws 10:00:0
- 1 Tuming laith 9 turning tules 9:10:0
- 7 Benches 35:00:0
- 120 Chisels goages Spok shaves & plains 24:00:0
- 6 Rasps & files 2:14:0
- 2 long plains 4 Smoothing plains 4:00:0
- 3 heal plains 1:10:0
- 1 pedestal plain 1 filister 1:10:0
- 3 hachets 3:00:0
- 12 Bitts for Boring Chairs 10:00:0
- a number of moulds 10:00:0
- 1 larg Grind Stone 10:00:0
- 2 turky Oyl Stones 10:00:0
- 4 p of Cumpases 1 p [air] of Calipers 2:05:0
- 1 Brass Cittle 1 Iron pott 3 Brushes 3:05:0
- 10 Glas windows 20:00:0
- 2 wooden Vices 3 Bevels 4 Squairs 6:00:0
- 2 glue pots 1 two foot rule 1 p [air] of Dividers 2:15:0

Perkins re-established his prosperous business in a shop closer to his Queen Street home. There he continued to work for Samuel Grant and other upholsterers. However, the losses from the fire were difficult to overcome. In 1761 he was forced to mortgage part of his property and ten years later to mortgage all of it. The latter obligation was never settled and apparently at his death the
family lost ownership of the property. During these later years Henry Perkins, as eldest son, was called upon to provide financial support for homeless or aged relatives. When his brother William died in 1762, he became guardian to the four children. Furthermore his father probably moved into his house after the fire, no doubt placing an additional burden on him.

Henry Perkins died in August 1783 after a brief illness. No inventory of the estate was taken; however, he did leave a will in which he bequeathed small sums of money to various relatives with the residue of the estate passing to his sister Esther. Despite economic hardships late in life, he appears to have lived comfortably. Indeed, according to the family genealogist, Perkins died "a rich man."

No. 32 John Perkins, son of the chairmaker Edmund Perkins, Sr. (no. 29), was born on 17 December 1723. Like his brothers, he was probably trained by his father. He married Susanna Tuck about 1745 and had begun working on his own by 1748. A year later he and his brother-in-law John Trevett, also a chairmaker (no. 44), purchased a house on Battery March Street in the South End. During the 1750s Perkins, possibly in partnership with Trevett, developed his business into a highly successful one. However, in 1760 fire almost ended his career. Shortly after dawn on 20 March 1760 flames swept through his home, destroying many of his household possessions and shop goods. The losses reached the staggering sum of £2149:7:6. The following list of shop materials consumed...
in the blaze reveals both the extent of the damage and the scale of his business in 1760:

- 220 wallnot Feet for Chairs £ 27:10:0
- 500 foot wallnt 2 Inch Plank @ 5/ 125:00:0
- 100 foot wallnt 4 Inch Plank @ 14/ 50:00:0
- wallnt Post Bedsted Finishd. Best Sort 25:00:0
- Six Comps. Chairs wallnt. 30:00:0
- Six Mehogany Chairs in hand 45:00:0
- 50 foot Mehogany Plank @ 11/3 28:02:6
- Six wallnt Chairs one Round About Chair in hand 18:00:0
- two Fraim Saws Stele Pait [Plate] £20 three
- Tennant one Pannal Do 30:00:0
- My Chest and Other Tools of the Best Sort 40:00:0
- three Benches One turning Laith 20:00:0
- Shop windows and Other Glass 30:00:0
- one Large turkey Oyle Stone & Grind Stone 10:00:0
- Eight Chair Seats £3 One Sacking Bottom £3 6:00:0
- an easy Chair Fraim Carvd. not Finishd 4:00:0

Perkins sold his charred house and land on 20 August 1760 and moved elsewhere in the town, choosing to rent a dwelling rather than rebuild. A bill of 26 March 1761 shows that he continued to practice the chairmaking trade. Josiah Salisbury, a wealthy shopkeeper, on that date purchased a close stool chair from Perkins for £1:4:0 (L.M.). Other public documents refer to him in Boston in 1765 and 1766. Shortly thereafter he and his family removed to Gorham, Maine. By 1768 he was living on a fifty acre lot in Gorham with his family.

At the outbreak of the Revolution Perkins enlisted as a sergeant in Captain Williams' Company and was promoted to the rank of ensign before 1 January 1776. While serving in the Seige of Boston, he contracted small pox and died in a Brookline hospital on 18 April 1776. His oldest son, John, carried on in the footsteps of his father, working as a cabinetmaker in Gorham until 1796.
No. 33  William Perkins, the son of Edmund (no. 29) and Mary Perkins, was born on 19 November 1716 and undoubtedly learned the chairmaking trade from his father. He married Elizabeth Palfrey on 4 June 1741 at the New South Church and had at least four children. On 30 May 1743 he was appointed one of the enginemen for the fire engine "kept in the cellar under the Town House," a position which he held until at least 20 February 1754. Although the location of his home and shop are not known, to fulfill such a post he must have lived in the center of town near the Town House. In 1750 he sold to William Waine, a Boston tailor, six leather-bottomed chairs for £5:12:0 (L.M.). Eight years later Samuel Wethered purchased six "molbrow" chair frames from him for his inn on King Street. Perkins died suddenly in early 1760, sometime before the Great Fire of March 20. His widow Elizabeth was appointed administratrix of the estate and Benjamin Frothingham, Joseph Putnam (no. 35), and Thomas Read were chosen to take an inventory. Their list, submitted on 14 March 1760, totalled £24:0:1 (L.M.) and included a variety of household items, four dollars in cash, and "Sundrys in the joyners Shop as Tools Stuff &c p[er] Inventory £5:9:5." Unfortunately the special account of the "Sundrys" has not been preserved.

Of all the members of the Perkins family, we know the least about William. His inventory is remarkably sparse for a man of forty-three with four children under the age of twenty-one. His list of bedding, for example, only included a bedstead and two mattresses. Possibly his family removed many of the
goods in the estate prior to the appraisal. Nevertheless, it appears that William's career failed to equal that of his brothers Henry and John.

No. 34  **Joseph Putnam** was born in Salem on 1 August 1714. He married Sarah Uran (or Vran) of Boston on 19 February 1736 and presumably had begun to work as a chairmaker in Boston by that date. During these early years, he may have worked in partnership with his brother William, also a local chairmaker (no. 35). In an account of 1741 Daniel Rea, a Boston tailor, referred to the two men jointly. In April 1742 Joseph was chosen to serve as an engineman in the "Engine House at the Dock." By 1758 he had become master of Town Engine Number 4, a position he held until 1770.

Prior to 1760 Putnam resided on Milk Street and Battery March Street, possibly in the home of his father-in-law Joseph Uran. The house, however, was destroyed in the Great Fire. Shortly thereafter Putnam submitted an inventory of his losses. It totalled £1030:18:0 and included many household and shop goods. Among the latter were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seven Benches</td>
<td>£32:00:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one Pair Screws</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ten Plains</td>
<td>4:10:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two Saws   One Fram Saw</td>
<td>14:10:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mehogany Plank</td>
<td>50:00:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>350 wallnot Feet for Chairs</td>
<td>45:00:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>131 foot Wallnot Boards</td>
<td>19:13:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maple Boards &amp; Plank</td>
<td>19:12:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black wallnot Planck</td>
<td>50:00:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400 Bundles Flag &amp; Salt Hay</td>
<td>39:00:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eight Chairs</td>
<td>8:00:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six wallnot Chairs</td>
<td>24:00:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glass windows</td>
<td>30:00:0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
With "Seven Benches" and "350 wallnot Feet for Chairs" on hand in the shop at one time Putnam obviously operated a large business. Evidently he was quite successful for less than six months after the fire he was able to purchase a house and land on Sudbury Street near the Mill Pond. There he resided for the remainder of his life.

Little is known of his activities following the eventful year of 1760. After his wife's death, he married Elizabeth Cumston on 3 April 1766. In 1771 Putnam owned a house and separate shop building. His will was written on 23 February 1786 and proved on 29 July 1788. In it he was identified as a chairmaker; however, the only item in his inventory related to the trade was a "Chairmaker's cramping Iron 48/". His estate was valued at £684:10:5 (L.M.) and included his home on Sudbury Street appraised at £600 (L.M.).

No. 35 William Putnam, the younger brother of Joseph Putnam (no. 34), was born in Salem on 1 August 1717. He married Ruth Leach, the daughter of John Leach, a Boston joiner, on 16 October 1740. Putnam quickly became one of Boston's most prosperous chairmakers. In December 1744 he purchased a house on Mackerel Lane near Oliver's Dock in the South End. His brother Joseph lived in the same area and Edmund Perkins, Sr. (no. 29), resided less than a block away. No bills or accounts have been discovered describing his business. However, his inventory, recorded on 25 July 1749 shortly after his death at the young age of thirty-one, reveals that he managed a successful shop and by craftsmen's standards enjoyed a comfortable living. The inventory totalled £2511:12:0 and included...
such signs of wealth as Bibles and books (valued at £22), five pictures, and twenty-nine ounces of plate. He also left £352:17:5 in cash, an immense sum for a craftsman. His shop goods, appraised at £499:12:7, were divided into the following categories:

- Shop, Sundrys in the Shop as p[er] Acont £ 369:02:3
- Sundry Sorts of Lumber in the Yard £ 5:00:0
- Tools & Stock at the Work Shop £ 125:10:4

Unfortunately the account of "Sundrys" was not preserved and we can only speculate on the contents of the shop. Certainly it rivaled the scale of Boston's largest chairmaking establishments.

No. 36 Nathaniel Ridgway, the son of Samuel Ridgway (no. 37), was born on 10 May 1729. He filed his intention to marry Rebecca Gooding on 8 August 1754 and presumably had begun to work as a chairmaker by that date. He was excused from serving as a constable in 1756. A later reference to him occurs in 1779. Ridgway (identified as a chairmaker), his two brothers, and brother-in-law sold their late father's home on Wood Lane.

No. 37 Samuel Ridgway, Sr., was born in Charlestown on 13 November 1700, married Naomi Reynolds on 14 January 1725, and died in Boston on 25 October 1773. By the time of his marriage he had become a resident of Boston. In June of 1725 he joined the First Church and in July of 1727 purchased a brick house on
Wood Lane in the North End. He served as a town constable in 1737 and a scavenger in 1739. For many years Ridgway rented two shops on Anne Street from James Allen, a prominent Boston merchant, and from at least 1759 to 1766 one of Ridgway's sons worked in partnership with him at this address.

Ridgway seems to have been a major producer of inexpensive chairs in Boston. In 1732 he sold Samuel Smith "4 chairs 3 Backs," referring to chairs with three slats. A year later Caleb Richardson purchased six chairs at six shillings each and six more for twelve shillings apiece. In 1737 the Boston upholsterer Samuel Grant bought two dozen chairs at six shillings each. Such prices were extremely low. Undoubtedly these chairs were simple, rush-seated examples made of native woods.

Ridgway continued to produce simple slat-back chairs throughout his life. The inventory of his estate, recorded on 17 November 1773, included the following items in his shop:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 Back Chairs</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3/15:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Back Chairs</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3/4:15:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Chairs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6/8:10:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maple Chairs</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3/12:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chamber Chairs</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3/18:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bunekers Flaggs</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>3/15:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rounds for Chairs</td>
<td>1 parcel</td>
<td>3/13:0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Occasionally Ridgway did construct more elaborate furniture. In an account of 1748 he billed Kender Mason, a local merchant, for twelve maple chairs "at fifty Shillings in Bills of the old Tenor a piece." Apparently, however, he
did not choose mahogany or walnut for his furniture. Among the many surviving accounts of Ridgway's work, there is no reference to these costly imported woods.

Ridgway, in addition to chairmaking, practiced the craft of drum-making. Among the goods listed in his shop inventory were:

- 15 Large Drum Rims 40/ L 2:00:0 [L.M.]
- 11 Midlin Size 14/8 0:14:8
- 8 Childrens ditto 5/4 0:05:4
- 30 Drum Hoops 6/ 0:06:0
- 1 mide Size Drum 10/ 2 Small ditto @ 5 1:00:0
- 7 pr Drum Sticks 3/6 0:03:6

Few other craftsmen pursued this specialized craft in Boston. William Wilson, a turner and drum-maker (no. 50), died about 1730 and apparently for the next thirty years Ridgway maintained a monopoly on local drum production.

Ridgway gained a substantial income from his crafts. His home was small but well furnished with such expensive items as silver porringers, a silver tankard, and numerous prints. Unlike most Boston artisans, he died leaving few debts and a legacy of almost £200 (L.M.) to his children.

No. 38 Samuel Ridgway, Jr., born on 2 January 1727, was the eldest son of a Boston chairmaker (no. 37). He was married four times: to Elizabeth Gedney on 13 June 1751, Elizabeth How in 1755, Mary Paine on 29 December 1763, and Sarah Greaton on 31 January 1793. In 1753 he served as a constable and in 1756 became a member of the Artillery Company, rising to the rank of first sergeant in...
1761. He held the post of town warden in 1775 and after the Revolution was made a deacon of the New North Brick Church.

Through marriage Ridgway allied himself with several of Boston's most prominent families, particularly the Gedneys and the Paines. His third wife, Mary Paine, was the sister of Elizabeth Bentley, the mother of the famous Salem diarist, William Bentley. During his trips to Boston Bentley often resided with his uncle. On 24 December 1789 Bentley reported that he "went with Mr Isaac White to Boston, & dined that day with Capt, now Deacon Ridgway, whose house I made my home." On a later trip to Boston in 1798, Bentley found his uncle ill. "Visited my old Uncle Ridgway, deacon of the North Brick Church, who has reached 70 years & evidently declines. A worthy man." Ridgway died the next year on 26 May 1799.

Ridgway enjoyed a long and prosperous career. He had begun to work as a chairmaker by 1749 when, at the urging of the Overseers of the Poor, he took on Miles Hubbard as an apprentice. Apparently Hubbard served his master well for in the following years Ridgway turned increasingly to the Overseers for labor. All told, between 1749 and 1784 he trained five impoverished youths in his large shop. No other Boston woodworker accepted more than one.

Like his father, Ridgway specialized in the production of plain, inexpensive chairs and drums. In 1756 he billed Samuel Grant £2:12:0 (L.M.) for eighteen chairs; five years later he sold three dozen chairs and a roundabout chair.
to Grant for £5:6:8 (L.M.), an average cost of under three shillings per chair. After the Revolution he continued to carry on his trade and as late as 1790 still supervised the production of furniture in his shop. By 1798, however, he had retired from all but his drum-making business. In April of 1799 he bequeathed his parchment for making drums to his brother Ebenezer, a Boston chairmaker. The inventory of his estate contains no references to the manufacture of chairs.

Ridgway purchased a home on Middle Street in 1758 and remained there for the rest of his career. His shop was located on Ann Street and may, in fact, have been the same structure rented by his father from James Allen during the 1750s. Late in life Ridgway leased this building to a variety of craftsmen, including the cabinetmaker Abraham Hayward and the chairmaker Joseph Adams.

Ridgway was far more successful in his trade than the great majority of Boston chairmakers. At his death he left an estate valued at over $14,000. He owned three houses in the North End, the shop on Ann Street, and a pew in the New North Brick Church. Appraisers of the estate referred to him as a gentleman, not a chairmaker — a significant sign of his status in the town.

No. 39 James Rogers, the son of Ichabod and Anne Rogers of Boston, was born on 3 August 1729. He was identified as a chairmaker in a deed of 1753 in which he received one half of his father's house and land on Friends Street near the Mill Pond. On 8 July 1756 he married Elizabeth Phillips. Though little is known of his business, he must have been a prominent and respected tradesman. In
1779, 1780, and 1782 he served as surveyor of hemp for the town and in 1781 and from 1784 to 1793 held the position of surveyor of boards. Rogers died on 12 October 1793. His widow and Joseph Roby, a Boston tin-plate worker, were appointed executors of the estate. An inventory of his property, taken on 10 February 1794, included a chest with tools appraised at thirty-six shillings and the house on Friends Street. Appraisers placed a total value of £215 (L.M.) on the estate.

No. 40 Thomas Smith was identified as a chairmaker of Boston in a law suit of 1742. In the case his wife, the former Elizabeth Ballory (or Mallory), was sued by Ebenezer Pratt, Jr., of Weymouth. Ballory and Smith had married in Boston on 10 January 1740. Nothing further is known of Smith.

No. 41 David Snoden was born in Boston on 18 April 1705. He announced his intention to marry Mary Gilburt on 24 August 1732. No record of their marriage has survived. Three years later, on 9 January 1735, he married Margaret Gallop, the widow of a Boston boatbuilder. They had one son, Samuel, born in 1736.

Snoden was first identified as a chairmaker in 1733 and throughout the remainder of his career was described as a chairmaker or gentleman in public records. Like many local craftsmen, he attempted to increase his income by expanding into other areas of employment. In 1736, using money acquired from the sale of his wife's property, he bought one-half of a brew house and its equipment.
in the North End. His efforts at brewing, however, must have been unsuccessful for two years later he decided to sell his share of the operation back to the original owner at a slightly lower price.

Snoden for a time may also have served as a shopkeeper and tavern-keeper in Boston. An account of 1733 listed large quantities of textiles (four bolts of English duck, nine bolts of Holland duck, nine pieces of garlits) in his possession. In the same year he petitioned the town for permission to sell alcoholic beverages. The request was denied.

Between 1738 and 1747 Snoden remained continually in debt. Yet during this period he still managed to accumulate sufficient credit to purchase a home on Middle Street next door to Samuel Ridgway, Jr. (no. 37), and a tenement on Hull Street. At his death shortly before 23 January 1747, he left a mass of unpaid bills and mortgages on both properties. His widow remarried shortly after his death and for the next seventeen years she and her husband struggled to settle the Snoden estate.

Though saddled with debts, Snoden enjoyed a comfortable standard of living. His estate was valued at the substantial sum of £2192:4:0. According to an inventory of his possessions, he owned far more than the typical craftsman. Among the most fashionable furnishings in his house were four paintings in gilt frames, a canvas floor cloth, two wigs, an easy chair, and 112 ounces of silver. The latter included a milk pot, a pepper box, four porringer, and a cann. Snoden
also owned two slaves. The inventory did not contain any mention of tools, chair-
making materials, and shop goods.233

While numerous references to Snoden appear throughout the Suffolk
County records, no bills or accounts describing his work have been found. Hope­
fully additional evidence will be discovered to document what types of furniture
he made and in what quantity.

No. 42 Paul Spear was born in Boston on 30 June 1733.234 In 1756 he married
Clemence Weld, the daughter of Edmund Weld, a prominent Roxbury cabinet-
maker.235 Public records referred to Spear as a chairmaker in March 1760 and
January 1767.236 However, in July of the latter year he was identified as a
lighterman and in 1789 and 1792 as an innkeeper.237

Spear died on 17 October 1792 at the age of 59.238 An inventory of
his estate was taken shortly after his death. It totalled £626:15:4 (L.M.) and in­
cluded his home on Purchase Street and another dwelling at Fort Hill.239 There
were no references to chairmaking tools or materials in the inventory. Apparently
Spear only followed the trade during the early years of his career.

No. 43 Daniel Swan can only be documented as a Boston turner by a single bill
to Nathaniel Holmes dated 6 January 1740. He charged the cabinetmaker £5:18:6
for a variety of turned work including six sets of "balls," eleven sets of drops,
fifteen sets of flame finials, and eighteen pillars.240
Swan may have been the Daniel Swan who married Mary Ellard in Boston on 4 July 1741.

No. 44  **John Trevett** (or Trevitt) was a member of the prosperous Perkins family chairmakers. On 31 August 1749 he announced his intention to marry Esther, the daughter of Edmund Perkins, Sr. (no. 29). In the same year he and John Perkins (no. 32) purchased a house and land on Battery March Street in the South End. Nothing is known at present of Trevett's chairmaking business. He may have worked in partnership with John Perkins throughout the 1750s. Trevett died sometime before 19 August 1760.

No. 45  **Anthony Underwood** was born in Boston on 2 May 1680 and was married to Jane Place on 1 May 1703. (Eight years earlier her sister, Sarah Place, had married Thomas Stevens, a Boston joiner.) He held several town posts: hogreeve in 1710, engineman in 1733, and engine master in 1736.

Little is known of Underwood's career as a chairmaker. He is recorded as working in the trade in 1709, 1738, and 1742. Apparently he operated a large establishment in which thousands of inexpensive slat-back chairs were produced. According to a remarkable surviving account, he employed his son John (no. 46) during the years 1734 to 1746. In this thirteen year interval the younger Underwood constructed 5,180 turned chairs for his father, an average of 475 chairs per year. For his labor John Underwood received two shillings for each chair.
Anthony Underwood's home and shop were located on Middle Street near the residences of Samuel Ridgway, Sr. (no. 37), and David Snoden (no. 41). He had purchased a portion of the property from the heirs of his father-in-law in 1703 and by 1748 had gained complete ownership. Though possessing such visible signs of success as a prosperous shop and his own home, Underwood did not become wealthy. He mortgaged his Middle Street property and when he died on 10 December 1748 left an estate burdened with debts. John Underwood, appointed by the court to settle his father's accounts, was forced to auction the family home. Even this did not provide sufficient funds to repay every creditor and the estate was declared insolvent.

No. 46 John Underwood is one of the few Boston turners whose career can be traced in detail. John, the son of Anthony Underwood (no. 45), was born on 10 August 1704. He was married three times: to Elizabeth Rich on 1 January 1734, Mary Patterson on 28 January 1748, and Hepzibah Ray about 1752.

Underwood was apparently apprenticed to his father. By 1733 he had begun to work on his own; however, he continued to reside in the family home until at least 1748 and throughout the period was often employed as a journeyman in his father's shop. A bill of 6 February 1733 reveals him to have been a skilled craftsman capable of producing a wide variety of furniture forms and decorative details. He charged Nathaniel Holmes, a Boston cabinetmaker, for the following:
For Holmes, Underwood was one of many specialized craftsmen who were called upon to produce individual elements for furniture. "Draps," for example, embellished the skirts of dressing tables and high chests.

In addition to performing piece work for Boston cabinetmakers, Underwood constructed great quantities of lathe-turned, banister-back chairs in his father's shop. Between the years 1734 and 1745 he supplied 6,180 chairs, an average of 475 chairs per year. In return, he received two shillings per chair for his labor.
Like many local craftsmen, Underwood attempted to supplement his income through tavernkeeping. In 1743 the town selectmen granted him permission to operate as a retailer on Middle Street. 260 His efforts, however, provided only a marginal income and throughout his life he was hindered by debts.

In 1752, the year of his marriage to the widow Hepzibah Ray, he purchased a small house on Middle Street. This move probably resulted more from his wife's wishes than from his own prosperity for he mortgaged the property soon after obtaining it. 261 Little is known of the last six years of his life. He died sometime before 14 March 1758. Edward Marion, a blacksmith, Samuel Ridgway, Sr. (no. 37), and his son, Samuel, Jr. (no. 38), all of whom lived nearby, were chosen to act as administrators of the estate. 262 An inventory was recorded on 7 April 1758 which amounted to £129:0:6 (L.M.). It included a frame saw, a hand saw, and "a parcel of old Tools" — no doubt the latter was inherited by Underwood from his father. 263

Underwood's total assets failed to be sufficient to repay his creditors. On 14 February 1760, two years after his death, his estate was declared insolvent by the probate court. 264

No. 47 Clement Vincent, a skilful chairmaker, worked in Boston throughout much of the second half of the eighteenth century. Born in 1715, he married Mercy Langdon in 1741 and had at least two children, Sarah and Clement. 265 He had begun in his trade by June 1747 when he billed Samuel Grant, a Boston upholsterer,
for an easy chair frame and a set of comices for a bed. In 1751 he charged Elizabeth Stoddard ten shillings for "Putting up a Teaster & Curtains," "Cutting a bedsted Shorter," and making "one new hed bord." Between 1756 and 1760 Samuel Grant ordered numerous easy chair frames and bedsteads from him.

Vincent worked in close association with Edmund Perkins, Sr. (no. 29). His small shop was located near to Perkins' Mackerel Lane establishment. In addition, he found employment with the same upholsterer, Samuel Grant. He may, in fact, have served as a journeyman for Perkins during the early years of his career. In 1760 he, like Perkins, suffered losses in the Great Boston Fire. However, it is obvious from the inventory submitted afterwards that he operated on a much smaller scale than his neighbor. Among his shop goods destroyed in the blaze were the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 Easy Chair frames</td>
<td>£1:12:00:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Setts Cornishs</td>
<td>12:00:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 hollow plains</td>
<td>1:13:9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Sash Saw</td>
<td>2:05:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 plain [s]</td>
<td>0:15:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 fermers &amp; Gouges</td>
<td>1:04:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 small Glew pot</td>
<td>0:09:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Walnut Chair feet</td>
<td>2:00:0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vincent continued to work in Boston after the fire. He supplied furniture to Samuel Grant until at least March 1770. At the outbreak of the Revolution he may have moved to Dorchester, however, he did return to Boston at a later date. He died there on 21 October 1797 in the home of his son-in-law, Thomas Dillon, on Creek Lane. No probate inventory of his estate has been located.
No. 48 Samuel Wheeler, Sr., the son of Thomas and Sarah Wheeler of Boston, was born on 26 February 1699. He married Mary How of Dorchester on 21 September 1726. In a reference of 1720 he was described as a joiner. All later documents identified him as a chairmaker.

Wheeler must have prospered in his trade for he was one of the few woodworkers to own two pieces of land in the town. In 1733 he purchased a house on Marlborough Street from his mother for £115. Here he resided until at least 1742 when he acquired a house on Orange Street in the South End. Though forced to mortgage the second house soon after buying it, he quickly settled the mortgage and for the remainder of his life enjoyed a successful career on Orange Street.

During the mid-1740s Wheeler turned to innkeeping as an additional means of income. In 1744 he received permission from the town to sell "strong drink." He did not, however, abandon his chairmaking business. Probate accounts, written after his death in 1747, referred to him as a chairmaker and an inventory of his estate, recorded on 16 February 1748, listed a variety of woodworking materials in his possession including:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>204 feet of maple Planke</td>
<td>£6:00:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52 feet of maple Board</td>
<td>0:15:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one Crosscut Saw</td>
<td>2:00:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Pit Do one Glupott</td>
<td>3:10:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Chisalls 6 Goughes 2 Iron hold fasts</td>
<td>3:00:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one hatchit one Bitt 4 Small Do 2 Iron Squaers</td>
<td>2:10:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Joynters 9 Small Do one Beanch</td>
<td>3:00:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one Tuning Leath 3 mortising Cheasels</td>
<td>2:05:0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
Wheeler died at or near the peak of his career, leaving behind a small but active shop and ten children ranging in age from one to twenty. The burden of rearing so many children was an impossible task for Wheeler's widow and her father, Isaac How, a gentleman of Dorchester, became their legal guardian. Settlement of the Wheeler estate was delayed until the children had matured. Finally, in 1757 the court set off to Mrs. Wheeler one-third of her late husband's real estate and equally divided the remaining third among the children.  

No. 49  Samuel Wheeler, Jr., was the son and namesake of a prosperous Boston chairmaker (no. 48). Born on 2 December 1728, he was only eighteen when his father died.  Afterwards he may have lived briefly with his grandfather Isaac How of Dorchester. He must have begun working on his own by the early 1750s for by 1757 he had accumulated sufficient capital to purchase two-thirds of the family home on Orange Street. He served as an engineman for a local fire company in 1758 and may have been the Samuel Wheeler who married Sarah Newcome of Dorchester on 1 September 1763. Nothing further is known of his career.

No. 50  William Wilson, baptized on 5 August 1660, worked in Boston as a turner from about 1679, the year of his marriage, until 1732, the approximate year...
of his death. He served in several town offices: constable in 1701 and 1717, tithingman in 1710, and watchman on the Old North Watch in 1723.

A detailed inventory of his estate offers considerable insight into his activities as a turner. Clearly he was a versatile individual. He made and mended drums, repaired clocks and watches, sold hand engines, and constructed chairs. The shop inventory is quoted below in its entirety:

```
The Drums that were finished 2 large ones
   6 small ones
small Drum Rims Hoops Lines heads snails Parchment & Drum Sticks Ears & Leather &c
To a pcell of Old Turn'd Work & old Screw Things a wooden Vice and three old Jacks
To two old Clocks & 2 old Watches Price of all
To pcell of old watch wheels & old brass Wheels & Scraps &c
   1:10:0
To 2 Saws 1 k Cutt one a Slitting Saw
To 6 old fraim Saws 6 Small hand Vices
To 4 pencer Bitts & Stocks 7 Gimblets 2 Drawing Knives and three bourg Borer's
To 1 G'lew Pott 1 Mackeril Lead a few old Files
To Sundry small Things in the shop
   13:14:3
To 1 hold fast nipers Calipors & Compasses &c
To old hand Engines & hand Pump
To 2 small Grindstones Scyth & Sickle
To Clefis & Turn'd work & a small peice of Ivory
To a Fir Lumbrick & old Chests & sundry old things
To 40 Bundles of Flaggs 1 Joynt Stool 1 Joining Block & 2 small Rowling Pins & 1 small Drum mending
To a Buming Glass & a String of Bloodstone Beads
To 6 Carved foreparts for Chairs
```

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
A study of the biographies of Boston's chairmakers and turners, though not as illuminating as a single craftsman's business records, does enable one to generalize about the degree of specialization, shop output and size, and a craftsman's chances for economic success in the chairmaking trade. That specialization existed among chairmakers is not surprising. With thirty-six men working in the trade between 1725 and 1760, it is to be expected. Chairmakers may be divided into two major categories according to specialization: those who provided chair frames and bedsteads to upholsterers, and those who produced inexpensive slat-back or banister-back chairs without upholstered seats for both local consumption and export.

In an account of London tradesmen published in 1747, Robert Campbell reported that "to cover Chairs that have stuffed Bottoms" was strictly the upholsterer's task. Bostonians also assigned the final stage in chair production to the upholsterer. He covered even the simplest leather slip seat. As a result, a large segment of the Boston chairmaking population depended on upholsterers to prepare their chair frames for sale. Some chairmakers, in fact, were employed, or at least commissioned, by upholsterers. Clement Vincent, for example, made easy chair frames, bed posts, head boards, and bed and window cornices for Samuel Grant. In addition, he erected beds, repaired bedsteads, and hung curtains on his own for patrons throughout Boston. Likewise, Henry Perkins and Edmund Perkins, Sr., were often engaged by Grant to build and repair furniture. None of these chairmakers attempted to upholster chairs of his own production; clearly, close ties with an upholsterer were vital to his profession.
A number of chairmakers, on the other hand, maintained little contact with the upholstery trade. Anthony Underwood, Samuel Ridgway, Sr., and Samuel Ridgway, Jr., made large quantities of maple slat-back chairs with seats of flag woven in their own shops.²⁹⁴ Craftsmen gathered flag, or rush as it is called today, from nearby marshlands and often kept ample supplies on hand for their work. Stephen Fullerton stored one thousand bundles of the material in a room of his house.²⁹⁵ According to an inventory of 1760, the shop of Joseph Putnam contained "400 Bundles Flag & Salt Hay."²⁹⁶ No other material approached the popularity of flag as a durable and inexpensive substance for seating.

Boston turners performed a greater variety of tasks than either category of chairmakers. Besides chairs, they made handles of every description, decorative details for furniture, trays, circular table tops, and stair and garden balusters. Yet even among these versatile craftsmen, there was some degree of specialization. Thomas Hunt emphasized the manufacture of brushes in his shop.²⁹⁷ William Wilson repaired clocks and watches, an employment unique among Boston turners.²⁹⁸

The most specialized branch of the chairmaking industry was chair caning. John Lane, an emigrant from London, practiced the craft between 1730 and 1737, and after his death his widow continued to cane "Chairs, Couches, and Stools, with the utmost Fidelity and Dispatch" until at least 1756.²⁹⁹ While no other artisan identified himself solely as a chair caner, some occasionally made or mended cane seats. Edmund Perkins borrowed £25 from Thomas Fitch, the Boston
upholsterer, in 1724 to purchase cane and his son Henry listed "6 Cumps [compass] Cain Seats" in his shop in 1760. The latter probably resembled English chair seats of the 1740s by Giles Grendey. Though encountered infrequently in documentary sources, the mere mention of cane, a luxury from the Orient, indicates the existence of a sophisticated and complex furniture trade in Boston.

The output of Boston chairmakers varied according to the type of work they performed. Samuel Ridgway, Sr., and his two sons undoubtedly manufactured thousands of undistinguished slat-back chairs during their careers. Clement Vincent and Edmund Perkins, Jr., however, constructed far fewer examples, chiefly elaborate time-consuming easy chairs, corner chairs, and splat-back chairs. Nevertheless the total chair production in Boston between 1725 and 1760 must have reached the tens of thousands. During the mid-1740s the number of exported chairs alone totalled almost one thousand per year. Furthermore, one craftsman, John Underwood, is known to have built 6,180 chairs within the thirteen year span 1734 through 1746.

To have produced so many chairs, Underwood must have fabricated standard elements such as turned banisters, legs, and arms in bulk, stored them in his shop, and assembled them into sets of chairs whenever necessary. Certainly other craftsmen accumulated large inventories of chair parts. In 1760 the contents of the shop of John Perkins included 220 "walnott Feet for Chairs."
year Joseph Putnam listed "350 walnut Feet for Chairs" in an inventory of his shop materials.\textsuperscript{303} The use of mass-produced parts may help to explain the lack of stylistic unity in Boston chairs. As John Kirk has stated in his book American Chairs, Queen Anne and Chippendale:

> The stretchers, legs, seat, back post, crest rail, and splat, though each beautifully drawn, seem to have been conceived of separately; they never really achieve any unified movement. One feels it would be possible to exchange the legs or splats or seats with any other related chair and still have a good typical Massachusetts product.\textsuperscript{309}

The shops of Boston chairmakers and turners ranged significantly in size. Using the number of work benches as a guide, we find that the smallest establishments included only one, the largest seven. The average shop contained two to three benches. Such shops were modest in comparison to the chair and cabinet factories of nineteenth-century Boston. In 1833, for example, thirty-four benches filled "Foster's Manufactory" in nearby Charlestown.\textsuperscript{310}

Many members of the Boston chair industry gained sizeable incomes from their work. Joseph Putnam, William Putnam, Henry Perkins, John Perkins, Edmund Perkins, Sr., John Bright, and Isaiah Audebert reached a solid middle-class plateau, equal to their most successful colleagues in the woodworking trades.\textsuperscript{311} A single chairmaker, Samuel Ridgway, Sr., accumulated great wealth. At his death in 1799 he bequeathed to heirs an estate valued at over $14,000.\textsuperscript{312} The majority of chair-producing craftsmen, however, failed to achieve even a moderate standard of living. John Alcock, Stephen Fullerton, William Fullerton,
Jr., and Thomas Odell were plagued with debts throughout their careers. Anthony Underwood, John Underwood, and David Snoden left insolvent estates. A number of others, such as John Bobb or James Johnson, can be documented by only a very few elusive references. Their absence from public and private records suggests that they too experienced economic hardships in the town and, perhaps like the cabinetmaker Charles Warham, moved to more lucrative environs.

Boston chairmakers and turners often sought to add to their craft income by adopting secondary occupations. William Crockford performed minor carpentry jobs for his landlord in return for an abatement of his rent. Both Samuel Ridgway, Sr., and his son Samuel, Jr., sold drums and drumsticks. Innkeeping provided the most common source of extra earnings. Almost every craftsman who owned or rented an entire house operated it as a tavern at some period of his life. George Bridge, James Graham, Samuel Mattocks, David Snoden, Paul Spear, John Underwood, and Samuel Wheeler, Sr., received town licenses for varying lengths of time to retail "strong drink."

This chapter has focussed on the lives and business activities of Boston chairmakers and turners between 1725 and 1760. While much information on their work has been gathered from diverse sources, at present no extant piece of furniture can be assigned to a particular individual. After the Revolution numerous workmen stamped or labelled their products. Yet no chairs or bedsteads made during the middle years of the eighteenth century bear similar documentation. Nevertheless,
through portraits such as Mrs. Andrew Oliver and Son (fig. 24), surviving chairs with local histories (figs. 25, 26, 27), and detailed biographies, we can begin to grasp the significant role played by chairmakers and turners in the Boston furniture industry.
FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER II


3. Ibid., nos. 143-148.

4. See the biography of Morris Griffen (no. 15) in this chapter.

5. See pp. 14-29.

6. See pp. 29-49.


8. Suffolk County Inferior Court of Common Pleas, Boston, Massachusetts, 8 June 1750 (hereafter Suffolk Common Pleas); Suffolk County Superior Court of General Sessions, Boston, Massachusetts, docket 87501 (hereafter Suffolk General Sessions).


14 *A Report of the Record Commissioners of the City of Boston Containing Boston Births from A.D. 1700 to A.D. 1800*, XXIV (Boston: Rockwell and Churchill, City Printers, 1894), 163 (hereafter *Boston Births 1700-1800*).


19 *Suffolk County Registry of Probate*, Boston, Massachusetts, docket 14375 (hereafter *Suffolk Probate Records*).

20 *Suffolk Common Pleas*, 2 December 1742.


22 Forman, "Boston Craftsmen," no. 141.

23 *Suffolk Common Pleas*, 19 March 1733.

24 *A Report of the Record Commissioners of the City of Boston Containing the Records of Boston Selectmen, 1716 to 1736*, XIII (Boston: Rockwell and Churchill, City Printers, 1885), 235, 258 (hereafter *Selectmen's Records 1716-1736*).

25 *The Boston Gazette*, 29 November-6 December 1736, p. 2.


27 Mary Kent Davey Babcock, *Christ Church, Salem Street, Boston* (Boston: Thomas Todd, 1947), p. 100.

28 *Suffolk Common Pleas*, 14 September 1734.
29Suffolk Deeds, LI, 257-259.

30Boston Marriages 1700-1751, pp. 331, 343.

31Miscellaneous Papers, pp. 56-57.

32"The Clark's Register [of Christ Church]," p. 192, Boston Athenaeum.

33Account Book of John Clarke, p. 16, Massachusetts Historical Society.


35Account Book of John Clarke, p. 16, Massachusetts Historical Society; Suffolk Deeds, LXXV, 165.

36"The Clark's Register [of Christ Church]," p. 188, Boston Athenaeum.

37Daybook of Thomas Hancock, 14 April and 27 May 1738, Baker Library, Harvard University.

38Account Book of John Clarke, loose bills inserted between p. 16 recto and verso, Massachusetts Historical Society.

39Suffolk Probate Records, LI, 546-550. The pagination used for this bound volume of the Suffolk Probate Records and all subsequent probate volumes is taken from the modern number stamped on each page.


41Ibid., 20 March 1759.


43Suffolk General Sessions, dockets 64900, 64915.


Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
45. Suffolk General Sessions, dockets 89295, 90201.

46. Bond between John Hancock and Stephen Fullerton, Boston, 13 May 1769, Governor Hancock House - Inventory - Pictures - Furniture, Box 2, Hancock Papers, American Antiquarian Society.


49. Suffolk Common Pleas, 16 March 1733.


52. Suffolk Common Pleas, 14 September 1751; Suffolk General Sessions, docket 87437.

53. Suffolk General Sessions, dockets 75819, 78256; Miscellaneous Papers, p. 125.

54. "Account of Losses in Fire of 1760," Ms. Am. 1809 (49), Boston Public Library.


57. Suffolk Deeds, XCI1, 89, 101; XCVIII, 183-184; CIII, 78-79; CIX, 212-213; CLXX, 197-198; CLXXXI, 149-150.

58. Suffolk Probate Records, docket 21584.
In the fire Graham suffered personal losses valued at £41:13:8, a small sum considering the highly inflated currency of the time.

Account Book of John Clarke, p. 49, Massachusetts Historical Society.

Ibid.; Suffolk Probate Records, LXIII, 183.


"Register of Burials" for King's Chapel, p. 11, Massachusetts Historical Society, states that Griffen "age 48" was buried on 11 January 1752; Boston Marriages 1700-1751, pp. 183, 334, 336.

Seybolt, Town Officials, p. 223 fn.

Suffolk Common Pleas, 3 June 1740; "Register of Burials" for King's Chapel, p. 11, Massachusetts Historical Society.

Thomas B. Wyman, Genealogy of the Name and Family of Hunt (Boston: John Wilson and Son, 1862-1863), p. 349.


Oliver Ayer Roberts, History of the Military Company of the Massachusetts Now Called the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company of Massachusetts, 1637-1888, 4 vols. (Boston: Alfred Mudge & Son, 1895-1901), 1, 423-429.

Seybolt, Town Officials, pp. 164, 180, 209, 214, 239, 261, 263.

Suffolk Probate Records, LXI, 313-314.

Quoted in Wyman, Genealogy of Hunt Family, p. 349.


Suffolk Deeds, XI, 164.

76. It is difficult to determine all of Hunt's town posts for another Thomas Hunt, anchorsmith of Boston, was predominant in local affairs at the same time. See Roberts, History of the Artillery Company, I, 275; Seybolt, Town Officials, pp. 61, 66, 69, 74; M. Halsey Thomas, ed., The Diary of Samuel Sewall, 2 vols. (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1973), I, 134.

77. Forman, "Boston Craftsmen," no. 137; Suffolk Probate Records, docket 6608.

78. Account Book of Samuel Grant, 29 January 1733, p. 203; 16 September 1733, p. 264, Massachusetts Historical Society; Suffolk Common Pleas, 17 September and 16 December 1734.


80. Suffolk Common Pleas, 18 September 1741.

81. The Boston Gazette, 31 August - 7 September 1730, p. 2.


86. Suffolk Common Pleas, January 1743.

87. Ibid., 11 September 1733.

88. Suffolk Probate Records, LV, 437.

89. Ibid., LVII, 113-119; Account Book of John Clarke, p. 28, Massachusetts Historical Society.

90. There is no evidence to document McKillister's presence in Boston. However, since Holmes is known to have employed two other turners from the town, it is likely that McKillister resided there also.
Bill, Daniel McKillister to Nathaniel Holmes, Boston, 10 September 1738, Bills 1728-1759, VIII, Bourn Papers, Baker Library, Harvard University.

See "Thwing File," entries for James Mattocks, Samuel Mattocks I, and Samuel Mattocks II.

Boston Births 1630-1699, p. 181.

Boston Marriages 1700-1751, p. 41; Boston Births 1700-1800, pp. 92, 99, 141, 151.

Boston Marriages 1700-1751, pp. 108, 139.

Seybolt, Town Officials, pp. 155, 158.

Suffolk Deeds, XXXV, 96-97, 121; XLII, 237.

Selectmen's Records 1716-1736, pp. 55, 70, 115.

Ibid., p. 115; Account Book of Thomas Amory, 27 July 1724 - 11 July 1727, passim, Massachusetts Historical Society.

The Boston News-Letter, 6 - 13 March 1729, p. 2.

Suffolk Deeds, LVII, 44-45.


Ibid.

Suffolk Common Pleas, Vol. for 1710-1713, p. 125. The bound volumes identified in this and future notes contain transcribed summaries of each completed court case, arranged by session.

Ibid., Vol. for 1720-1721, pp. 49, 73.


Ibid., p. 180; see also Forman, "Boston Craftsmen," no. 148.

Suffolk Common Pleas, 21 August 1733.
116

109 Boston Marriages 1700-1751, p. 207.

110 A Private Proof Printed in Order to Preserve Certain Matters Connected with the Boston Branch of the Perkins Family (Boston: T. R. Marvin & Son, 1890), pp. 26-27.

111 Ibid., p. 27.

112 Seaburg and Paterson, Merchant Prince of Boston, pp. 17-19.

113 Ledger of Daniel Henchman, 1712-1729, p. 25, Baker Library, Harvard University.

114 Account Book of Thomas Fitch, 7 March 1720, p. 72, Massachusetts Historical Society; Account Book of Samuel Grant, 8 August 1729, p. 23, Massachusetts Historical Society.

115 Account Book of Samuel Grant, 12 February 1730, p. 35; 19 February 1731, p. 77; 5 February 1732, p. 131, Massachusetts Historical Society; Account Book of Samuel Grant, 26 December 1738, p. 75; 24 December 1739, p. 130; 27 July 1740, p. 165, American Antiquarian Society. It is possible that other payments were made to Perkins for portions of the account books are missing.

116 A suit of freedom clothes was made for Jent by the tailor Daniel Rea in March 1741. Account Book of Daniel Rea, 6 March 1741, p. 102, Baker Library, Harvard University. The reference to the journeyman appears in Account Book of Samuel Grant, 3 October 1739, p. 117, American Antiquarian Society. The reference to the negro is from Account Book of Daniel Rea, 10 August 1740, p. 67, Baker Library, Harvard University.

117 Suffolk Deeds, XXVII, 177-178.

118 Ibid., XCI, 79-80.

119 "Account of Losses in Fire of 1760," Ms. Am. 1809 (81), Boston Public Library.

120 Suffolk Deeds, XCV, 120-121.

121 Apparently after his death, his estate received £90 (L.M.) from the town committee responsible for compensating victims of the fire. See Suffolk Probate Records, LXI, 439.

122 Ibid., LIX, 500; LX, 318-320.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
His obituary in The Boston News-Letter of 8 July 1773, p. 3, stated that he died at "aged 45." The newspaper mistakenly identified him as Edward rather than Edmund.

Petty Ledger of Samuel Grant, 1755-1762, p. 84, Boston Public Library.

"Account of Losses in Fire of 1760," Ms. Am. 1809 (82), Boston Public Library.

Presumably he married her shortly after publishing his intention in 1762. She served as administrator of his estate. Boston Marriages 1752-1809, p. 419.

The Boston News-Letter, 8 July 1773, p. 3; Suffolk Probate Records, LXXIII, 604-605.

Boston Marriages 1700-1751, p. 72.

Account Book of Samuel Grant, 6 January 1738, p. 76, American Antiquarian Society.

Ibid., 15 February 1739, p. 82; 26 December 1739, p. 131.

Suffolk Deeds, LXVI, 69-70.

Ibid.

The intention of his marriage to Grace Thaxter was published on 7 November 1745. Boston Marriages 1700-1751, p. 281. A deed of 1771 refers to Grace as his wife. Suffolk Deeds, CXIX, 130-131.

Seybolt, Town Officials, pp. 229, 265, 290; Roberts, History of the Artillery Company, II, 75.

"Account of Losses in Fire of 1760," Ms. Am. 1809 (83), Boston Public Library.

In an assessment of 1771 Perkins is credited with a house and shop valued at £34:13:4 (L.M.). Both are listed in ward nine and in all likelihood stood near to, if not next to, one another. Perkins is also listed with stock in trade valued at £150 (L.M.), a high figure for a craftsman and clearly indicative of the
continued magnitude of his business. “Boston Valuation for 1771,” CXXXII, 133, Massachusetts Archives.

133 Petty Ledger of Samuel Grant, 1762-1771, p. 20, Boston Public Library.

139 Suffolk Deeds, CXIII, 49-50; CXIX, 130-131.

140 Suffolk Probate Records, LXI, 411.

141 His death occurred sometime between 1 August 1783 when his will was written and 9 September 1783 when it was recorded by the court. Ibid., docket 18019.

142 Ibid.

143 A Private Proof, p. 28.


146 Suffolk Common Pleas, 14 September 1750.

147 Suffolk Deeds, LXXVII, 16-17.

148 “Account of Losses in Fire of 1760,” Ms. Am. 1809 (85), Boston Public Library.

149 Ibid.

150 Suffolk Deeds, XCIV, 273-274.


152 Suffolk Probate Records, LXIV, 497; LXXV, 240.


154 Ibid.
Ibid. In his will of 1783 Henry Perkins bequeathed £10 (L.M.) to his nephew John, chairmaker of Gorham. Suffolk Probate Records, docket 18019.


Boston Marriages 1700-1751, p. 345.

A list of the children of William Perkins is given in Suffolk Probate Records, LXI, 411.

Seybolt, Town Officials, pp. 232, 233 fn.


Suffolk Probate Records, docket 11844.

Ibid., docket 12286.

Ibid.


Ibid., p. 221.


Seybolt, Town Officials, p. 227.

Ibid., pp. 235, 339 fn.

In a list of Boston residents suffering losses in the Great Fire of 1760, Putnam's name follows that of Joseph Uran. The list is arranged by streets, suggesting that the two men lived next to one another or shared the same dwelling. Miscellaneous Papers, p. 125.

"Account of Losses in Fire of 1760," Ms. Am. 1809 (99), Boston Public Library.

Suffolk Deeds, XCV, 40.

Boston Marriages 1752-1809, p. 56.


175. Ibid.

176. Putnam, History of the Putnam Family, 1, 222.

177. Ibid.


179. Suffolk Probate Records, XLII, 515-516.

180. Ibid. Such a large sum suggests that William Putnam may also have been involved in commerce either through export of his furniture or sale of dry goods to neighbors. Both were practiced by other craftsmen and in Putnam's case would surely indicate that he was actively expanding his business during the late 1740s.

181. Ibid.


183. Ibid.


185. Suffolk Deeds, CXLI, 30-32.


188. Seybolt, Town Officials, pp. 206, 214.
The inventory of James Allen, recorded on 3 September 1756, included:

Two Shops fronting Ann Street in ye Occupa[tion] of Mr. Ridgway, with ye Land behind the same £133:6:8 [L.M.]
The property later passed to Jeremy Allen and was rented jointly by "Sam[uel] Ridgway & Son." Suffolk Probate Records, LI, 597; LXIV, 436; LXV, 33.

Account Book of Samuel Grant, 28 September 1732, p. 173, Massachusetts Historical Society.

Ibid., 24 October 1733, p. 272.

Ibid., 24 November 1737, p. 625.

Suffolk Probate Records, docket 15505.

Suffolk Common Pleas, 21 January 1749.

Suffolk Probate Records, docket 15505.

Ibid.


Ibid., p. 339.


Diary of William Bentley, I, 133.

Ibid., II, 255.

J. Russell's Gazette, 27 May 1799, p. 3; see also Diary of William Bentley, II, 310.


Ibid., pp. 440, 443, 414, 452, 453.
It is not known when Ridgway purchased the Ann Street shop. He was in possession of the property by 1789 and perhaps as early as 1771. In that year, according to a tax evaluation, he owned a house and detached shop. The latter may well have been the structure on Ann Street. "Boston Valuation for 1771," CXXXII, 107, Massachusetts Archives.

Suffolk Deeds, CLXXXII, 149; Suffolk Probate Records, docket 21051.

Pierce, ed., Records of the First Church, XL, 398.

Suffolk Deeds, LXXXIII, 163.


A Report of the Record Commissioners of the City of Boston Containing the Boston Town Records, 1778 to 1783, XXVI (Boston: Rockwell and Churchill, City Printers, 1895), 51, 111, 180, 229; A Volume of Records Relating to the Early History of Boston Containing the Boston Town Records, 1784 to 1796, XXXI (Boston: Municipal Printing Office, 1903), 11, 58, 102, 140, 162, 190, 221, 253, 280, 323.

The Independent Chronicle and the Universal Advertiser, 14 October 1793, p. 3. The obituary listed his address incorrectly as Hanover Street, a main thoroughfare adjoining Friends Street.

Suffolk Probate Records, docket 20227.

Suffolk Common Pleas, 10 June 1742.

Boston Marriages 1700-1751, p. 213.
Suffolk Deeds, LiV, 54. Snoden sold a wharf near Fish Street which his wife had inherited from her previous husband to pay for the brew house. Ibid., pp. 67-68.

227 Ibid., LVI, 194-195. Snoden had purchased the brew house for £500. He resold it for the same amount. However, because of high inflation at the time, the price actually represented a loss for Snoden.

228 Ibid., p. 245.

229 A Report of the Record Commissioners of the City of Boston Containing the Records of Boston Selectmen, 1736 to 1742, XV (Boston: Rockwell and Churchill, City Printers, 1885), 131.

230 Suffolk Deeds, LVI, 244-245; LXVIII, 7-9.

231 Suffolk Probate Records, docket 8661.


233 Suffolk Probate Records, docket 8661.

234 James Spear Loring, "Spear Family Record," New England Historical and Genealogical Register, XVIII (April, 1864), 159-161.

235 Spear filed his intention to marry Clemence Weld on 24 June 1756. Boston Marriages 1752-1809, p. 20. For references to Edmund Weld, see Suffolk Probate Records, XLV, 302-303; LIIX, 247-250.

236 Suffolk Probate Records, LIIX, 247; LXV, 489.

237 The Boston Directory (Boston: John Norman, 1789), p. 40; Suffolk Deeds, CX, 255.
233 The Columbian Centinel, 17 October 1792, p. 3.

239 Suffolk Probate Records, docket 20054.

240 Bill, Daniel Swan to Nathaniel Holmes, Boston, 6 January 1740, Bills 1723-1759, VIII, Boum Papers, Baker Library, Harvard University.

241 Boston Marriages 1700-1751, p. 332.

242 Ibid., p. 292.

243 Suffolk Deeds, LXXVII, 16-17.

244 A deed of that date referred to "Esther Trevitt Wife of John Trevitt late of Boston Chairmaker deceased." Ibid., XCIV, 273-274.

245 Boston Births 1630-1699, p. 153; Boston Marriages 1700-1751, p. 16.

246 Boston Marriages 1700-1751, p. 348.

247 Seybolt, Town Officials, pp. 124, 189, 204.

248 Suffolk Common Pleas, 21 June 1742; Suffolk Probate Records, XXXIV, 71. Underwood was identified at his death as a chairmaker. However, he had apparently retired from his trade by that time because an inventory of his estate listed few tools and no lumber. Suffolk Probate Records, XLIII, 325-325; XLIV, 472-473.

249 Suffolk Probate Records, docket 9182; see also John Underwood biography (no. 46) in this chapter.


251 The date of Underwood's death is given in an account submitted by his son John who had rented a portion of the family home between 1746 and 1748: "By the Rent of the front End of Sd House From the Sd Tenth of April [1746] to the Tenth of December ad 1748 which Time my father Deceased." Suffolk Probate Records, docket 9182.

252 Ibid.
253 Boston Births 1700-1800, p. 31.

254 Boston Marriages 1700-1751, pp. 188, 263; Boston Marriages 1752-1809, p. 4.

255 Bill, John Underwood to Nathaniel Holmes, Boston, 6 February 1733, Bills 1728-1759, VIII, Boum Papers, Baker Library, Harvard University.

256 Underwood stated in an account recorded after his father's death that he had rented a portion of the family home until 10 April 1748. Suffolk Probate Records, docket 9182.

257 Bill, John Underwood to Nathaniel Holmes, Boston, 6 February 1733, Bills 1728-1759, VIII, Boum Papers, Baker Library, Harvard University.

258 See pp. 16, 27.

259 Suffolk Probate Records, docket 9182. The account is vague concerning the appearance of these chairs. Underwood billed his father for "tuming" 515 dozen chairs. Presumably these were banister-back examples because of the reference to "tuming." All but the seat rails of a banister-back chair could be made on a lathe. Other varieties such as the slat-back or the splat-back chair required additional work with saws, chisels, planes, and drawknives.


261 Suffolk Deeds, LXXXI, 141-143.

262 Suffolk Probate Records, LII, 186.

263 Ibid., LIII, 263-265.

264 Ibid., LVI, 175.

265 His obituary in The Independent Chronicle and the Universal Advertiser of 23 October 1797, p. 3, described him as aged 82. His marriage to Mercy Langdon is not recorded. However, their intention to marry was announced on 18 April 1741. Boston Marriages 1700-1751, p. 269. The births of the children, though not listed in the town records, can be documented through Vincent's obituary and the announcement of his daughter's marriage to Thomas Dillon on 24 March 1770. Boston Marriages 1752-1809, p. 48.

266 Petty Ledger of Samuel Grant, 1755-1762, p. 60, Boston Public Library.
Bill, Clement Vincent to Elizabeth Stoddard, Boston, 1 November 1752, 1735-1770, II, David S. Greenough Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.

Petty Ledger of Samuel Grant, 1755-1762, pp. 60, 76, 89, 139, Boston Public Library.

Vincent's association with Perkins is well documented in the business accounts of Samuel Grant. Often Grant billed Perkins for goods delivered to Vincent. For example, on 4 December 1742 Grant charged him for "2 1/2 yd. Ozna [brig] @ 4/6 dld. Vincent." Account Book of Samuel Grant, p. 317, American Antiquarian Society. Numerous similar references appear throughout the account book at the Massachusetts Historical Society and the petty ledgers at the Boston Public Library, suggesting that his shop stood near to Perkins' and that possibly he worked at one time for Perkins.

"Account of Losses in Fire in 1760," Ms. Am. 1809 (161), Boston Public Library.

Petty Ledger of Samuel Grant, 1762-1771, p. 145, Boston Public Library.

Francis Everett Blake, "Gleanings from Massachusetts Archives," New England Historical and Genealogical Register, LV (October, 1901), 339.

The Independent Chronicle and the Universal Advertiser, 23 October 1797, p. 3.


Boston Marriages 1700-1751, p. 326.


Suffolk Deeds, XLVII, 175-176.

Ibid., LXIV, 149-150.

Ibid., 150-152.


Suffolk Probate Records, docket 8847.
282 Ibid.

283 *Boston Births 1700-1800*, p. 190; *Suffolk Probate Records*, docket 8847.

284 Isaac How was appointed legal guardian for Samuel and his nine brothers and sisters. *Suffolk Probate Records*, docket 8847.

235 Ibid., LV1, 118-120.


238 Forman, "Boston Craftsmen," no. 140.


290 *Suffolk Probate Records*, XXXI, 221-222.


292 See biography of no. 47.

293 See nos. 29, 31.

294 See nos. 37, 38, 45.

295 See no. 9.

296 See no. 34.

297 See no. 17.

298 See no. 50.

299 See no. 21.


301 "Account of Losses in Fire of 1760," Ms. Am. 1809 (83), Boston Public Library.

See nos. 36, 37, 38.

See nos. 30, 47.

Few export records for Boston have survived. One manuscript volume for the years 1744 to 1748 reveals that between 1 April 1744 and 1 April 1745, 809 chairs were shipped from Boston to ports in the West Indies and along the Atlantic coast. This total does not include references to five or fewer chairs since these may have been riding chairs or chaises. Furthermore it does not take into account ambiguous cargoes such as a "parcel of chairs." "Clearances from Boston," 1744-1748, Customs Records, Boston Athenaeum.

See no. 45.

See no. 32.

See no. 34.


See nos. 3, 6, 29, 31, 32, 34, 35.

See no. 38.

See nos. 1, 9, 11, 27.

See nos. 41, 45, 46.

See nos. 4, 18.

See pp. 9-10.

See no. 7.

See nos. 37, 33.
See nos. 5, 14, 26, 41, 42, 46, 48.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Books and Articles


"Diary for 1773 to the End of 1774, of Mr. Thomas Newell, Boston." Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society, XV (1876-1877), 335-363.


A Report of the Record Commissioners of the City of Boston. 39 vols. Boston: Rockwell and Churchill, City Printers, 1876-1898; Municipal Printing Office, 1898-1903; Printing Department, 1909. The following volumes were cited in this thesis:


City Directories


Newspapers

Boston Evening Post. (Boston.) 1756.

The Boston Gazette. (Boston.) 1730, 1736, 1740, 1750.

The Boston News-Letter. (Boston.) 1729, 1742, 1773.

The Columbian Centinel. (Boston.) 1792.

The Independent Chronicle and the Universal Advertiser. (Boston.) 1793, 1797.

J. Russell's Gazette. (Boston.) 1799.


Business Accounts


_________. Samuel Grant Account Book, 1737-1760.

_________. Hancock Papers. Box 2, Governor Hancock House - Inventory - Pictures - Furniture.


_________. William Waine Ledger, 1745-1774.

Boston Public Library. Samuel Grant Petty Ledger, 1755-1762.

_________. Samuel Grant Petty Ledger, 1762-1771.

The Bostonian Society. Samuel Grant Receipt Book, 1731-1740.


_________. Samuel Abbot Papers.

_________. Bourn Papers, Vols. VI, VIII.

_________. Peter Faneuil Daybook, 1731-1732.
Thomas Hancock Daybook, 1737-1739.

Hancock Papers, Vol. XV.

Daniel Henchman Ledger, 1712-1729.


Townsend and Wigglesworth Account Books, 1758-1765. 3 vols.


55.764.2, Bill, Mary Jackson to Nathaniel Holmes, 15 March 1740.

55.524-55.525, Bills, John Mudge to Nathaniel Holmes, 11 December 1734 and 6 January 1733.


John Clarke Account Book, 1732-1771.

Thomas Fitch Account Book, 1719-1732.

Thomas Fitch Account Book, 1732-1736.

Thomas Fitch Letterbook, 1723-1733.

Samuel Grant Account Book, 1728-1737.

David S. Greenough Papers.

Church Records


Massachusetts Historical Society. "Register of Burials" for King's Chapel.


Public Records

Boston, Massachusetts. Massachusetts Archives. "Boston Valuation for 1771."

* * *

Suffolk County Inferior Court of Common Pleas. Dockets and Bound Volumes.

* * *


* * *

Suffolk County Registry of Probate. Dockets and Bound Volumes.

* * *

Suffolk County Superior Court of General Sessions. Dockets.


Secondary Sources

Books and Articles


Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
Blake, Francis Everett. "Gleanings from Massachusetts Archives." New England Historical and Genealogical Register, LV (October, 1901), 388-391.

Brazer, Esther S. "The Early Boston Japanners." Antiques, XLIII (May, 1943), 208-211.


Hall, Lillian A. "Some Descendants of John Ridgway." New England Historical and Genealogical Register, LXVI (October, 1912), 332-335.


A Private Proof Printed in Order to Preserve Certain Matters Connected with the Boston Branch of the Perkins Family. Boston: T. R. Marvin & Son, 1890.


- "George Bright, Cabinetmaker." Art Quarterly, XXVII (1964), 134-149.


Swan, Mabel M. "Boston's Carvers and Joiners, Pre-Revolutionary and Post-Revolutionary." Antiques, LIII (March and April, 1948), 198-201, 281-285.


**Genealogy of the Name and Family of Hunt.** Boston: John Wilson and Son, 1862-1863.

Other Sources


Massachusetts Historical Society. Annie Thwing. "Boston Inhabitants." (Card file.)
APPENDIX

The following list contains the names and working dates, arranged in chronological order, of each craftsman discussed in Chapter II. If a craftsman was born in Boston, his earliest working date is given as his twenty-first year. If he was not born in Boston, the date of his arrival or marriage in the town is used. The final working date is either the year of his death or, if he is known to have changed professions, the last year in which he was identified as a chairmaking craftsman.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>WORKING DATES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Snoden</td>
<td>1726-1747</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lane, J.</td>
<td>1730-1737</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lane, S.</td>
<td>1730-1756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perkins, H.</td>
<td>1731-1783</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson</td>
<td>1732-1734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love</td>
<td>1733</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Griffen</td>
<td>1733-1752</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcock, J.</td>
<td>1733-1766</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putnam, J.</td>
<td>1735-1788</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crockford</td>
<td>1737-1756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perkins, W.</td>
<td>1737-1760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McKillister</td>
<td>1738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orr</td>
<td>1738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swan</td>
<td>1740-1741</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>