

Petition to the Mint Board: 'The Case of Charles Stuart one of the Monyers belonging to Her Maj^{ties} Mint in the Tower of London'.

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Whereas by the Laws and Custome of the Mint it is Provided, that the Monyers belonging to her Majesties Mint in the Tower of London, shall take Apprentices, and instruct them in the Art and Mystery of Coining, to the end there may be never wanting a sufficient number of able and skilfull workmen to performe the service of the Mint.

And Whereas Charles Stuart having for the term of Seven Years served the Monyers as an Apprentice, and during the time of recoinng the Old Money performing the duty of an Apprentice, with all the Faithfulness and Diligence that such a time especially required: at the expiration of Seven Years Apprentiship, he was by the Provost and Society of Monyers admitted into the Fellowship of Monyers and in this capacity has constantly attended the service of the Mint for almost Eight Years.

But some Years before his being made a Monyer, the Provost with the rest of the Monyers thought good to draw up certain Articles of Agreement for the better preservation of Society and good order among themselves, and whereby they obliged themselves, if they broke any of these Articles to pay some little forfeiture, the very highest of which was forty shillings: and seeing these Articles had no other end or tendency, than to keep up peace and good order in the Society, the said Charles Stuart when he was made a Monyer gave his consent to these Articles; and by these Rules thus voluntarily agreed to, the whole society has bin kept in mutual love and peace, for many years, till about two Years and a half ago New Jealousies broke out among them upon a very small occasion.

The Honourable the Master Worker sending for the Provost to know the charge of coining Copper Farthings, and they not agreeing together upon the price, the said Provost came back full of Jealousy of the Master Worker, apprehending that he had a design to make a separate contract with some of the Monyers only that were willing to coin the Copper cheaper, and to exclude the rest. To defeat the Master Worker in his suspected design, this expedient was resolv'd upon by the Provost and the Monyers, To draw up a body of Laws in which the Old Articles should be inserted, with ye addition of several New ones; particularly one, and for the sake of which all ye rest were made, is to prevent the making any separate Contract; and an augmentation of the Penalty, from forty shillings which was the highest sanction of the Old Articles, to Five Hundred Pounds or any one that shou'd dare to act against any of these Laws.

When this Project was mov'd first, the said Charles Stuart was surpriz'd to see how well it was receiv'd by a great part of the Monyers and therefore he desir'd em to consider well on what they did, and whether it was safe for them to enter into such a Combination: but notwithstanding all he said, these Laws were form'd, and every Monyer was required to sign em; but when it came to the turn of the said Charles Stuart, he declined setting his hand to any such Laws till he was better inform'd of their right and power to make them: Little was said to him upon his refusing it, for fear, as he imagin'd, talking too much upon the subject before all had sign'd might move some other to stand out: and therefore the Matter rested so above a Year.

But last Lady day was twelvemonth it was taken up again. When the Provost told the said Charles Stuart to his greate Surprise, that the Salary which he and the rest of the Monyers enjoy by an Act of Parliament in that behalfe, and which by Your Honours care is paid as punctually, he the Provost would deprive the said Charles Stuart of till set he his hand to these New Laws; then the said Charles Stuart desir'd to have a Copie of the Laws that he might consider em; which allso was refus'd him, telling him he might read em himselfe, but they could not permit a copie of em to go abroad.

But notwithstanding this hard usage, of being deny'd a Copie of their Laws to consider before he sign'd em, and of having a whole Years Salary stopt in the hands of the Provost for not signing em, the said Charles Stuart has constantly attended the service of the Mint all along, and had he bin inclin'd by such strange treatment to neglect it, as he never was, yet as often as there was occasion, they called upon him to come to work, who were most zealous in refusing to pay him for his work; and for all that he constantly obeyd their call, tho as constantly as he applied himself to the Provost for his Salary, and the wages of so many days work he possitively refused to pay him either.

At last this Proposal was made to the said Charles Stuart, that he should bring a proper Iudge to consider their Laws and both sides shou'd agree to abide by his Iudgment, If he aprov'd of em, then the said Charles Stuart shou'd be oblig'd to sign em; if he disapprov'd of em they shou'd be bound to cancell em; this Proposall the said Charles Stuart through his natural desire of peace accepted of; and accordingly Council was freed to read and examine these Laws, which being done the Council attended the Monyers at their next meeting, and gave his Iudgment against their Laws telling em among other things, that by the Charter and Indenture of ye Mint, the only Laws which they shou'd follow, the Monyers have no power to make New Laws, or even to punish the breakers of the old, that being given into the hands of none but the Warden the Master worker and comptroller who are empow'rd to punish all Offenders, whether the Provost the Fellows or their Apprentices as in reason and justice they shall think fit for her Majesties service according to the Antient Power and Authority of Right thereunt belonging: Whereas in this Case of Charles Stuart the Monyers have assumed a power even of making New Laws, and forcing all their Fellow Monyers to consent to em, and punishing the Refusers in a very extraordinary Manner, to Deprive a man of a salary granted him by the Authority of Queen and Parliament and yet employ him in the Service for which that Salary is granted : this and a great deale more the Council urg'd; that it wou'd be the safest way to Cancell their Laws, and be contented with the Old Laws of the Mint and the Powers Lodged with the Great Officers: And tho it was their own Proposal, they wou'd not keep to it, but insisted upon their former terms of the said Charles Stuart signing or no Salary: upon which ye Council advised the said Charles Stuart to make a demand of the Yearly Salary and other mony of his which they had in their hands, and he accordingly did demand it, and they peremtority refus'd to pay: the Regard which the said Charles Stuart bears to the Monyers and his Vnwillingnes to make any complaints against them to your HONOURS, would have gone a great way towards bringing him to comply with 'em almost in anything tho nere so inconvenient provided it was Lawful.

But the said Charles Stuart has since bin assured by his Council that he can't set his hand to the Laws of ye Monyers Enacting, without doing the highest Injury to ye Officers, and Divesting the Warden the Master Worker and Comptroller of ye Powers which both Charter and Indenture of the Mint, they are justly possessed of, He therefore witholds the said Charles Stuart from setting his hand to these Laws; by these reasons following: 1st: Because ye Company of Monyers is but a part of the Corporation, the Warden the Master Worker and the Comptroller being the other more considerable part: 2^d: Because one part of a Corporation has not a Power to make Laws without ye knowledge of ye other: 3^d: Because the Power of punishing ties not in the hands of the Monyers where these New Laws wou'd Lodge it, but only in the hands of the superior Officers of ye Mint: 4^{thly}: Even by these New Laws of their if the said Charles Stuart has done any thing that forfeits his Salary, the Monyers are bound to acquaint the Superior Officers with it that they may punish as their wisdom think fit. And 5^{thly}: the Right or Interest of this Corporation is so far from being consulted in this Case, that by these New Laws that one part of ye Corporation Combines against the other; and whoever sets his hand to em enters into a Confederacy against ye Officers, for this was the first design of making these New Laws and this is the end they tend to.

For these reasons among many others the said Charles Stuart is advised by his Council by no means to enter into such a Combination and as he is so great a sufferer upon that account, to lay his Case before **Your Honours** where it ought to Lye and where he is sure to find Iustice.
