

On Construction in the Rise of Wage Labour 1349-1563

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POINT OF DEPARTURE

My own point of departure is as an architect faced with the question of how I should design buildings. This is a question every architect is faced with. Wouldn't the most obvious answer be, let us see how buildings were designed in previous similar cases and do it the same way, maybe with amendments if there had been any shortcomings. Or are there good reasons to consider a fundamentally new approach? Which criteria should guide us to a new approach?

Present generations are obsessed by the idea that innovation is paramount, an aim in itself. What is really innovative in building design in historical terms? Which path did innovation follow in the past? Buildings were produced according to human and social needs - or fancy. What has changed in the past, production or needs, supply or demand, and why? How did they shape the built environment? The demand approach leads us to examine the use of buildings, why they permanently ceased to satisfy human needs and how production was adjusted to meet these needs. Conversely, the supply approach focuses our attention on the mode of producing buildings, and why in the course of history this was considered deficient and improved accordingly. In both spheres, production as well as consumption, specific human social relations are the agent and we may ask how changes in human social relations affect both the production and consumption of buildings. This is the starting point of this paper.

In production there is no doubt that since the demise of feudal serfdom wage labour relations are the dominant form of social relations. In consumption one might argue that, as under feudalism, property is still an important, if not the decisive, determinant in social relations. Overall, however, the development of wage relations in production is at the root of the capitalist industrial transformation which we are witnessing to date. And wage earners, including those on salaries, are by far the largest segment of society whether as producers or consumers of buildings.

Talking about the roots of the transformation, the period this paper will highlight is known variably according to different approaches in historical research

- the late middle ages,
- the pre-industrial age,
- "The So-Called Original Accumulation of Capital" (Marx 1970, p. 713),
- "The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism" (Sweezy et al. 1974),
- the Rise of Wage Labour.

The concept of the ‘middle ages’ was that Greek and Roman antiquity were the first great civilisation which, following a process of degeneration, was destroyed by barbaric Indo-Germanic tribes and eventually had a renaissance (‘Renaissance’) as symbolised by Greek Columns decorating the facades of noble palaces.

The notion of ‘pre-industrial’ development supposes that industrial production based on technical inventions such as the steam engine has created a new civilisation without precedent.

“The So-Called Original Accumulation of Capital” was Karl Marx’s identification of the same period according to the theory he called historical materialism, suggesting that within feudal relations capital began to be accumulated which caused a demand of wage labour and ultimately gave birth to capitalism as a new mode of production. (The current English translation “*Primitive Accumulation*” is replaced by ‘*Original Accumulation*’ in order to render the German “*ursprüngliche Akkumulation*”. J.J.)

How the transition from feudalism to capitalism came about was the bone of contention among those economic historians, predominantly of Marxist inspiration, who debated over the four decades after WW II the question which Marx himself had left unanswered: whence did the capitalists come from, what social status did they represent?

Exploring the rise of wage labour is the reverse of the search for the origin of capital accumulation. But in contrast to the abstract process of the accumulation of value, the rise of wage labour is the subjective activity of living human beings, who have always existed, to become a dominant force and to break up a society based on property relations. The period is well defined as the centuries between the worst outbreak of the bubonic plague, the Black Death in England 1348-9, and the regulation of labour under the Elizabethan ‘Statute of Artificers, Labourers, Servants of Husbandry and Apprentices’ from 1563.

These centuries also exhibit a notable development of building and urban development. Though this is not my subject, it is worth keeping in mind that the construction labour process has not only transformed building production but also the built environment. The beginnings are marked by, on the one hand, the building and rebuilding of gothic cathedrals and monasteries – the latter mostly destroyed with the dissolution under Henry VIII – and, on the other, the simple timber framed cottages. The final stage of our period may best be remembered by the small size Tudor brick mansion or the timber framed two-story town house. In terms of urban development, the contrast between a few fortified corporate towns and the rural countryside became replaced by a great multitude of little market towns, whilst the corporate towns were gripped by decay with the exception of the metropolis London (Phythian-Adams 1978, Clarke and Slack 1972).

The history of labour relations in this period of the rise of wage labour boasts a number of excellent studies since the late 19th century. James Edwin Thorold Rogers in a truly seminal study collected

the rates of wages and prices and produced a picture of development of wages in construction which is still valid (1866-1902). About a hundred years later Henry Phelps-Brown and Sheila Hopkins (1981) largely confirmed Thorold Rogers' findings and a more recent study by David Farmer (1991), reviewing and updating the work of both these protagonists in the light of even more detailed evidence, only underlines the phenomenal rise of wage rates as compared to rents during the century after the Black Death. All three authors predominantly rely on wages of construction workers. Further studies on the development of wages complement the panorama, such as by Simon A.C. Penn and Christopher Dyer (1990), Christine Newman (2001), Hassell A. Smith (1989), and in particular on building craftsmen by Donald Woodward (1995). Concerning the change in the mode of production Karl Marx tops the league with 'Capital' Vol. I (1887), and the famous 'Transition Debate' was sparked off by Maurice Dobb (1946). Rodney Hilton introduced the publication of what was initially a series of articles in 'Past and Present' (Sweezy et al. 1974) and T.H. Aston and C.H.E. Philpin the articles of the following 'Brenner Debate' (1985).

One source indirectly providing testimony to the transformation of wage labour has only occasionally been tapped but never fully exploited, the statutes on labourers. The first ever was initially an ordinance, later raised to the status of a statute, 'Statutum de Operariis' from 1349 responding to the shortage of labour caused by the horrendous death toll of the Black Death. The outstanding termination of this series of legislation is the monumental 'Statute of Artificers' from 1563. The series encompasses in all 38 statutes.

Labour statutes, of course, do not tell us the reality of how labour was, but only how the Royalty and the Commons wanted it to be employed. Preambles to statutes almost consistently complain about the lack of enforcement and thorough studies have been carried out on whether or to what extent the regulations were implemented (Penn and Dyer 1990, Putnam 1908, Poos 1983). The dominant conclusion is: "The labour legislation was fairly ineffective, especially in the more developed areas of the country, because many employers found it to their advantage to ignore it and could afford to do so." (Fryde and Fryde 1991, p. 758) But, in expressing their concerns, the Commons tell us how they perceive their relationship with labour from the point of view of the employers, at least in the hundred years after the Black Death. Later a new class of employers emerges which is not represented in the House of Commons. From the legislation on how the social order should be regulated and from its changes important information can be gathered about social reality. As it happens, construction features as the sector in which wage labour was concentrated.

THE TESTIMONY OF THE LABOUR STATUTES

"Per Vite Necessarium Laborare"

A labourer is a person "non vivens de mercatura, nec certum exercens artificium, nec habiens de suo proprio unde vivere vel terram propriam circa cultura cuius se poterit occupare" (St. 1 = Statute 1 according to the numbering in the References). Such a male person, able bodied between 14 and

60 years of age not having property or land to cultivate nor being a merchant or artificer was compelled 'to work for his living' ("per vite necessarium laborare") at statutory rates. In other words, such a person belonged to the class of those receiving salaries and wages ("receivauntz salaries & gages", St. 2). There were obviously also those who might not find a living in this order, the sick and the aged as well as those who tried to escape their obligations, the vagabonds. The sick and the aged had to be maintained in their native communities by charitable donations, whilst the 'idle' vagabonds were to be whipped, put into the stocks etc. until they accepted to work, or ultimately be convicted to the gallows. Thus provisions for the impotent, poor, and vagabonds were part and parcel of labour law.

This classification of wage labour is not unambiguous. Most wage earners were tenant farmers whose holdings were insufficient to maintain a family but provided a necessary supplement to the miserable statutory wage rates of the 14th century. There were also those tenant farmers who owed services to their landlords while employing wage labourers in the cultivation of their holdings. The span of the two hundred years from 1349 to 1563 was also the period of the emergence of the yeomanry and the landed gentry who do not enjoy the same rights as those addressed about the time of the Black Death as having 'property to live on' ("suo proprio unde vivere"). Eventually a new definition was needed and given in the Statute of Artificers 1563: "not having Landes Tenements Rentes or Hereditamentes Copieholde or Freeholde of an Estate of Inheritance or for the terme of anie Lief or Lyves of the clere value of fourtye shillings, nor being worthe of his owne Godes the clere value of tenne poundes, [...]" (St. 38, § 3). According to this definition it was not any more the status of being a landlord but the ownership of value which raised a citizen above those obliged to offer their labour on the market.

The category of labourers needed a demarcation not only against those 'having Landes Tenements Rentes', but also against those unable to work classified as the poor and impotent or simply the poor, which became increasingly detailed as earning wages became a common rather than exceptional means of making a living. From 1547 the poor became legally entitled to receive relief in their native town or parish or where they had last been living. (St. 30) Conversely, begging was forbidden except with a particular license "To thintent that valiant Beggers ydle and loytering parsones maye be avoided, and the impotent feble and lame provided for, which are poore in verie dede [...]" (St. 35). The status of the poor and the funding of the relief in the respective communities were then firmly established in a separate body of the so-called Poor Laws from 1562-3 onwards (St. 37).

Originally wage labourers were landless, at least in the sense that their holdings were insufficient to provide a living. As a result of this landless status "Servants and Labourers [...] do flee from County to County [...] to the great Damage of Gentlemen and others to whom they should serve." (St. 13) From 1495 (St. 20) 'vacabonds and beggers' are accommodated in a special line of Statutes. In the mid 16th century the numbers of beggars and vagrants reached a scale unknown before:

“Vagabonds and Beggars doo dailie encrease [...] chieflie by occation of idleness [...] whereby does insue contynuall thefts, murthers [...] heynous offences.” (St. 32) To eliminate these ‘vagabonds’, as an offspring of vagrant labour, three means were applied, punishment, forced labour, and poor relief in their native community.

Subdivisions of Labour

Labour according to the meaning of the statutes is not a homogeneous category (see Table 1). Four divisions are addressed in the first ‘Ordinance’ of 1349: ‘operarii, servientes, artificarii’, and ‘venditores victualium’, and the ordinance makes a distinction between ‘labor’ and ‘artificium’ as a need to make a living (“per vite necessarium laborare”) (St. 1). If we eliminate those who sell merchandise and whose living is determined by prices, we are confined to those ‘receiving salaries and wages’ (“recevantz salaries & gages”) (St. 2). The most elaborate statute of the 14th century, the ‘Statute of Cambridge’ from 1389-90 (St. 9) confirms the same divisions – in French – of ‘servantz, laboreres, artificers’, and ‘vitaillers’. New divisions are introduced by a statute from 1405-6 (St. 12): ‘servantz de husbandrie’ and ‘apprentices’. In a statute later again (St. 17) the ‘servant artificer’ is clearly distinguished from that in ‘husbandrie’. A statute from 1436-7 (15 Henry VI, c. VI) underlines that members of chartered guilds and companies do not belong to the category of labour. A new legally relevant distinction appears in a statute from 1444-5 (St. 19), the day labourer (“artificer & labourer per le jour”) as opposed to servants receiving annual wages. In 1512 (St. 24) we find also ‘laborers of Husbandrie’ or in 1549-50 ‘common Laborers of Husbandrie’ (St. 32). The designations of ‘handicrafts men’ and ‘workmen’ in 1548 (St. 31) seem to be only synonyma of labourers and artificers. The revival of slavery between 1547 (St. 30) and 1549-50 (St. 33) was an episode of the most ferocious persecution of unemployed vagrant labour. The final statute from 1563 in our series (St. 38) uses a few more different terms in order to cover variants of the same subdivisions, except one that is truly new, the ‘Apprentices to Husbandry’.

If we exclude the grocers, bakers, butchers, innkeepers etc. (victuallers) selling their products, the servants earning hardly more than pocket money on top of maintenance, and apprentices working for nothing, we are left with the artificers and labourers as genuine wage earners. Again of the labourers we may exclude those of husbandry who are employed only in peak times of harvest, in threshing, weeding etc. in order to delimit those wage earners who were able to make a living and even work at contract and employ labourers, later called journeymen.

How did these artificers and labourers develop their position in society according to the wording of the statutes, how much did they earn? The first ordinance (St. 1) simply regulated maximum wages at the level of 1346 before the plague which was then specified a year later (St. 2) at e.g. 4 pence/day for a master freemason, 3 for a master carpenter and 1.5 for a plasterers without food and drink. In 1360-1 (St. 4) these rates were confirmed, day rates instead of weekly rates made compulsory, imprisonment ordered for those taking more, and ‘congregations, chapters, ordinances and others’ between them strictly forbidden. Another Statute in 1378 (St. 7) confirming and

upgrading the first ordinance to become a statute indicates the limited effectiveness of statutes. The ‘Statute of Cambridge’ from 1388 (St. 9) is a renewed determined attempt to control labour and to ensure the supply of servants for agriculture. As all these regulations failed to be implemented (Putnam 1908) and wages rose above regulated rates, a statute from 1444-5 adjusted the rates probably to the levels actually paid, e.g. 5½ pence/day for the master carpenter, 4½ pence/day for “autres artificers concernantz edification” (other artificers concerning building) without food and drink, and 3½ for “chescune autre labourer” (St. 19). This was about twice as much as the rate unrevised since 1350 whilst prices of consumables and rents had fallen by about 40%. However, complaints about excessive wages being paid and taken remained a constant feature of labour statutes as if there was a systematic complicity between the employers, including the county authorities, and employees to defy the regulation of wages. But it was not until the Statute of Artificers in 1563 that national maximum rates were abolished for good and replaced by a system of six-monthly regional wage setting through the Justices of the Peace “as they think meet [...] respecting the Plenty and Scarcity of the Time” (St. 38, § XI).

Table 1: Labour Subdivisions

Mode of payment			Kind of labourers	
paid according to	prices		sellers of victuals etc.	
	wage rates	per day	artificers	
			labourers	of husbandry
				of artificers
		per year	servants	of husbandry
				of artificers
			apprentices	of husbandry
				of artificers

Town or County?

The legal topography of the English kingdom is diverse. But as a rule and already specified in 1357 (St. 3), labour statutes explicitly cover the counties as well as the corporate cities, the ‘Five Ports’ and London. Exceptions are made occasionally. London for instance, according to a statute from 1515 (St. 26), was allowed wages above statutory rates because of the higher costs of living and local taxes in the metropolis. Irrespective of the legal coverage, the dynamic of the development of wage labour was located in the rural manors, villages, or parishes. It was from these communities that the ‘small local market towns’, in contrast to regional centres, larger cities and the metropolis of London, arose and finally prospered at the expense of the larger towns (Clarke and Slack 1972, Hoskins 1953, Phythian-Adams 1978, Platt 1976). The corporate towns in particular defended their

trade monopolies of the chartered trade companies and, where building trades were incorporated, these would not allow ‘foreigners’ to work in the town (Unwin 1904, p. 65). As Clarke and Slack summarise the exclusiveness against wage labour of these towns: “There is little evidence of large numbers of poor vagrants coming into town, nor indeed of many urban paupers at all.” (Clarke and Slack 1972, p. 9) Thus it was in the rural areas where, through the conversion of and liberation from services and the concentration of landholdings in the hands of the emergent yeomanry and gentry, wage labour was generated and where it became employed in the first place. Industry based on wage labour was located in the counties unrestricted by the privileges of royal charters and their ordinances. As the so-called ‘Ordinance of Corporation Act’ from 1503-4 (19 Henry VII, c. 6) reaffirmed the privilege of royal charters and outlawed all other combinations of artificers, wage labour was largely excluded from the world of trade organisation.

“Artificers Concernauntz Edification”

Artificers working in building stand out in the regulation of day rates. They are specifically addressed more than any other artificers and in the succession of labour statutes we can observe the increasing differentiation of labour both in occupations and status (see Table 2). If we exclude those selling merchandise and services at prices, such as victuallers, clothiers, brewers, innkeepers etc. as well as labourers and servants of husbandry, building artificers and their labourers, servants and apprentices represent the prototype of wage earners.

In the first statute from 1349 (St. 1) carpenters, masons and tilers - “Carpentarii Cementarii Tegularii” – are listed with saddlers, skinners, white-tawers, cordwainers, tailors, smiths, shipwrights, and carters. A year later (St. 2) the building workers alone represent the artificers, namely master carpenters, carpenters, free masons, masons, tilers, roofers, plasterers, and wallers. In 1360-1 a statute (St. 4) only mentions carpenters and masons to confirm the preceding labour regulations. The statute from 1389-90 (St. 10), which temporarily made wages adjustable to prices of victuals relates to day labourers – “laborers per le journes” – specified exclusively as masons, carpenters, and tilers. A new occupation, the dauber, was introduced in 1402 (St. 11) to co-represent the category of day labourers, who are not allowed to charge weekly rates. In 1425 the masons were threatened with imprisonment if they held ‘chapters and congregations’ (St. 16). Even the very detailed statute from 1445-6 on “salaries and wages of servants, labourers and artificers” (St. 19) set new day rates explicitly only for “artificers concernauntz edification”. By the end of the fifteenth century, in 1495, a statute (St. 21) extended the list of building workers by bricklayers, plumbers, glaziers, carvers, and joiners and added the shipbuilders as a new species of artificers: shipwrights, clynchers, holders, and caulkers. Exactly the same list of building and shipbuilding artificers is specified exclusively in the statute from 1514-5 (St. 25) and extended a year later by plasterers and healiers (building repair artificers) in a statute making an exception for London (St. 26). In 1548, as a result of substantial innovation in building technology, a statute ‘against conspiracy’ (St. 31) includes six new occupations into the list of ‘artificers handicrafts men’: hardhewers, sawyers, paviors, lime-burners, brickmakers, and tilemakers. Incidentally daubers and carvers are struck off

the list this time; maybe the daubers were not regarded as artificers any more and the carvers tended to be paid ‘by the great’, that is for a piece of work. Significantly in our context a statute from 1549-50 (St. 34) explicitly excludes ‘clothmakers, fullers, shermen, weavers, tailors, and shoemakers’ to work as ‘journeymen’, that is at day rates, but have “to serve for contract at least $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{2}$, or one year”. The great Statute of Artificers from 1563 (St. 38), despite its declared aim to reorganise the whole body of labour law, only confirms the exclusive position of builders and shipbuilders as artificers working at day rates. As compared to previous legislation, however, freemasons, plumbers, and glaziers are omitted whereas the roofers are represented by four – tilers, slaters, thatchers, shinglers – instead of one occupation. All the textile and lather trades, victuallers etc. are firmly condemned not to “worcke for any lesse tyme or terme then for one hole yere” (§ II). It was not until 1597-8 that “all manner Artyficers Worckmen and Worckwomen” were admitted to “eyther working by Day Weeke Moneth” (39 Elizabeth I, c. 12)

Table 2: Building artificers in labour statutes 1349-1563

1 (1349)	2 (1350-1)	10 (1389-90)	11 (1402)	15 (1423)	19 (1444-5)	21 (1495)	25 (1514-5)	26 (1515)	31 (1548)	38 (1562-3)
	mestre carpenter					maister carpenter	mastir carpenter			
carpentarius	carpenter	carpenter	carpenter	carpenter	mesne carpenter			carpenter	carpenter	carpenter
	mestre mason de franche peer									
cementarius	mason	mason	cementer	mason	frank mason	free mason				
					rough mason	rough mason	rough mason	rough mason	roughmason	roughmason
						bricklayer	brekelayer	brekelayer	bricklayer	bricklayer
					maistre tiler	maistre tyler	mastir tyler			
tegularius	teguler	teguler	teguler	tiler				tyler	tyler	tyler
					maistre sclatter					slater
	couvourour de ros & estreyrn									thatcher
										shingler
	plastrer		plastrer					plaisterer	playsterer	playsterer
	overour des mures [darzill]									
			douber	dauber				dawber		
						plommer	plummer		plumber	
						glasier	glaseour	glasier	glasyer	
						kerver	kerver	karver		
						joiner	joyner	joynour	joyner	
								hyllier		healier
									hardhewer	
									sawyer	sawyer
									pavyer	
									lyme-burner	lymeburner
									brickmaker	brickmaker
									tilemaker	tilemaker

If the preceding analysis exhibits the gradual specialisation of building artificers as an indication of their ability to structure a sector of production, there is another aspect which underlines this process, the stratification of the hierarchy (see Table 3). Already the second statute (St. 2) distinguished the ‘mestre carpenter’ from the ‘carpenter’ and the ‘mestre mason de franche peer’ (freemason) from the mason, as well as both from their servants and labourers. The apprentice was added to these four grades in the Statute of Cambridge from 1388 (St. 9). More than a hundred years later, in 1495 (St. 21), a new level was regulated on top of these grades, carpenters and masons ‘having under any of them six men’. These six grades highlight the degree of work organisation achieved within the building crafts by the end of the 15th century. This hierarchy implied, obviously, also an emerging divide between employers and employees, those making covenants ‘by the great’ and those working for these masters as journeymen and labourers ‘by the day’, or as servants and apprentices ‘by the year’. This does not mean, however, that building production was generally organised under contractors. Most of the work in the 14th to 16th centuries, whether large or small, was probably carried out at day rates under the supervision of what would nowadays be called the client or his representative, a small farmer, a gentleman, a bailiff, a clerk of works etc. (Newman 2001, Smith 1989, Woodward 1995, pp. 25-28). From the statutes one may conclude that wage labour became increasingly divided into two classes of masters on the one hand and journeymen, labourers, servants, and apprentices on the other. But nothing points to even ‘primitive’ accumulation of capital by the masters.

Table 3: Artificers’ grades and wage rates

Mode of pay	Grade	St. 2 (1350-1)	St. 19 (1444-5)	St. 21 (1495)
Pence per day without food and drink	master in charge of 6 men	-	-	7
	master	3	5½	6
	ordinary artificer	2	4½	5
	labourer	1½	3½	4
Annual wage with accommodation, food, drink, and clothing	servant			
	apprentice			

CONCLUSION

Production or Consumption

The point of departure in this paper was what triggered innovation in building design in the past, supply or demand, production or consumption? We have been looking at a period which is by many regarded as a turning point in history, which put the forces of change in sharper relief. It is obvious that this question cannot be answered on the basis of the evidence analysed in this paper. All that can be said is that this evidence on the development of wage labour highlights a fundamental change of social relations in the building production process. It demonstrates the liberation of the

serf from submission under feudal landownership and, simultaneously from the cultivation of land as the sole means of livelihood. Nothing in this evidence points to any exterior force driving this process. The ruling class of landlords and other urban dignitaries almost desperately tries to contain this process all along its itinerary from the Black Death to the Elizabethan era. Conversely, it is evident that, to the great grief of lords and gentlemen, despite legal restrictions and all the risks of failure many people preferred life as a labourer to that of a villein. Is this not enough to explain social change springing from the supply of labour rather than the demand for building? It is equally evident that this change in the form of production generated change in building need of such as for instance for housing and shops for the labourers constituting the small market towns, which were mushrooming across the kingdom. This is the approach taken in this paper.

The Trigger

This surge of wage labour and its legal regulation at the level of the kingdom has been a subject of debate amongst distinguished historians (Sweezy et al. 1976, Aston and Philpin 1984), the results of which do not need to be discussed here. Various causes have been put forward in this debate, e.g. ecology and demographic development by Michael M. Postan, merchants from the eastern Mediterranean by Henry Pirenne, technical innovation in farming by Georges Duby, the accumulation of merchant capital by Robert Brenner. These attempts to identify a trigger of change, ‘prime mover’ as it was dubbed in this Transition Debate, were to different degrees theoretically based on historical materialism. This approach assumes that every social formation based on its respective mode of production bears its specific congenital defects which will eventually cause the disintegration of the existing mode and generate a new one. Contrary to this approach, this paper argues that it is the subjectivity active in the physical and mental labour process that generates change in the production process, in other words, the labouring human is at the source of historical change, not capital accumulation. The rise of wage labour may best be imagined in the picture of the vagrants that ‘do flee from County to County’ and thus breaking the bonds of serfdom tying the peasant to a piece of land.

Why the Building ‘Handicrafts Men’?

In his study of the different trades George Unwin tried to grasp the specificity of the building artificer as opposed to the trader “who sells the product of [capital and labour] direct to the consumer.”(Unwin 1904, p. 62) He referred to Sidney and Beatrice Webb who hit the nail on the head in characterising the building artificer by the end of the middle ages: “unlike the typical mast craftsman of the handicraft trades they sold nothing but labour, and their own labour only” (S. and B. Webb 1894, p.9). Unwin added another aspect, that of the vagrant, in the following summary:

The building trades [...] have always worked under economic conditions peculiar to themselves. The mason, the tiler and the carpenter could not like the weaver, the glover, or the pinmaker, produce large quantities of transportable commodities to be disposed of by the middleman at a distant market. Indeed, they could hardly be said to work for a market at all,

so direct was their relation to the consumer. In this respect they were on a level with the travelling tinker, or with the taylor who worked in his customer's house on material supplied by the latter.

(Unwin 1904, p. 64)

These judgements from about a hundred years ago are perfectly consistent with the wage regulations of the labour statutes which set nothing but maximum day rates for building artificers. Nevertheless working 'by the great' - e.g. charging a price for building a barn etc. - was also accepted as a mode of remuneration and statutes did not exclude the employment of journeymen, servants, and apprentices by the masters, whilst no single statute refers to the provision of building materials.

If the rise of wage labour was a crucial factor in the demise of feudal relations, where may the emergence of capitalist relations be detected in relation to building production? All historians, who have studied building production, agree that building contractors did not develop to any significant extent before the 17th century. So a considerable formation of productive capital must not be expected among the ranks of building artificers. But some occupations emerge in the mid-sixteenth century (St. 31, 1548), that do presuppose substantial investments in building materials production: sawyers, lime-burners, brickmakers, and tile-makers. Sawing pits and kilns require variable capital for labour and raw material over the time before the material can be sold. Another link to capital accumulation is that part of the product of the sector, which can be regarded as capital investment, such as farmhouses, barns, walls, shops, paved streets, quay walls, ware houses etc. Most of this building production - neglected by historians of architecture - took place in rural areas against the background of decaying monasteries and chartered towns. In this sense wage labour in the building crafts did contribute to early capital formation for rural people. This process may perhaps be termed the embryonic stage of 'Building Capitalism' (Clarke 1992).

Table 4. 'Statutes of the Realm' (London 1810-1828) concerning wage labour 1349-1563

	No	Year	Reign	Statute
Vol. I	1	1349	23 Edward III, c. 1-8	D'proclamacioe faciendoe de serventibus
	2	1350-1	25 Edward III, Stat. 2, c. 1-7	lestatur d'artificers & servauntz
	3	1357	31 Edward III, Stat. 1, c. 7	Statute of Labourers extended to London etc.
	4	1360-1	34 Edward III, c. 9-11	lestatur des laborers ... estoie en touz pointz; forspris la penance pecuniere
	5	1363	37 Edward III, c. 5-6	artificers gentz de mestere se teignent chescun a un meister
	6	1368	42 Edward III, c. 6	lestatur & ordinance faitz de laborers & artificers doivent duement executz
Vol. II	7	1378	2 Richard II, Stat. 1, c. 8	Estatutz & ordinances faites de Artificers servantz & Laborers .. misez en due execucion
	8	1383	7 Richard II, c. 5	denquere vagerantz & faitors
	9	1388	12 Richard II, c. 3-10	toutz les estatutz des Artificers Laborers servantz & Vitailleurs ... soient duement executz (Cambridge)

	No	Year	Reign	Statute
	10	1389-90	13 Richard II, Stat. 1, c. 8	les estatutz & ordinances faitz de servantz laborers artificers & vitailers ... soient duement executz
	11	1402	4 Henry IV, c. 14	nul labourer ... lowere per jours de festes
	12	1405-6	7 Henry IV, c. 17	que les bons estatutz ... touchantz laborers artificers & autres servantz de husbandrye soient ... mys an due execucion
	13	1414	2 Henry V, Stat. 1, c. 4	que lestatut de laborers fait a Cantebrigg & toutes autres soient mys en due execucion
	14	1416	4 Henry V, Stat. 2, c. 4	The Pain contained in the said Statutes shall run only upon the taker
	15	1423	2 Henry VI, c. 18	Enforcement of 2 Henry V, Stat. 1, c.4
	16	1425	3 Henry VI, c. 1	congregacions & confederancies faitz par les Masons ... ne soient desore tenuz
	17	1427	6 Henry VI, c. 3	de faire en lour plein session un foitz per an
	18	1429	8 Henry VI, c. 8	lestatut & ordinance, lesquelles ore sount expires, ... en due execucion
	19	1444-5	23 Henry VI, c. 12	les Salariez & gages des Servantz laborers & artificers
	20	1495	11 Henry VII, c. 2, I-IV	An Acte agaynst vacabonds and beggers
	21	1495	11 Henry VII, c. 22, I-VI	An Act for Servants Wages
	22	1496-7	12 Henry VII, c. 3	An Acte for the making voide of the Statute concerning Artificers & poore Laborers
Vol. III	23	1503-4	19 Henry VII, c. 12	De validis mendicantibus repellend
	24	1512	4 Henry VIII, c. 5	Per Laborantibus
	25	1514-15	6 Henry VIII, c. 3	Acte concernyng Artificers & Labourers
	26	1515	7 Henry VIII, c. 5	Thacte for Labourers & artificers within the Citie of London
	27	1530-1	22 Henry VIII, c. 12, I-XVI	An Acte concernyng punysshement of Beggers & Vacabunds
	28	1530-1	22 Henry VIII, c. 13	An Acte concerning Bakers, Bruers, Surgeons & Scryveners
Vol. IV	29	1535	27 Henry VIII, c. 25, VII-XXVIII	An Acte for the punysshement of strudy vacabundes and beggers
	30	1547	1 Edward VI, c. 3	An Acte for the Punishment of Vagabondes and for the Relief of the poore and impotent Parsons
	31	1548	2&3 Edward VI, c. 15	An Acte towching Victuallers and Handycrafts men
	32	1549-50	3&4 Edward VI, c. 16	An Acte towchyng the Punishment of Vacabonds and other ydle Parsons
	33	1549-50	3&4 Edward VI, c. 20	An Acte touchinge the Repeale of certeyne braunche of 2&3 Edward VI, c. 15
	34	1549-50	3&4 Edward VI, c. 22	An Acte concerning reteynyng of Journeymen by dyverse persons
	35	1552	5&6 Edward VI, c. 2	For the Provisyon and Relief of the Poore
	36	1552	5&6 Edward VI, c. 3	An Acte for the keping of Hollie daies and Fasting dayes
	37	1562-3	5 Elizabeth I, c. 3	An Acte for the Releife of the Poore
	38	1562-3	5 Elizabeth I, c. 4	An Acte towching dyvers Orders for Artificers Labourers Servantes of Husbandrye and Apprentises

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