

**THE GUILDHALL OF THE CITY OF  
LONDON, TOGETHER WITH A SHORT  
ACCOUNT OF ITS HISTORIC  
ASSOCIATIONS, AND THE MUNICIPAL  
WORK CARRIED ON THEREIN**

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The Guildhall of the city of London, together with a short account of its historic associations, and the municipal work carried on therein by Sir John James Baddeley

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**SIR JOHN JAMES BADDELEY**

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Photo, by the L. S. P. Co., Ltd.

THE HOME OF THE CITY ARCHIVES.

*A Corner of the Town Clerk's Muniment Room, containing Parchment Rolls and Volumes of the 13th, 14th, and 15th centuries (see page 160).*

# The Guildhall

OF THE

## City of London



Together with a short Account  
of Its Historic Associations,  
and the Municipal Work  
carried on therein.

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COMPILED BY

SIR JOHN JAMES BADDELEY, J.P., Deputy,

SHERIFF OF LONDON, 1908-9.

(Chairman of the City Lands Committee, 1898.)

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## PREFACE.

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**D**URING the past half century the Corporation of the City of London has published a series of volumes compiled from its own archives, which extend back for more than six hundred years. These volumes deal with the City's history, its ceremonials, and its ancient historical buildings; among these may be mentioned for our present purpose, Riley's 'Memorials of London Life,' 'The Ceremonial Book,' 'London's Roll of Fame,' Welch's 'Guildhall Library and its Work,' Price's 'Historical Account of the Guildhall,' Dr. Sharpe's 'London and the Kingdom,' and the 'Calendar of Letter Books of the City of London.' The earlier portion of the present book has been almost entirely compiled from the above-named works. The formal description of the Guildhall has been taken, for the most part, from Price's 'Account,' and the historical facts described in the short summary of the City's history from Dr. Sharpe's volumes; entire passages have been taken from both, and the compiler desires to make all due acknowledgment of the great assistance these books have been to him in the production of this volume.

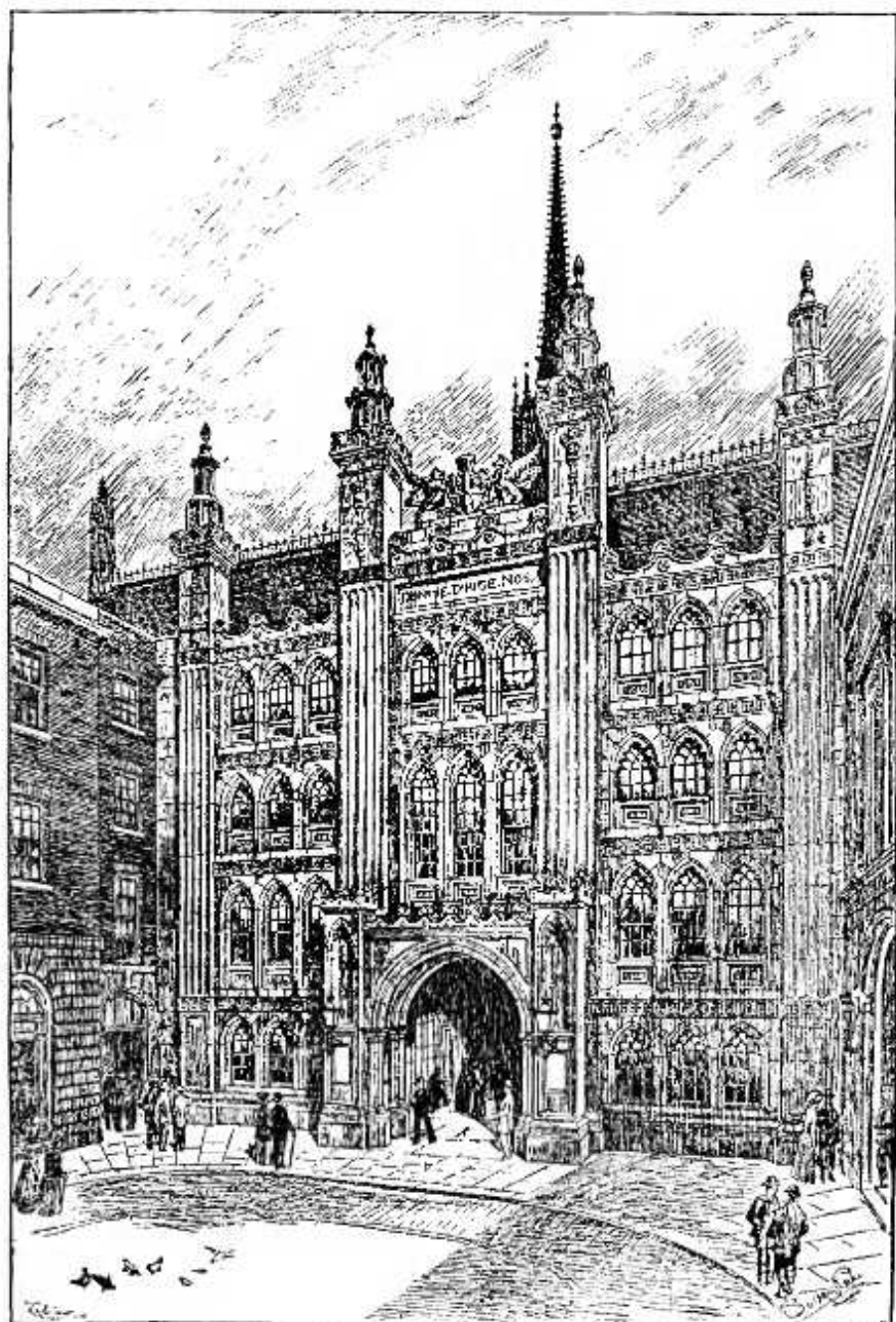
Although this work is chiefly intended as a Guide to the Guildhall, it is thought that the visitor would consider it incomplete, were not some information afforded respecting the more important events that have taken place within its walls, as well as that of the ceremonies and public functions, that are to be witnessed there in these days. A summary of its historic past has been therefore added, together with a short history of the Mayoralty, the Shrievalty, and the Courts of Aldermen and Common Council.

It is also thought that a short account of the work now being carried on by the Court of Common Council in the government of the "one square mile" will be of interest, not only to the citizens, but, also to the stranger who comes within the City's boundaries.

J. J. B.

GUILDHALL, 1912.

839849



THE GUILDHALL.



"I pray you, let us satisfy our eyes  
With the memorials and the things of fame  
That do renown this City."

TWELFTH NIGHT, Act III.; Scene 3.

## The Historic Past.

THE student of the history of the City of London, and of its Mayors, Aldermen, Sheriffs, Common Council and Citizens, will be easily able to conjure up visions of some of the many stirring National and Civic events, that have taken place within the historic walls of Guildhall, and that history, when known, may well cause a thrill of pride to swell in the breast of the most ordinary matter-of-fact citizen of the present day.

Truly and eloquently did the late Sir Walter Besant (London's modern historian), in a public address, describe the City (with its centre at Guildhall) as "the protectress of freedom." He said: "This principle—the necessity of freedom—was handed down from father to son; it became the religion of the citizens; they proclaimed it and fought for it; they won it, and lost it; they recovered part of it, and lost it again. At last they won it altogether, and, in winning it, they gained a great deal more than they had contemplated or hoped for. They won for their descendants, they won for every town where the English tongue is spoken, the rights of free men in free cities, the rights of the individual, the rights of property." And shall it not also be said that the spirit of freemen which animated our illustrious predecessors still animates many of the citizens of the present day?

Well has Mr. Loftie written in his book on London ("Historic Towns" series) that "It would be interesting to go over all the recorded instances in which the City of London interfered directly in the affairs of the Kingdom, such a survey

would be a History of England as seen from the windows of the Guildhall"; and Mr. Price in his historical account of the Guildhall writes, "The true history of the Guildhall is to be based on the numerous traditions and interesting associations by which it is connected with the most important Corporation in the world. The stirring episodes, religious, political and social, with which this Hall has been associated for many centuries, clothe it with a far deeper interest than could any mere technical description of its walls, its masonry, the painted glass and sculpture, with which it is adorned."

Let us then, in imagination, take our stand in the old Guildhall, and allow our thoughts to revert to the time of the Conquest. We see the citizens strong enough to make terms with the Norman invader, and receive at his hands a confirmation of their old Charter, by which their liberties and power of self-government are guaranteed. In the contest between Stephen and the Empress Matilda (1135-1153) we see the citizens holding, as it were, the balance. Richard, Cœur-de-Lion, is assisted by the City, and we can picture his martial figure striding at times through the Hall. The citizens, in 1215, are lending their help to the Barons in wresting from the reluctant John the great Charter of England's liberties, and in return, the grateful Barons make provision for the preservation of the liberties of the City. Fitz-Walter, the leader of the Barons, and the Mayor of the City are both among those specially appointed to see the terms of the Charter strictly carried out.

We cannot linger over the almost continuous fight between the citizens and the Plantagenet kings in defence of the City's liberties and charters, but the citizens are loyal, for on receiving the news in a letter from Queen Isabel (1312) announcing the birth of Edward, afterwards the Third, at Windsor, they held high festival for a week, and on the last day of rejoicing "The Mayor, richly costumed, and the Aldermen, arrayed in like suits of robes, with the Drapers, Mercers, and Vintners, in costumes, rode on horseback to Westminster, there made offering, and then returned to the Guildhall, which was excellently well tapestried and dressed out. There they dined; and after dinner went in carols, throughout the City, all the rest of the day and great part of the night." This 'Edward of Windsor' on

succeeding to the throne, is popular, and chiefly by the City's assistance in men and money is enabled to prosecute his wars in France; gaining the memorable victories of Crecy and Poitiers. Just before Crecy the citizens are in a state of alarm at the prospect of an immediate attack by the French, and protect the Guildhall by "Guns wrought of latten mounted on teleres, and charged with powder and pellets of lead." On the King's return, the Mayor (the Master of the Vintners' Company, Henry Picard), entertains him at a grand banquet, together with the Kings of France, Scotland, Denmark and Cyprus (1363). The citizens' influence is chiefly instrumental in deposing Edward's grandson, the weak and uncertain Richard; the articles accusing him of misgovernment are drawn up and publicly read in Guildhall (1399). We hear the Mayor saying, "Let us apparel ourselves and go and receive the Duke of Lancaster since we agreed to send for him." As Henry IV., son of 'time-honoured Lancaster,' he is fairly popular, although again and again he holds the charter to ransom.

Henry of Monmouth appears on the scene, and we picture the brilliant gathering assembled in the Guildhall, when the King's brothers, John, Duke of Bedford, Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester (the "good Duke Humphrey"), and his cousin, Edward, Duke of York, with the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of Winchester, and others, come to confer with the Mayor, as to what assistance is to be rendered the King in his proposed claim to the crown of France. But now arises a question of precedence—the Mayor, as the King's representative in the City, claims to occupy the centre seat—in other words to take the chair, and his claim is allowed, thus making a precedent which future Mayors are to uphold. Visions of the citizens' enthusiasm float around, when the news of the glorious victory of Agincourt on St. Crispin's day is announced (1415), just as the newly elected Mayor is being sworn into office,—of "the solemn pilgrimage of the Mayor, Aldermen and Commonalty, from Guildhall on foot to Westminster, for the purpose of making humble thanks to the Almighty and His saints, especially St. Edward the Confessor, for the joyous victory." Later on, at the termination of the war with France, the King and Queen are entertained in the Guildhall, and we picture Whittington, to the astonishment and