

**THE STRANGER'S GUIDE
THROUGH THE CITY
OF YORK, AND ITS
CATHEDRAL PP. 13-152**

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The Stranger's Guide Through the City of York, and Its Cathedral pp. 13-152 by Anonymous

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ANONYMOUS

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THE
Stranger's Guide
THROUGH
THE CITY OF YORK,
AND ITS
CATHEDRAL.

Illustrated with a Plan of the City, and 15 Wood Engravings.



The whole now First Compiled from
ORIGINAL AND AUTHENTIC DOCUMENTS.

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what time the title of mayor was conferred on the chief magistrate, cannot now be ascertained.

The title of Lord was first conferred upon the mayor by Richard II. That monarch, after granting a new charter to the citizens, at his coming to York, took his sword from his side, and gave it to William de Selby, then mayor, to be borne before him and his successors, with the point erected, except in the presence of the king, *ad perpetuum*. From this emblem of justice, the title of LORD MAYOR is deduced. In 1392, the same monarch presented Robert Savage, then lord mayor, with the first mace, and a cap of maintenance to the sword-bearer. About four years afterwards, he abolished the office of bailiffs, and appointed two sheriffs, thus making York a distinct county, which is called the county of the city. The ainsty, which comprises about thirty-five towns and villages, was annexed to the county of the city, by Henry VI. York and London are the only two places in England whose chief magistrates are distinguished by the title of "Lord;" and it is worthy of remark, that our city enjoyed this high honour before the present metropolis of the kingdom.

The government of the city much resembles that system which, on a grander scale, is the envy of foreigners and the boast and glory of England: the lord mayor representing the sovereign; the upper house, the house of peers; and the lower one, the house of commons. Besides the lord mayor, the corporation consists of

a recorder, two city counsel, twelve aldermen, two sheriffs, seventy-two common-council men, and six chamberlains.

The **LORD MAYOR** is chosen annually from among the aldermen, on the 15th of January. On the 3rd of February, the lord mayor elect enters upon his office, and along with the corporation, accompanied by music, banners, &c., he proceeds through the principal streets of the city in procession. On this and other public occasions, he is habited in a rich scarlet mantle, with a massy gold chain hung round his neck. The office is one of great trust and importance. Within his own jurisdiction, he is surpassed by none in rank and power, except the king, and the presumptive heir to the crown. At the sessions of the peace he is supreme. The judge of assize sits at his right-hand, whilst he occupies the chair. No law can pass the corporation without his approval and concurrence. The wife of the lord mayor, if he be married, is dignified with the title of **LADY MAYORESS**. Such was *formerly* the courtesy of the citizens of York, that she still retained the title of *lady* after her husband was divested of office. This gave rise to the well-known couplet—

He is a lord for a year and a day,
But she is a lady for ever and aye.

The **ALDERMEN** are chosen out of the wealthier class of citizens, or from the list of those who have served the office of sheriff. They may be exempted from this office by the payment of a fine, at the discretion of the corporation.

THE SHERIFFS, who are chosen on the 21st of September, have a double function to exercise, ministerial and judicial; as they execute and make returns of all processes and precepts of the courts of law, and have authority to hold several courts of a distinct nature. They have also authority to inspect all weights and measures; to collect all public profits, customs, and taxes, of the city and county of the city; and have the care of all debtors and felons confined within the same. Soon after they enter on office, the sheriffs, or their deputies, read a proclamation in several parts of the city. This was formerly attended with considerable parade and ceremony; and this ancient custom, though almost universally exploded, is sometimes yet retained, when individuals of spirit are chosen to fill the office. The fine for exemption is usually 100 guineas. The gentlemen who have served this office are also members of the upper house, under the title of **THE TWENTY-FOUR**, though they generally exceed that number.

THE RECORDER is the particular guardian of the privileges of the citizens, and the preserver of the ancient records and charters. He is by virtue of his office justice of the peace and of the quorum. He is the public orator of the corporate body, and sits at the right-hand of the lord mayor, as assistant to him and the bench. Two other counsellors act in unison with the recorder, and are called the **CITY COUNSEL**.