

**BIRMINGHAM
120 YEARS AGO**

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Birmingham 120 Years Ago by Charles E. Scarse

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CHARLES E. SCARSE

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This Edition is limited to 250 Copies. One hundred and ten Copies have been privately subscribed, 25 Copies are reserved by the Editor, and the remainder, 115 Copies are published by Messrs. Cornish Bros., of New Street, Birmingham.



BIRMINGHAM

120 YEARS AGO.

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Being a Reprint of an old Directory, published in 1777; to which has been added a Streets Directory, a Trades Directory, and a few Notes of Comparison between Birmingham of 1776 and the City of To-day.

Dedicated to the First Lord Mayor of Birmingham.

COMPILED AND EDITED BY

CHARLES E. SCARSE,

Librarian of the Birmingham Library.

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BIRMINGHAM:

PRINTED FOR CORNISH BROTHERS, NEW STREET, AT
THE "JOURNAL" OFFICE, 31, CANNON STREET.

1896.

S. H.

To the Right Honourable
The Lord Mayor of Birmingham

(*Mr. Councillor JAMES SMITH*).

MY LORD MAYOR,

In respectfully dedicating this little volume to your Lordship, I venture to express the hope it will be found of sufficient general interest to warrant its publication, and that it may be permitted to mark an important landmark in the history of Birmingham and, may I add, in your own life. The honour conferred on the City by the creation of a Lord Mayor, and on your Lordship in being the first to fill that important office, is an epoch worthy of commemoration. That the Citizens of Birmingham appreciate the conduct of their First Lord Mayor is fully testified by the fact that they have asked you to fill the Civic Chair for a second time.

I am,
My Lord Mayor,
Your obedient and obliged Servant,
CHARLES EDWARD SCARSE.

BIRMINGHAM LIBRARY,
UNION STREET,

October 1st, 1896.

COPY OF THE LETTERS PATENT DOCUMENT
CREATING A LORD MAYOR OF BIRMINGHAM.

Victoria by the Grace of God

of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland Queen Defender of the Faith **To all to whom these presents shall come greeting** **Whereas** by our charter dated the thirty first day of October in the second year of our reign we were graciously pleased to incorporate the inhabitants of the borough of Birmingham in our county of Warwick and their successors by the title of the Mayor Aldermen and Burgesses of the borough of Birmingham in the County of Warwick **And** **Whereas** we by our royal charter dated the fourteenth day of January in the fifty second year of our reign and did constitute the said borough of Birmingham a City and did declare that the Mayor Aldermen and Burgesses of the said borough should thenceforth be one body politic and corporate by the name and style of the Mayor Aldermen and Citizens of the City of Birmingham in the County of Warwick **Now Know Ye** that our will and pleasure is and we do hereby declare and ordain that from and after the date of these presents the Chief Magistrate now and for the time being of the said City of Birmingham shall be styled entitled and called Lord Mayor of Birmingham **And** we do hereby authorize and empower the Chief Magistrate of the said City of Birmingham now and for the time being henceforth at all times to assume and use and to be called and named, by the style title and appellation of: *Lord Mayor, of, Birmingham* and to enjoy and use all and singular the rights privileges preeminences and advantages, in the degree of a Lord Mayor in all things duly and of right belonging. **In Witness** whereof we have caused these our letters to be made patent **Witness** our self at Westminster the third day of June in the fifty ninth year of our reign.

By Warrant under the Queen's Sign Manual.

Huir Mackenzie.

BIRMINGHAM TRANQUILLITY,

1776.

In England's fair capital, every year,
 A tumult is raised about choosing Lord Mayor ;
 Each party engages with fury and spleen,
 And nothing but strife and contention is seen.

Ye wrangling old cits, let me beg you'd look down,
 And copy from Birmingham's peaceable town,
 Where souls sixty thousand or more you may view,
No justice dwells here, and but constables two.

In no place besides that's so populous grown,
 Was ever less noise or disturbances known :
 All hands find employment, and when their work's done,
 Are happy as any souls under the sun.

With hammer and file time is carefully beat,
 For such is the music of every street :
 The anvil's sharp sound is the artiff's delight,
 And stamps, lathes, and presses in concert unite.

Let cities and boroughs for contests prepare,
 In choosing of sheriffs, recorder, or mayor,
 With most kinds of titles they've nothing to do,
 Nor discord in choosing of officers shew.

The envy and hatred elections bring on,
 Their hearty intention is always to shun ;
 No polling, no scratching, no scrutinies rise,—
 Who friendship esteem must such measures despise.

To far distant climes doth her commerce extend ;
 Her channels of traffic admit of no end ;
 And Birmingham, whilst there is trade in the land,
 In brightest invention unrivalled shall stand.

J. FREETH.

BIRMINGHAM JUBILATION,

1896.

Not only London now, but Birmingham each year,
Is busily engaged in choosing a Lord Mayor.
Here is no strife or discord, all peacefully agree,
In private meetings settle, who our Lord Mayor shall be.

Our gracious Queen, the Town into a City raised,
And by all the citizens her Majesty was praised ;
But louder were the praises which on every side were heard,
When our whilome simple Mayor, she turned into a Lord.

How many years have passed, and what changes taken place,
Since first I sang her glories, and bestowed the Muses' grace !
From an almost country village, into a mighty town,
This seat of all the industries has wonderfully grown.

The spirit of true progress, her Council now displays,
Striving ever how it best the City's fame can raise ;
Her noble banner "Forward" have so wide unfurled,
She is known now as the City best governed in the world.

As I ramble now about, O the wonders that I see !
Free Parks for recreation, and Libraries also Free,
Where all may be partakers of the treasures of the mind ;
And Free Art Galleries, where we stores of beauty find.

And the City's healthy too, the streets are paved and clean,
And splendid are the goods in shop-windows to be seen.
And such the streams of light, the gas-lamps now display,
That the City in the night, is a rival to the day.

And largely has her trade increased, and will with time increase,
For though she weapons makes of war, she a lover is of peace ;
And as each year passes by, may each new Lord Mayor find
A Birmingham more healthy, both in body and in mind !

THE GHOST OF FREETH.