

SOURCES ON LORD MAYORS OF LONDON IN CLRO AND ELSEWHERE

Sources within CLRO and elsewhere relating to Lord Mayors of the City of London are summarised below.

The Lord Mayor of London is elected from amongst the 25 [26 before 1978] Aldermen of the City by a body called Common Hall. Common Hall consists of the Liverymen (senior members) of the 100 City of London Livery Companies (the successors of the medieval trade and craft guilds). In order to be eligible for election as Lord Mayor, an Alderman has to have served a one-year term as one of the two Sheriffs of the City.

LISTS AND INDEXES OF LORD MAYORS OF LONDON

CLRO has a complete typed list of all Lord Mayors of London from the earliest times to the present day, with their dates in office. If you would like a free copy of this list, please send an A4 stamped, self-addressed envelope to CLRO with your request. CLRO also has manuscript and card indexes to all Lord Mayors and Sheriffs, and to most post-17th century Common Councilmen (councillors) of the City of London.

All the Aldermen (including all Lord Mayors) of the City of London from the earliest times up to 1913 are listed and indexed, sometimes with brief biographical information, in AB Beaven, *The Aldermen of the City of London* (London, 2 volumes, 1908, 1913). Copies of Beaven's book are available both in CLRO and in the **Printed Books Section of Guildhall Library** (Aldermanbury, London EC2P 2EJ, telephone 020 7332 1868, fax 020 7600 3384, website <http://ihr.sas.ac.uk/gh/>). CLRO also has full card indexes up to the present day to all Aldermen since Beaven's book.

BIOGRAPHIES OF LORD MAYORS OF LONDON

Many (but by no means all) Lord Mayors, Sheriffs, Aldermen and Common Councilmen are the subjects of biographical notes, compiled by the archivists at CLRO from time to time over the past 30 years or so. These vary in content and length from very sketchy (dates of office, perhaps a parent's name, an address, etc.) to very full. If you are interested in particular individuals, especially if they were well known either in City or national circles, it is always worth checking with CLRO, to see if there are existing biographical notes.

A similar source is Guildhall Library's Noble Collection (in the Prints and Maps Section, so not available on Saturdays), which includes a set of very variable notes on many City figures. Some include detailed genealogical notes, others contain a bare précis of a person's career. There is sometimes an overlap between Guildhall Library's Noble Collection and CLRO's biographical notes.

Some of the better-known Lord Mayors, Sheriffs, Aldermen and Common Councilmen are the subject of biographical entries in the *Dictionary of National Biography (DNB)*, a new edition of which is currently in preparation. Some of those who died 1851-1900 are also included in F Boase, *Modern English Biography* (1892-1921, reprinted 1965) or *Who Was Who 1897-1980* (7 volumes, published by A and C Black, London, 1929-1982), with a *Cumulative Index ... 1897-1980*, (1991)). The *DNB* and *Who Was Who* are also available on CD ROM. Biographical details of many Aldermen and Common Councilmen c. 1660-1689 are published in JR

Woodhead's *The Rulers of London 1660-1689* (London and Middlesex Archaeological Society, 1965). These publications are available both in CLRO and in Guildhall Library, except for Boase and the CD-ROM versions, which are available in Guildhall Library but not CLRO.

Guildhall Library also has microfilms of the City's local newspaper, the *City Press* (succeeded by the *City Recorder*) from 1857, and *The Times* (1785 to date), as well as some other London newspapers. These often cover elections and admissions of Sheriffs and Lord Mayors and major civic events involving them, such as royal entertainments. The more famous characters will also have obituaries in *The Times*, which has published quarterly indexes, as well as a cumulative index 1790-1945, 1970-1980 on CD ROM, also held by Guildhall Library. The less famous characters often have an obituary in the *City Press*, which is not indexed, so a date of death needs to be known before a sensible search can be made. Copies of most British newspapers are held by the **British Library Newspaper Library** (Colindale Avenue, London NW9 5HE, telephone 020 7412 7353, fax 020 7412 7379, e-mail newspaper@bl.uk, website <http://www.bl.uk/collections/newspaper/>).

CLRO also holds the annual Corporation pocket books from 1788 to date (with gaps, especially in the earlier period, not name indexed), which were published annually and which list the names, addresses, wards and committee service of each Common Councilman and Alderman for each year.

LORD MAYORS OF LONDON AS CITY FREEMEN AND LIVERYMEN

Anyone wishing to stand for election as a Common Councilman, Alderman, Sheriff or Lord Mayor of the City of London first had to be a Freeman of the City of London. CLRO holds City Freedom admission papers from 1681 (with a few gaps), which usually give a father's name and other details depending on the date and type of document present in the admission papers. Further detailed information about the contents of the City Freedom admission papers is available in *My Ancestors Were Freemen of the City of London* by Vivienne E Aldous (Society of Genealogists, 1999), which is available for reference both in CLRO and Guildhall Library.

You can search the indexes to the City Freedom admission papers yourself, but it can be time-consuming as the indexes are arranged by date by initial letter only of surname. The archivists at CLRO can make only very limited searches on behalf of enquirers for the same reason. If you send in a request for anyone's Freedom details, please supply some idea of the date of possible admission or birth of the person (a person could become a Freeman at any time after their 21st birthday). Please note that replacement City Freedom certificates are granted only to living Freemen on proof of loss or destruction of their own certificates: it is not possible to provide certificates of deceased Freemen.

In practice, all Aldermen, and thus all Lord Mayors, are not only Freemen of the City of London, but also Liverymen of one of the City Livery Companies. The archives of most of the City of London Livery Companies are held by the **Manuscripts Section of Guildhall Library** (Aldermanbury, London EC2P 2EJ, telephone 020 7332 1863, fax 020 7600 3384, e-mail manuscripts.guildhall@corpoflondon.gov.uk, website <http://ihr.sas.ac.uk/gh/>).

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