

CORCAIGH

Latitude 51° 54" N.
Longitude 8° 28" W.
Area, 9,797 acres.
Population 138,092.
Birth Rate 21.1.
Death Rate—10.2.

The City of Cork is situated on a number of islands near the head of the tidal estuary of the River Lee. The suburbs on the north are based on red sandstone, and those on the south on a limestone ridge.

In the opening years of the seventh century, Aedh, son of Conla, Chief of the Uibh Meic Iar, bestowed upon St. Finbarr, a lios, which stood on this limestone ridge, within which he built a church.

This church became a monastic school, and its site is to-day occupied by the Protestant Cathedral of Cork, dedicated to St. Finbarr.

During the Ninth Century, Norse and Danish raiders established trading establishments on those islands, and from that origin, the commercial city of Cork developed.

Cork.

CHARTERS

THE first Charter granted to the City of Cork appears to have been one from Prince John in the year 1185; which granted to the citizens of Cork the same free laws and free customs as the citizens of Bristol enjoy and confirmed to the citizens of Cork all the enclosure of land to them and their heirs remaining in free burgage, except a place in the City which he keeps to make a fortress, and to dower the City of Cork granted all laws, franchises, and free customs that are at Bristol.

The next charter was one of 26 Henry III, dated 2nd January, 1242. This Charter grants to the citizens that they and their heirs may have and hold the City of Cork with its appurtenances in fee farm, at a rent of four score marks, to be paid annually at the Exchequer. It further granted that they and their heirs should have all "the prisage of wine custom and cocket, as well by land as water, in all pills, creeks, and strands within the port of the City, and certain personal privileges and free customs therein mentioned and amongst others, that they should be quit of the payment of tolls, customs, pontage, and all other customs throughout his entire dominions." The head of the Corporation is in this Charter described as the "Provost."

A series of other charters follow, viz.:—

19—Edward I., dated 12th June, 1291. Confirmatory Charter.

31—Edward I., dated 13th October, 1303. The baliffs and men of Cork were granted murage as in other towns in Ireland, for six years.

11—Edward II., dated 20th January, 1318. Released to the Corporation by the title of "The Mayor and Baliffs and Commonalty of the City of Cork," all account on foot of the murage granted by the last Charter. This appears to be the first Charter in which the office of Mayor is named.

12—Edward II., dated 20th July, 1318. It confirms the charter 19 Edward I., and grants that the Mayor when elected, may be sworn before his predecessor in office, instead of going to Dublin for the purpose of taking the oaths before the Barons of the Exchequer. It also granted to the Mayor and Baliffs the assize of bread, the assay of weights and measures, and certain other privileges usual in charters of that period.

Then followed 4 Edward III., dated 17th July, 1330; 5 Edward III., dated 12th Feb., 1331; and 5 Richard II., dated 2nd Jan., 1381. These are all mere charters of confirmation.

2—Edward IV., dated 1st Dec., 1462. Confirmed all the former charters, and after reciting that the Mayor and Commonalty had eleven parish churches in the city belonging, together with suburbs, to the said City annexed, of the space and length of one mile, "exutraque parte civitatis," for which they paid a rent of 80 marks annually to the Crown, so long as the suburbs remained undestroyed; and reciting further, that the suburbs were destroyed by Irish enemies and English rebels, had been so for fifty years then past, whereby the Mayor and Commonalty were unable to pay the rent remitted the arrear, and granted them the cocket of the City for the construction of the walls, to hold until they should be able to go peaceably one mile outside the same.

15—Henry VII., dated 1st Aug., 1500. Confirmed all former charters, and further granted that the Mayor and citizens, and their successors, might enjoy their franchises as well within the City and suburbs of the same, as through the whole part of the said City, and every part thereof, viz.: "As far as the shore, point, or strand called Rewrawne, on the western part of the said port, and as far as to the shore point or strand of the sea, called Benowdran, on the eastern part of the same port, and as far as the castle of Carrigrohan, on the western side of the said City and in all towns, pills, creeks, burgs, and strands in and to which the sea ebbs and flows in length and breadth within the aforesaid two points, called Rewrawne and Benowdran." It is in assertion of the rights created by this charter that every three years the Lord Mayor for the time being carried out the ancient ceremony of "Throwing the Dart," thus asserting the jurisdiction of the Municipality as far as Rewrawne and Benowdran on the west and east respectively, better known by their modern names of Cork Head and Poer Head. The earliest record of the observance of this custom of "Throwing the Dart" to be found amongst the archives of the Corporation, is stated to be the following under date of May the 30th, 1759: "Ordered that Mr. Mayor to provide an entertainment at Blackrock Castle on the 1st August next, and

that the expenses thereof to be paid out of the revenues of the Corporation; and it is ordered that the Mayor and the other proper Officers of the Corporation do go in their boats to the Harbour's mouth, and other parts of the channel and river, to assert their ancient right to the government thereof, and that the Mayor and other Officers do land at convenient places in the said harbour, and proceed to high water mark in evidence of the right of jurisdiction granted by charter to the Corporation in all creeks and strands within the harbour as far as high water mark." The Mayor was at that time as now, Admiral of the Port, and was in the habit of holding an Admiralty Court at Blackrock Castle, which however, is not the present building, but the older structure built on the same site by Lord Mountjoy in the reign of James I., which was destroyed by fire in 1827, since when the "Throwing of the Dart" superseded the Admiralty Court that used to be held by the Mayor of Cork within the old castle walls. It is surmised that the "Throwing of the Dart" is really of Danish institution. The charter also released during pleasure all arrears of the rent of 80 marks reserved by the charter of Henry III., up to the date of the charter: and granted that, in future, the Corporation in lieu thereof should render at the Exchequer 20 lbs. in wax.

1—Henry VIII., dated 24th February, 1509, Confirmatory Charter.

28—Henry VIII., dated 11th March, 1536, Granted that the Mayor might have a sword carried before him and that the sword-bearer should wear a "remarkable" cap, and granted to the Mayor the custody of the castle.

3—Edward VI., dated 9th May, 1549. Confirmatory Charter.

18—Elizabeth, dated 1st Dec., 1573. Granted that the Mayor, Recorder and Baliffs, and the four senior Aldermen who had served the office of Mayor of the City, though they should have ceased to be Mayor, as long as they should be Aldermen, should be keepers of the peace within the City as well by land as by water and that those persons, or three of them, of whom the Mayor or Recorder to be one, should be Justices of Oyer and Terminer and general gaol delivery, and to inquire of all felonies, trespasses, etc. within the City and the Liberties of the same. It further

granted to the Corporation all fines and amercements, etc., within the City, as well before the Justices as all other judges forfeited.

6—James I., dated 10th March, 1608. Recited that the City of Cork was an ancient city and was incorporated by letters patent of King Henry III., and long before and that the Mayors, Baliffs and Citizens of the City of Cork had enjoyed divers privileges. It granted that the City of Cork for ever after should be a free City of itself, and the Mayors, Bailiffs, and Citizens of the City by whatever name or names they had been theretofore incorporated, and their successors for ever, should be one body corporate, in deed, fact and name by the name of the "The Mayor, Sheriffs and Commonalty of the City of Cork." It further granted that there should be annually one of the most honest and discreet citizens, according to the ancient manner and custom of the City, elected to be Mayor, and two honest and discreet citizens to be Sheriffs, and that the Mayor, Sheriffs and Commonalty, or the major part of them, of whom the Mayor and a Sheriff should always be two, should have power to make bye-laws for the government of the city, and the officers of the Corporation, and the residents within the City. It further granted that the City of Cork and all lands extending from the walls of the city for the space and circuit of three miles on every side should be measured and marked out by Commissioners who are named in the charter, and thenceforward should be a distinct county to be called "The County of the City of Cork," and that the Commissioners should describe the boundaries to be fixed upon by them in an indenture to be returned into the Court of Chancery. It further granted that the Mayor, Recorder and their successors, and the four senior Aldermen who should have served the office of Mayor, so long as they continue Aldermen, should be Justices of the Peace within the City, and within the County of the same City and the Liberties and suburbs of the same, as well by land and by water, and should have power to inquire, hear and determine, as often as it should seem expedient to them, of all felonies, trespasses, forestallings, etc., within the City. Licence was granted to hold two fairs with all tolls, etc., and the Corporation is released from the annual payment of the 20 lbs. of wax.

This charter also created a Corporation of the Staple with the same privileges as the Corporation of the Staple of London or Dublin.

The Commissioners appointed in this charter settled the boundaries of the County of the City as thereby directed, and made a return thereof into the Court of Chancery by indenture bearing date the 16th day of July, 1609.

Charles I., dated 5th April, 1631, confirmed former Charters and recited that the City of Cork, and the grounds and premises, as measured and settled under the Commission of James I., should be a County in itself, and called "The County of the City of Cork," that the Mayor, Recorder, and four senior Aldermen should be Justices of the Peace for the same, and that Justices of the County of Cork should not act in the City; and further directed that each mayor on retiring from office should be an Alderman, and that all the Aldermen should be members of the Common Council, provided the number should not exceed twenty-four. It further granted that the Mayor of the City should be the first Commissioner named in every Commission to be executed within the County of the City of Cork. That the Mayor, Sheriffs, and Commonalty, should have power to elect the Town Clerk, the Clerk of the Crown, and Public Notary, and also to elect six of the Aldermen of the ward, who should have power to hear and determine all causes between party and party, not exceeding 40s., arising within their respective wards.

9—George II., dated 2nd Jan., 1785. Granted that all the Aldermen of the City of Cork, immediately after they shall have retired from the office of Mayor shall be Justices of the Peace within the County of the City of Cork, with like power as conferred on the four senior Aldermen by the charter of Charles I.

21—George II., dated 3rd Mar., 1747. Gave licence to the Corporation to hold two fairs annually at a place called the Lough, within the Liberties, and to take the usual tolls.

5—Vic., dated 5th February, 1842, continuing and confirming the holding of the Recorder's Court of Record and Quarter Sessions of the Peace in the City of Cork for the Borough of Cork.

Copy of Charter, 9th July, 1900, conferring the title of "Lord Mayor" upon the Mayor.

Victoria, by the grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Queen, Defender of the Faith, and so forth. To all to whom these presents shall come, Greeting. Whereas our Royal predecessor, His Majesty King James, by his Charter made in the 6th year of his reign, which recites that the City of Cork was an ancient City and was Incorporated by Letters patent of King Henry the IV., and long before and that the Mayor, Bailiffs and Citizens of the City of Cork had enjoyed divers privileges, granted that the City of Cork for ever thereafter should be a free City of itself, and that the Mayor, Bailiffs, and Citizens, by whatever name they had been theretofore incorporated, and their successors for ever, should be in one body corporate in deed, fact and name, by the name of the Mayor, Sheriffs and Commonalty of the City of Cork. And Whereas our Royal predecessor, his Majesty King Charles I., by his Charter made in the 7th year of his reign, granted that the City of Cork and the grounds and premises therein should be a County in itself and called the County of the City of Cork. And Whereas we are minded by our Royal Charter to confer on the Mayor of the City of Cork, the title of Lord Mayor. Know ye, therefore, that We, of our special grace, certain knowledge and mere motion, by and with the advice and consent of our Justices General and General Governors of Ireland, do hereby confer upon the Mayor of Cork for the time being the title of Lord Mayor, with all such and the same powers and privileges as he has hitherto had as the Mayor of the City of Cork. Provided always that these our letters Patent be enrolled in the Rolls of the Chancery Division in our high Court of Justice in Ireland within the space of six calendar months next ensuing the date of these presents.

In witness whereof we have caused these our Letters to be made patent.

Witness our Justices General and General Governors of Ireland the 9th day of July in the 64th year of our Reign.
 Enrolled in the Consolidated judgements Record and Writ Office of Her Majesty's High Court of Justice in Ireland, Chancery Division, on the 28th day of August, 1900.

GEORGE CREE
 C.I.R.W.

OFFICIAL INSIGNIA

The gold collar of S. S. worn by the Lord Mayors of Cork, is a very fine specimen of Civic insignia. The Links of the S.S. joined alternately by links of looped gold and enamelled cinquefoils fifty-one links in all, terminating in a gold portcullis.

Attached to the chain is a medallion bearing on the obverse the City Arms, and on the reverse the following inscription:—
 "Cork, 19th June, 1787. The Right Worshipfull Samuel Rowland, Esq., Mayor, was publicly invested by the Common Speaker, on behalf of the Commons, in open Court of D'Oyer Hundred with the Gold Chain; and immediately after the Mayor conferred the like Honor on the High Sheriffs, and lastly, the Ceremony of investing the Mayor with this Pendant and Collar of S.S. was performed by a Deputation from the Council."

The Cork Corporation possesses four maces, alike in form and workmanship, but all varying in size; in extreme length ranging from 36 ins. to 33 ins., and to the top of the cresting, between 28 and 25 ins., the difference being represented by the bands forming the crown with the orb and cross on top. These bands, not being depressed, as usual, at their junction under the orb, give these maces an appearance of exceptional height, and they are peculiar also in other respects to be noticed presently.

The stems have three almost spherical knops. One is under each head, without any intervening scrolls or brackets. The lowest forms the base, with the addition of a splayed seal-shaped ending on the flat of which the arms of Cork City are engraved. This is very usual in English maces. The third knop divides the stem into equal portions. Each head is surmounted by a light crestwork formed exclusively of fleurs-de-lis of which there are twenty-four. From these spring the bands—beaded and scalloped—which carry the orb and cross as above referred to. The sides of each head are unusually straight. Engraved perpendicular lines divide the heads into four spaces and between these lines are inscribed the words:—

John Baldwin, Esqr., Mayor
 Horatio Townsend
 Christopher Carlton

} Esqrs., Shers.