



THE MASONIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF N.S.W.

THE MASONIC MAYORS AND LORD MAYORS OF SYDNEY

PAPER NO:- 6

PREPARED & DELIVERED BY:- G. H. Cumming.

DATE:- Monday, 27th July, 1992.

---

JOHN HOSKING <sup>1</sup>1806 - 1882

On 20th July, 1992, celebrations were held to mark the sesqui-centenary of the proclamation of Sydney as a city and the passing of the Act by the Legislative Council of New South Wales to enable elections to be held for the first city council.

Sydney was not, however, the first Australian colonial capital to be so proclaimed. That honour belongs to Adelaide which became the nation's oldest municipality in 1840.

A number of previous attempts had been made to have Sydney govern its own affairs.

In 1833 a proclamation was issued, passing the government of Sydney to three police magistrates.

This proved to be so unsatisfactory that a petition was presented to Governor Bourke in 1835 requesting a more organised form of local control. The Governor laid the petition before the Legislative Council but the matter fell into abeyance until 1839 when the Colonial Office considered the advisability of introducing local government into New South Wales. Once again the proposal came to nothing.

In 1840, Governor Gipps brought forward a bill which included a clause prohibiting all persons who had been transported as convicts from voting.

The Australian Patriotic Association led by Bro. William Charles Wentworth, Bro. Sir John Jamison and Bro. Dr. William Bland bitterly opposed the Bill which the Governor was forced to withdraw.

By 1842 the colony was entering the grip of an economic depression. Prior to this, money and credit was readily available, wool prices had soared and speculative investment was rife. Governor Gipps, in order to relieve some of the financial burden, introduced yet another Bill into the Legislative Council to enable the townsfolk of Sydney to govern their own affairs.

