

CHARTER OF EDWARD III. 10th. April EDWARD III, 22. (A.D. 1348.)

(EXTRACTED FROM CHARTER OF RICHARD II, 1377.)

EDWARD by the grace of God, King of England and France, and Lord of Ireland. To Archbishops, Bishops, Abbots, Priors, Earls, Barons, Justices, Sheriffs, Reeves, Ministers and all Bailiffs and His Faithful People- GREETING !

WE HAVE INSPECTED a charter of the Lord JOHN, formerly King of England, Our ancestor; in these words:

(HERE FOLLOWS THE CHARTER OF KING JOHN, 1205,
HEREBEFORE QUOTED IN FULL AS CHARTER No. 1.)

NOW WE HAVE GRANTED and confirmed the aforesaid grant and confirmation, holding them right and desirable, for Us and Our heirs, as far as in Us lies, to Our beloved the present Burgesses of the aforesaid town, and their heirs and successors as the said charter duly witnesses.

AND BECAUSE the aforesaid Burgesses fearing that they may hereafter be obstructed in the liberties and customs of which they have hitherto made use by authority of the aforesaid charter, which are contained therein in general terms, and which other Boroughs and towns in Our kingdom of England have in particular, by reason of the fact that those liberties and customs so used have not been specifically declared in the said charter; have petitioned Us that We should be disposed to make plain the said charter and to specify their liberties and customs. We, for the advantage and improvement of the said town, which comprises a general passage for the great men and people of Our Kingdom of England, and that the Burgesses of the said town may the more securely be capable of taking part in their affairs, for the fine which the same Burgesses have made with Us, wishing to shew them special favour, have thought fit to specify and declare to Our said Burgesses of Huntingdon and their heirs and successors, certain liberties and customs which other Boroughs and towns in Our Kingdom of England possess by virtue of a grant of Our ancestors in the following form, namely: that they have return of all writs of Us and Our heirs, and summonses of the Exchequer of Us and Our heirs, and execution of the same writs concerning all matters which may arise within the liberty of the said town, so that no Sheriff or other Bailiff or minister of Ours shall enter the liberty of the said town for the execution of the same, save on default of the Bailiffs of the said town, and that the Burgesses themselves may answer to Our Exchequer concerning all demands and summonses of the said Exchequer touching the Burgesses within the said town. And also that the said Burgesses may have in the town aforesaid a gaol for all those who happen to be seized, attached or arrested for felonies, trespasses or other crimes whatsoever, there committed, to be kept in custody by those whom the said Burgesses may think fit to appoint, so long as those so detained in the said gaol for felonies or other grave crimes, whom the Bailiffs of that town cannot duly deliver there according to the liberty and custom of Our court, shall be delivered at the said town by Our Justices, or those of Our heirs, assigned for gaol-delivery in the aforesaid county, according to the law and custom of Our Kingdom of England as hitherto has customarily been done. And the said Burgesses and their successors and heirs, Burgesses of the town aforesaid, may be quit for all time of tollage, murage, pannage, pontage, stallage, lastage and passage throughout the whole of Our Kingdom and Dominion. And that they have for all time cognisances of all pleas through their Bailiffs or their deputies there, namely: of lands, tenements and rents within the said town, as well as of trespasses, covenants, contracts and complaints arising within the liberty of the said town, or of dealings concerning any tenants and residents within the said town and its liberty.

AND ALSO that they and their heirs and successors shall not be put upon any assizes, juries or inquests with strangers, by

reason of any tenements, trespasses or other affairs of strangers whomsoever, before Us, Our Justices or other ministers of Us or Our heirs, which shall arise to be dealt with whilst they remain in the said Borough; and that strangers shall not be put upon any assizes, juries or inquests with the said Burgesses by reason of any lands or tenements in the said Borough, or of trespasses, covenants, contracts or other affairs within their boundaries which shall arise to be dealt with there; and that they shall not be convicted by strangers through any pleas arising within that Borough, but only by their fellow-burgesses, unless it touches Us or Our heirs or the Commonalty of the said Borough.

AND THEREFORE We will and firmly enjoin on behalf of Us and Our heirs that the said Burgesses of Huntingdon, their heirs and successors, have and hold in perpetuity all and each of the afore-named liberties and quittances in the form before-said, and that they shall henceforward fully enjoy and make use of both those and others which by virtue of the said charter they have hitherto reasonably used, without hindrance from Us or Our heirs, Justices, Escheators, Sheriffs or other Bailiffs or ministers of Ours whomsoever.

AS WITNESSES: The Venerable Fathers J(ohn) Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of All England; W(illiam) Bishop of Winchester, Our treasurer; and R(alph) Bishop of London; Henry of Lancaster; William de Bohun, of Northampton; and Richard of Arundel; Earls: Master John of Offord, Dean of Lincoln, Our Chancellor; Thomas Wake de Lydell; Richard Talebot, Steward of Our Household; and others.

GIVEN BY OUR HAND at Westminster, the 10th. day of April in the twenty-second year of Our reign in England, and the ninth in France.
