

## John Hende

John Hende, the diligent Draper who was Mayor in 1391-2, found himself caught up in the strained relationship which then existed between King Richard II and the City. Bent on exerting pressure on the City, the King summoned Mayor Hende, the Sheriffs, Aldermen and 24 commoners (one of who was Dick Whittington) to Nottingham in 1392. When Hende and his party appeared they met with the King's displeasure so were deposed or imprisoned and Richard II subsequently held the City to ransom, withdrawing its liberties and replacing its officials until a fine was paid. Hende bore the brunt of the King's wrath but he engaged the sympathy of the City and was elected Mayor a second time in 1404. It was during Hende's second term in office that the Drapers' guild secured the keepership of Blackwell Hall and the Drapers' ordinances of 1418 were compiled by the Brothhood meeting at Hende's house in St Swithin's Lane

The reputation which a medieval merchant established for himself depended on the part he played in parish life, City politics and upon his purchase of property. John Hende, one of the wealthiest merchants of the time, invested a large proportion of his fortune in land. Hende estimated that he enjoyed an income of £41 a year from manors in Kent and £54 14s from London property. He anticipated that his debts and merchandise would realize between £4,000 and £5,000. Like his friend, Richard Whittington, John Hende was a collector of the London customs and he lent large sums of money to the King. It was on the strength of successful men like Hende that the Drapers' guild rose to prosperity.

[excerpt from *A History of the Worshipful Company of Drapers of the City of London* by Penelope Hunting, 1989]