Aldermen, Councillors, Ladies, Gentlemen, Girls and Boys. I express at the outset my sincere thanks to Alderman Gilmartin and Alderman Taylor as Mover and Seconder respectively of the resolution that I should be Mayor of the Borough for the Municipal Year 1950-1 and also to the members of the Council for their unanimous election of me to that office. I am very conscious of the honour you do me in electing me the 36th Mayor of the Borough and shall endeavour to maintain the high and exacting standards of my predecessors over the course of the years from the Towns incorporation in 1896. Todmorden has been well served by its Mayors and I sincerely trust that in due time, my successors will be able to say likewlse.

I would also like to tender sincere thanks to all those people who have so kindly extended good wishes to me, and also to my wife, to the Mayoress. It is not, I think, fully realised how many sacrifices are made by womenfolk, especially the wives of Councillors and all men who take upon themselves public work.

They inevitably lose many hours of companionship and on occasions hours of sleep. It is common knowledge to the men concerned that they receive from their womenfolk ideas, inspiration, and guidance, and it is with both appreciation and pleasure that I pay this tribute to the wives, mothers and sisters for the great, if not apparent, part they play in Civic and Public life. Most of their work is done behind the scenes and their praises often go by unhonoured and unsung.

Regarding myself I cannot stand before you and claim to be a talented speaker, a profound thinker, a clever business man, or a wealthy magnate. I can, however, and I do say with truth and sincerity that I would like to be a friend to all people and I shall, in return for the honour you do me, be glad to have the opportunity to be of Service to others and to my town. To bring to the days diet of sights and sound, the wine of ones own temperament is, I believe, and integral part of our existence.

During my life I have endeavoured to practice kindness and courtesy, and for many years I have taken my part as I saw it, in the nurture admonition and instruction of young people, in the way they should live in the districts where I have resided. My other great 'interest has been in the welfare of

elderly people - a cause which is near to my heart and which I hope to develop during my Mayoralty.

I believe this interest of mine is widely known and appreciated by many so that I am encouraged to pursue my interest with renewed vigour during my term of office.

It is the Mayors prerogative on this his day to speak on any subject he wishes. In some Towns they will be speaking on the loss of their Municipal Powers, others will be speaking of their Towns achievements, others will mention their Towns future projects. Some Mayors will be praising the

Government of the day, others criticising it. As I see the position whilst we have every reason to take a pride in our past achievements and inheritance, we cannot live in the past nor yet in the future which is not as rosy as it appeared at one time to be. Our task is to live in the present amid the daily round and the common task.

But the theme of my remarks this morning is "Good Neighbourliness in our Town", I believe our townspeople are good neighbours, and on good terms of friendship with those who live next door or in the near vicinity. Many are the little acts of kindness that are performed daily one to another, and the reply to the thanks that are given is quite often "Eh! it was nothing much".

Very few are the people in our town who have not at some time of their life been connected with an organisation or efforts institution that knew how to arrange, get together efforts either in Sunday School Socials, Dramatic Societies, Choral Societies, or supporting a Sports Club.

Many people in Todmorden know of the joy and satisfaction they found in life when they took part in arranging functions that gave pleasure to others.

I am very much afraid, and it is a matter of regret to have to say it, that the number of people who find pleasure in this service for others is getting smaller month by month and year by year, and in this way towns are losing their individuality. I have a great desire and urge during my year to be of service to

any organisation in our town that is doing good work among either their young, middle aged or elderly. One of the great needs of the present day as to eliminate selfishness - a renewal of the will to serve which is buttressed on a higher outlook than the purely material and mercenary one. Man does not live by bread alone - an old truth which we shall have to relearn if not by mental and spiritual contemplation then by experience, and experience is not always an easy or pleasant way of acquiring knowledge.

I should esteem my year of office a successful one, if I could stimulate and increase good citizenship.

The obligations of a good citizen to my mind are few and simple - to be unselfish, to be friendly and to act the part of and be in truth the good neighbour. I plead, therefore, for good neighbourliness between individuals, between the ratepayer and the local authority and between public authorities.

Now may I say a few words to our future citizen the young people. I am very pleased to welcome you to our meeting to see this part of what is termed Civic life and which is a part of England’s heritage and I believe of our country's greatness. You have just witnessed a scene that ha s been observed in every Town in our country.

I am the Mayor of Todmorden. Of course, some Mayors and indeed some of our own Mayors hold and have held office for more than one year, but every year a new Term of office begins with a similar ceremony to the one you have witnessed this morning.

Does any boy or girl know the title we place before the names of these Gentlemen who occupy these chairs on the bench to my right and left - Yes - They are Aldermen and when you meet them in the street I think it is right and proper that you should speak to them with the time of the day and give the salute of respect, for these Gentlemen are very fond of children and they have been planning and working on their behalf and for all people in Todmorden, for upwards of thirty years. Courtesy and respect are not outmoded, but are ever present virtues which foster and improve human relationships.

Seated at these half circular tables are the Councillors. There are three in each Ward. Let us have a little quiz;-

1. How many Wards are there in Todmorden?

2. Will you name them?

3. Does any Boy or Girl know which Ward they live in? (Not Walsden or Cornholme).

4. Can you name the three Councillors in Stansfield Ward?

Do you know the title of these Gentlemen who sit opposite the Councillors - The various Chief Officials of the Corporation - These are the experts or professors who have given many years of study to their professions. They give guidance to the Councillors at their meetings and when things have been decided upon they see that the work is done properly, according to the Law, according to the cost authorised, and in a practical and skilful manner. The work and ordered progress of any local authority is grounded on a blending of the technical skill and ability of the official with the initiative, local knowledge, aspirations and desires of the elected representatives of the people. The one fertilises the other and without either, the other would tend to become sterile.

I am mentioning these things boys and girls, because I want you as you grow older to be interested in your town, no matter where you go to live in later life and no matter how old you live to be. You will never forget your school days, and the friends who live near your home, your neighbours of to-day.

Some of you older boys and girls will shortly be leaving school. You may not think so but it is true that you have been better cared for than any previous generation of boys and girls in Britain. School Meals, Milk, Medical care, Exercises, Sport, a broader education, have not always been the lot of all scholars and I trust that you will make the most of the opportunities you enjoy and which were denied to previous generations.

A higher standard of living in your homes and certainly more spending money, all these are very good things but they are not a guarantee that you will grow up to be a good citizen - you yourself are the only guarantee of that.

I believe some of you are here because you were elected to come by your Class and Form friends. They voted for you, because there is something about you, they like. One thing, I imagine, is that you always try to play fair, also you try to see that others give fair play. Keep that up boys and girls all your life. You never know, but you may in time call upon people to vote for you again in later life, and if they know you play fair and want to see others get fair play they will vote for you alright.

Now a word to the young married couples of our town who are still waiting for a separate house of their own. I know you have shown great patience and I must ask those of you who have not yet been accommodated to continue to do so, The list of applicants for corporation houses is still several times larger than the houses available or likely to be available in the next twelve months. At present we have 717 applications for Council houses. 50 houses are expected to be completed and let this year. 717 into 50 just won't go. Not all the 717 applicants, of course are young married couples and the Housing Committee strive to treat all classes of applicants fairly under their Points Scheme. That scheme may not be perfect, but it is true to say that the lettings under the scheme have been more satisfactory and produced less complaint than was the case previously. The sub-Committee who spend long hours in considering lettings have a heartrending task in balancing the claims of applicants and seeing that houses go to those whose need is greatest. Housing progress has not been as marked as the-Council would have liked, but it must be realised that they are not free to do what they wish. Restrictions on capital investment, rival claims on labour and materials and the financing of costly schemes are limiting factors which have to be contended with in Committee Room and office and cannot be waved away with a glib phrase or the sweep of a wand. We hope this year to start the erection of houses at Harley Wood and go some way to preparing the Stansfield Mill site for future development. The acquisition of this site and its tidying up will, I am confident, command general approval in the town. The corporation have in fact, been negotiating for years to this end, and are gratified that success has at long last crowned their efforts.

To the middle aged of our Town you have done a grand job during your life having weathered two terrible storms that were enough to break any ones spirits. In spite of this you are known for your industriousness, respected by your employers, because you are willing to do a fair days work for a fair days pay.

You are respected by those in the district where you live, because you respect the decent and the right, and you respect yourself because you try every day and in every way to be the good neighbour.

My final words are addressed to the elderly. You have played the game in your life, by your striving and working, and efforts and planning, are the people able to enjoy the benefits of to-day, shorter working weeks, health services, better homes, happy, healthy and higher educated grandchildren, it is to you that we should offer our thanks.

It was during your prime years these things were planned and the foundations laid. You can easily recall our town and country when as you say "things were not as they a re to-day". In the evening of your life you deserve the very best, and when is life at its best? It is best at all ages when you are surrounded by friends.

I want to make this offer this morning that I will endeavour at all times to be a friend during my term of office, particularly to the elderly. If they would like me to do so, I will devote every Tuesday afternoon and evening to visiting them in their homes. Send a note to the. Town Clerk or my home and I will visit you.

I sincerely wish to be as your Mayor, a Friend and a good neighbour to you all.