

## 'Biographical and Historical Notes on Bygone Darlington' by W. J. Mountford



'Biographical and Historical Notes on Bygone Darlington' by W. J. Mountford is a fascinating book packed with detailed insights into historical Darlington and its residents. Written circa. 1908, but with reminiscences dating back much earlier, it was transcribed by the author's son who writes in the books preface:

"For many years my father found much pleasure in searching through books of local interest and questioning all with whom he came into contact, to learn all within his power about the Darlington of bygone days. Many are the old residents he interviewed, many the directories and local records he perused with this intention. It was a labour of love to him and we who could speak to him about local characters, customs and legends, know how delighted he was to add to his notes anything - no matter how apparently trivial - connected with the town and its inhabitants."

Indeed these seemingly trivial observations and anecdotes are what make this book so precious. Where else could we discover that Darlington resident Billy Bowbank was a 'splendid whistler' or that Mr Stubbs was a picture framer who had a 'joke or a kind word for all'?

If you have an ancestor who lived in Darlington between 1840 and 1908 this book might just provide you with the kind of information no official document or census return could supply. And it isn't only family historians who benefit from Mr Mountford's descriptions. His many references to the streets, shops and buildings of the town really bring historical Darlington alive for the reader.