

Thomas Badger (1793 – 1862)

In 1810 Thomas Badger was articled to Joseph Wheatley, the leading solicitor in the town and became a partner five years later. At the same time he became deputy steward of the manors of Rotherham and Kimberworth. In 1819 he set up practice on his own account and two years later went to reside and practice at 29 High Street.



Thomas Badgers' house on High Street (extreme right).

From 1820 until 1860, he presided at Parish Vestry Meetings. In 1829 he was elected Coroner for the Upper Division of the Wapentake of Strafforth and Tickhill. This was a position of political significance which gave the holder both authority and social standing. It also meant that he was present to hear evidence at the inquests in some of the great colliery disasters in the area, including Moorends and Lundhill.

In 1834 he was one of the principal promoters of the Sheffield and Rotherham Railway and took a leading role in the formation of the Rotherham Gas Light and Coke Company. In 1837 he purchased the St Anns' Hill estate extending from Doncaster Gate Head to what became Cottenham Road.

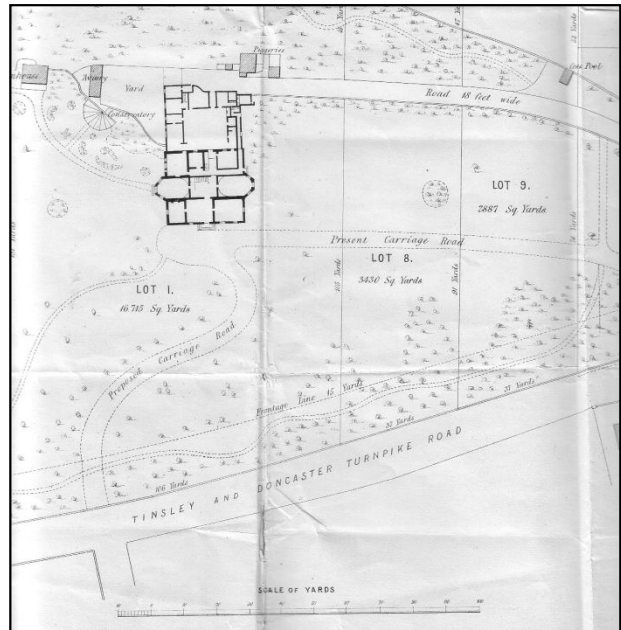
In 1838 in celebration of the opening of the Sheffield and Rotherham Railway and being one of the company's leading solicitors, he had erected in his garden part of the main mast of a '74 gun ship' from which a large Union Jack was flown. In 1839 he was elected President of the Yorkshire Law Society.



John Cockburn, in his book 'Rotherham Lawyers During 350 years', has this to say about him:

Thomas Badger was highly successful, not only because he was the leading practitioner in the era which followed the advent of the railways, but also because of his amazing activity and consummate business judgement, and probably by reason of his remarkable industry.

In 1853 he, and members of his family, acquired the Eastwood Estate, fronting Doncaster Road and St Anns' Road to the point where Fitzwilliam Road joins the highway to Doncaster. The likelihood seems to be that his brother, Benjamin, acquired Eastwood House and forty two acres surrounding it; Thomas acquired the remaining three hundred acres of grassland within the Estate. No doubt Thomas had visited both Eastwood House and Clifton House regularly when handling the Walker's legal affairs and had seen the potential. The map shows the part of the Estate immediately next to the House, divided into lots for sale in 1854.



He had three sons, Thomas Smith Badger, Henry Parkin Badger and Walter Samuel Badger, all of whom became solicitors. His wife Mary died in 1859 and, a couple of years later, on the 26th July 1862, he died at the age of sixty nine and was buried in Moorgate Cemetery.