

Who was Thomas R. Cadman & Sons Ltd?

Luke Cadman (1727-1788), a razorsmith moved to Sheffield in 1740, becoming an apprentice and subsequently a freeman of the Cutlers Company in 1748, when he was awarded the mark 'BENGALL'. The company continued throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as Luke Cadman's sons became involved in the business.

By the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the 'BENGALL' mark became synonymous with quality on an international scale. During WWII, Cadman's supplied the Navy with 250,000 razors. Post war, the staff of 100 was reduced to only 30 or 40. They attempted to diversify by manufacturing scissors and dissecting razors, but this did not save the company from demise.

During the decline, Cadman's still held an export trade, shipping 80/90% of their products to Australia, Japan, India and Poland. Cadman's occupied various addresses in Sheffield including Surrey Street, Fargate, Carver Street, Broomhall Street and Monmouth Street. The firm continued into the twentieth Century, until business eventually ceased in 1965. By their closure, only two workmen remained; grinders Mr. Alfred Skeels and Mr Jack Platts, both of whom were in their 60's.

The Cadman family seemingly wished to associate themselves with exotic locations, as David Cadman registered the mark 'SENEGAL' in 1758. This was perhaps a reaction to the growth of the British Empire in the 17th Century, which established trade links throughout the colonies, including Bengal for supplies of tea.

