

## **ARTICLE FOR THE MANUFACTURER MAGAZINE FOR APRIL 2010 EDITION**

I am delighted as Master Cutler to have been asked to write this foreword to the feature on Sheffield and South Yorkshire. The Cutlers Company in Hallamshire has, since 1624, been promoting, representing and ensuring the highest standard of manufacturing in the Sheffield and South Yorkshire region.

Many of my illustrious predecessors were the founding fathers of the industrial revolution in the region with names such as Firth, Vickers, Hadfield, Brown and Osborn. As Master Cutlers, they shaped the industries we have today, which, whilst being steeped in history, still contain the skills, capacity, and creativity that marks out South Yorkshire as one of the country's premier manufacturing regions.

The cutlery industry, on which the skills and the name Sheffield were originally recognised throughout the world, may be only a shadow of its former glory, but the steel, engineering and general materials and manufacturing industries that remain, are in good heart and looking forward to the upturn in demand and new opportunities that have recently come to the region.

The recent recession has taken its toll on the regions industries but probably to a lesser extent than some parts of the country. Many companies were already lean and using the latest technology, having suffered significantly in previous recessions at the hands of successive Governments, who valued manufacturing well down the economic food chain. Being big global exporters of the specialist products, with a weak sterling has also helped over the last two years.

The recent announcements from the Government relating to the establishment of a Nuclear Research Centre in the region and a financial package for Sheffield Forgemasters International to purchase one of the largest presses in the world, not only guarantees the future of the region's skilled workforce jobs and its global reputation for materials and manufacturing quality but places Sheffield and South Yorkshire at the heart of the country's much needed manufacturing revival.

The Cutlers Company is looking forward to supporting the manufacturing industries of this great region for another 385 years and ensuring that the name Sheffield and its 'Made in Sheffield' mark continues to be valued and identified as a measure of quality and innovation throughout the world.

**JAMES H NEWMAN**

**MASTER CUTLER**