

George Hawks (1801-1863)



George Hawks was Gateshead's first mayor in 1836 and owner of the Hawks ironworks building housing (Hawks Cottages) for some of his workforce. He was subsequently re-elected twice more in 1848 and 1849. It was said of Hawks that he 'could deliver a speech if long written and short to deliver'. He admitted himself in 1853 that 'his many other engagements did not allow of assiduous attention to the duties of his office'. However, despite this, he appears to have been popular - he was certainly popular as an industrialist as he adopted a paternalistic and caring attitude to his employees.

He inaugurated the annual civic service in November 1849 and two years later, his wife together with 100 other ladies, presented the Mayors Chain to the Borough of Gateshead - the chain which has been worn ever since. For many years he lived at Redheugh hall. He was buried in St Cuthbert's cemetery, Gateshead and his memorial statue now stands in Windmill Hills Park.