

THOMAS HARDWICK JNR. (1752-1827)

The name of Hardwick in the field of architecture was the most prominent name during the 19th century. From the late 18th century until 1892 the Hardwick Dynasty contributed some of the finest buildings in London and helped restore a great many too.

Born in Brentford, greater London, to a prosperous master mason Thomas Hardwick Snr. (1725 -1798) who worked with the Adam brothers during the building of Syon House.

Hardwick Jnr. underwent his training during the construction of the Somerset House and was tutored by William Chambers. He became a member of the Royal Academy and won the prestigious gold medal in architecture. Then came his travel to Europe with his close friend/rival Sir John Soane; together they visited Italy and France.

Thomas became a notable church architect and the church of St Mary's is his finest piece of work in London. The building is a prime example of Regency architecture. His other work included the restoration of St James, Piccadilly, St. Paul's, Convent Garden and St Bartholomew-the-less, in Smithfield.

He was also appointed Clerk of Works by King George III at both Hampton Court and Kew Palace.

In his later years he became a tutor to none other than JMW Turner whom he persuaded to concentrate more on painting rather than architecture!

He had two sons, John Hardwick, whom became a famous magistrate in London, and also Philip (1792-1870) who would become the second architect in the Hardwick line and who took over his father's office in 1825. Philip would later become the father to Philip Charles Hardwick (1822-1892) the third and last architect of that fine family.

It is also worth noting that Philip Hardwick married into the equally famous father and son architectural family, the Shaw's; John Shaw Snr (1776-1832) and his son John Shaw Jnr (1803-1870). The two families are buried together in Kensal Green.