Sheet No. 1

Watford’s Printing Past:- The Early Years

In 1816 James Hugh Perry set up a printing press at an address in Lower High Street, Watford (we have not been able to identify the exact location!).

[*Picture of early print machine?*]

He produced a programme for the Earl of Clarendon’s funeral in 1824, and also books of hymns and psalms and a book about the murderer Daniel Munn. Specimens of some of his work are in the British Library.

[*Programme of Earl of Clarendon’s funeral (1824)]*

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In 1823 John Peacock set up a printing press also in Lower High Street. His son, Samuel Peacock, inherited his father’s business and in 1863 he produced the first edition of Watford Observer. This contained the Mission Statement:-

“To all classes of readers, we state our design is to make the Observer a paper for the people”.

The press used to print the first edition of the Watford Observer is still on display in Watford Museum.

[*Picture of ‘Columbian’ press*]

In 1897 Samuel Peacock moved his printing works to 101 High Street, Watford.

[*Picture of 101 as was and as is*]