THOMAS, ROBERT (1782-1860), printer and publisher

Name: Robert Thomas
Date of birth: 1782
Date of death: 1860
Gender: Male
Occupation: printer and publisher
Area of activity: Printing and Publishing
Author: William Linnard

Robert Thomas, the son of John and Mary Thomas, was born at Rhandregynwen, on 16 November 1782 (Rhandregynwen, Llanymynech, Montgomeryshire, OS Map 118, SJ 2819; various spellings, was and still is a substantial farm on the banks of the river Vyrnwy). He married Mary Harris of Southampton at the Church of the Holy Rood, 8 January 1818 and they had two sons (William Kyffin and Robert George) and three daughters (Helen, Mary, and Frances), Robert Thomas became a successful printer and publisher in Fleet Street, London, and later in Adelaide, South Australia. He published *Thomas's Daily Register: Complete Remembrancer with an Almanack for the year of our Lord 1836* in London.

The family emigrated to Australia, sailing on 28 June 1836, on board the *Africaine*. They were among the very first pioneer settlers to South Australia, landing on 11 November 1836, on Kangaroo Island, and then setting up camp in Glenelg, Adelaide. They soon established a residence, printing office and store on Hindley Street, where they named their home Rhantregwnwyn Cottage. Thomas, as Government Printer, produced the Proclamation of the Province of South Australia, which was formally read by Governor Hindmarsh at Glenelg on 28 December 1836. He printed and published the next issue of *The Register* in Adelaide on 3 June 1837, i.e. less than a year after leaving Britain. Robert Thomas & Co. became a very successful family-owned printing and publishing house in Adelaide, and *The Register* became a daily paper owned by members of the Thomas family.

Robert Thomas died on 1 July 1860 in Adelaide. His wife Mary died on 10 February 1875, also at Adelaide. Her diary of their voyage to Australia, and selected letters, were eventually edited and published under the title *The diary and letters of Mary Thomas (1836-1866) being a record of the early days of South Australia* (three editions; the third, edited by Evan Kyffin Thomas, was published by W. K. Thomas & Co. in Adelaide in 1925).

Author

William Linnard

Sources

Personal research

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: Robert Thomas

Additional Links

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