



THOMAS FORMAN & SONS LTD

1848 – 2000

BRIEF HISTORY



The façade of the Forman building with Thomas Forman (inset)

Thomas Forman, the Founder, was born in Louth, Lincolnshire, where he was apprenticed on the 19th January, 1832, as a compositor.

His first business venture was as a bookseller and stationer in Bedford. He came to Nottingham in 1848 and was able to acquire a printing works situated at 14 Long Row, from a printer named Oliver.

Newspaper and book production were the major part of the business in addition to jobbing printing.

The first issue of the 'Daily Guardian' appeared in 1861, followed by 'The Evening Post' in 1878. In 1872 Thomas Forman had taken into partnership the two elder of his four sons, John and Arthur and the title 'Thomas Forman & Sons' had been assumed – later his other two sons, Jesse Robert and James Forman were included in the partnership.

By 1870 the original premises in Long Row had become inadequate and a move took place to Sherwood Street, with a frontage to what is now Forman Street.

Due to the expanding business, Sherwood Street eventually became inadequate and in 1919 it was agreed to dissolve the partnership and build new premises on Hucknall Road to produce the general printing. The move to Hucknall Road took place in 1926. The business was headed by James Forman and his son Dudley Perry Forman. 'Mr. Dudley' died tragically at the age of 43. In 1926, G.W. Knightall and H. E. Barrow became partners in the firm. Following the death of James Forman in 1931, the business remained in the ownership of the family with Col. W. A. Potter as its chairman. He was succeeded by his son Tom F. Potter. The Company celebrated its centenary in 1948.

In 1960 the business was sold to Mardon Son and Hall, then jointly owned by the Imperial Tobacco Group and the British American Tobacco Company. In 1980 British American Tobacco Company became the sole owner. After a failed management buy out in 1984 the Company was sold to Robert Maxwell's British Printing & Communications Corporation.

The business was again sold in 1989 to a London Group of Managers, and finally closed in 2000.



AERIAL VIEW OF THE FACTORY

The illustration shows Hucknall Road in the foreground and in the background can be seen the Pavilion, Tennis Courts, Bowling Greens, Cricket Pitch and to the right is one of the Football Pitches