



Person: Watson, Peter William (1761 – 1830)
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Stephen, Sir Leslie, ed. *Dictionary of National Biography, 1921–1922. Volumes 1–20, 22.* London, England: Oxford University Press

WATSON, PETER WILLIAM (1761 – 1830), botanist, was born at Hull in 1761, being baptised at Holy Trinity Church on ¹26 Aug. in that year. Educated at the grammar school under Joseph Milner [q.v.], and occupied in early life in trade, he was an enthusiastic student of botany, entomology, chemistry, and mineralogy, and a skilful landscape-painter. In 1812 he took an active part in the establishment of the Hull botanic garden. In his 'Dendrologia Britannica' he alludes (p. xii) to his 'own endeavours to furnish the institution with many indigenous plants, which I collected at considerable expense and labour, by traversing the whole East Riding ... in my gig, with proper apparatus for cutting up roots, collecting seeds, &c. of the rarer sorts, whose habits had been rendered familiar to me from numerous previous herborisations.' In 1824 and the following year he issued, in twenty-four parts, his 'Dendrologia Britannica; or Trees and Shrubs that will live in the Open Air of Britain throughout the year.' This work, which Loudon describes (Arboretum Britannicum, p.188) as 'the most scientific work devoted exclusively to trees which has hitherto been published in England,' was completed in two octavo volumes, printed in Hull and published in London in 1825. It contains an introduction to descriptive botany, occupying seventy-two pages and 172 excellent coloured plates of exotic trees and shrubs, each accompanied by a page of technical description. Watson died at Cottingham, near Hull, on 1 Sept. 1830. He was elected a fellow of the Linnean Society in 1824.

[R. W. Corlass's Sketches of Hull Authors. 1879.] G.S.B.

1782 December 16: Hull marriages
Peter William Watson to Eleanor Todd.

1789 April 30: Holy Trinity Baptisms, Hull
Eleanor daughter of Peter Wm and Eleanor Watson.

1807 October: The Monthly Magazine vol 24 part II, p. 269
PROCEEDINGS OF LEARNED SOCIETIES - THE ENTOMOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON ... The fourth paper, is by the president, Mr. Haworth, and is entitled "A brief Account of some rare and interesting Insects, not hitherto announced as Inhabitants of Britain" ... Hydrophilus marginellus, taken at Hull, by P. W. Watson, F.E.S. ...

1812 May 5: *Hull Packet
*Brick and Tile-Yard on Wallingfen NEAR NORTH CAVE. To be SOLD by PRIVATE CONTRACT, ALL that Piece or Parcel of GROUND, eligibly situated on the Weighton Canal containing two Acres and upwards, lately used as Clay Ground for manufacturing White and Red Stock Bricks, Tiles, &c. by BROMITT & BENISON. The Ground has only been Dug one season, and has great depth of Clay of excellent quality.
Also, on the said Premises, two Kilns, newly erected, with Tile Shed; consisting of about 18,000 Tile Deal Room, Stock Brick Shed, Mill and*

¹ His father was John Watson.

various Utensils used for carrying the Brick and Tile Trade on an extensive scale.

Apply on the Premises; or P. W. WATSON, Hull.

BROMITT's DEBTORS and CREDITORS. All Persons having claims or demands on Mr. John WATSON BROMITT, of Newport, near Cave, in the county of York, Brick and Tile-maker, are desired to send an account thereof to Mr. PETER WILLIAM WATSON, of Kingston-upon-Hull, Merchant, in order that the same maybe examined preparatory to their being discharged. —And all Persons who stand indebted to the said John Watson Bromitt, are desired to pay their respective debts to the said Peter William Watson, who is duly authorised to receive the same. Hull, 27th April, 1812.

1813 June 1: *Hull Packet

WANTED TO CHARTER, A SHIP of about 200 Tons register, to load a mixed cargo, at ARCHANGEL for HULL. P.W. Watson. Hull, May 31st, 1813.

1817 April 1: *Hull Packet

MARRIAGES This morning, at Cottingham, by Rev. James vicar, Mr. A.N. Somerscales, of this town, merchant, to Eleanor, youngest daughter of Mr P. Watson, former place.

1818: Pigot's Commercial Directory P163.

HULL - Fire Offices - Globe, P.W. Watson, 14, Bishop-lane

1822 July: Monthly Magazine v53, p539

VARIETIES, LITERARY AND PHILOSOPHICAL, Including Notices of Works in Hand, Domestic and Foreign.

Mr. P. W. Watson, of Hull, has been engaged in the vicinity of London, since the spring of 1820, in collecting materials for a Dendrologia Britannica, (trees and shrubs that will live in the open air of Britain during the whole year,) to be illustrated by original descriptions, and coloured plates from living plants. One hundred and ten coloured octavo drawings, by eminent artists, with occasional minute dissections, are already completed, of such hardy trees and shrubs as have not (few excepted) been figured by recent reputable botanists.

1823 May 12: *Hull Packet

LOCAL INTEREST - The annual meeting of the proprietors of the Hull Botanic Garden, was held last Wednesday, at the Dog and Duck Tavern, Scale-lane, the Rev. G. Lee in the chair. Mr Snowden, the treasurer and secretary, read the report of the last year's proceedings, which have been approved by the meeting, and also his financial statement, which is exceedingly encouraging, the usual vote of thanks, to the committee, the visitors and secretary, were unanimously passed. A vote of thanks was also passed to Mr Charles Frost, to whose assistance, Mr. Don, the curator, is greatly indebted. The following is a list of the committee chosen for the year ensuing:- Rev. G. Lee, Mr. C. Frost, Mr. J. C. Parker, Mr. P. W. Watson, Mr. J. Crosse, Mr. B. Snowden, Mr. G. Fielding, Mr. C. Lutwidge, Mr. J. K. Watson, Mr. J. Alderson, Mr. J.C. Cankrein, and Mr. J. K. Pickard.

1827 March 20: *Hull Packet

MARRIAGES. On Thursday, at Cottingham, by the Rev. J. Deans, Edward Straw Blundell, M.D. of Brigg, Lincolnshire, to Eleanor Somerscales, youngest daughter of Peter William Watson, Esq. of the former place, the widow of the late Mr. Anthony Somerscales of this place.

1827 December 25: *Hull Packet

HULL BOTANIC GARDENS. WANTED, a PERSON well acquainted with the CULTIVATION of PLANTS, to Superintend the Botanic Garden, till the appointment of a Curator in the room of Mr. Donn, deceased.

1828 September 2: *Hull Packet

On Friday at Cottingham, in the 68th year of her age, Eleanor, wife of P. W. Watson, Esq. - She was deservedly esteemed by a numerous circle of friends.

1829 September 22: Hull Packet

TO BE LET, And may be Entered upon on the 2nd of February, 1830, A Farm, containing Sixty-six Acres, more or less, of fine Rich Land, (principally Arable,) lying in a Ring-fence, with a House, Barn, and other substantial appropriate Buildings, situate at DUNSWELL, mid-way between Hull and Beverley, adjoining the Turnpike Road.

For Particulars appley to Dr. Blundell, the Owner, 35, George Street, Hull; or to P. W. Watson, Esq. Cottingham. Applications (if by letter) to be post-paid.

1830 November: Annual Register v 72, p 272

DEATHS - At Cottingham, in his 70th year, P. W. Watson, esq. F.L.S. a scientific botanist, and one of the founders of the Botanic-garden, Hull.

1830 November 9: *Hull Packet

LITERARY AND PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY. The first meeting for the season, the members of the above society, was held on Friday evening last, the reading room of the Subscription Library, Chas. Frost, Esq. President, in the chair. The meeting was numerously attended. Several new members were balloted for and elected, and the curator, W. H. Dikes, Esq. announced the receipt number of donations to the museum, many of which were exhibited on the table and excited, much curiosity. Amongst others we may enumerate the following:- Mr. Todd, (fishmonger) sea lamprey; Dr. Horner, some interesting specimens of sea weed, in glass cases; Capt. Berriman, specimens of foreign birds; John Broadley, Esq. frog fish, from Demerara. [The curator, in noticing this donation, said that the received opinion was that this creature was first a fish, and afterwards turned to a frog; but his opinion was that it was the tadpole of a large species of frog; an opinion in which conceived himself to borne out by one of the specimens, in which the frog seemed just emerging from the tadpole form.] - Capt. Wilcockson, a kangaroo; the Scarborough Philosophical Society, their first report; John Hey, Esq. a collection of rare insects; J. Eglin, Esq. a fossil Ichthyosaurus. - [This is a remarkably fine specimen, six feet or more length, and nearly perfect.] Geo. Fielding, Esq. an Albatross, - [a splendid bird] - W. Field, Esq. (through Mr. Broadley,) various specimens, vegetable and mineral, from Mr. F's collieries; Worsley, Esq. fossil bones, found on his estate near York. - [These form part of the organic remains, regarding which Mr. Dikes read highly interesting paper at former meeting of the society.] - The thanks of the members were voted to those gentlemen who had contributed these valuable additions to the society's museum.

On the proposition of G. Fielding, Esq. Capt. Lewis, who had recently contributed two excellent papers, was elected honorary member.

T. W. Gleadow, Esq. submitted a proposition regarding the laws of the society in respect proprietary members, and after a short discussion arrangement was made for taking it into consideration on a future opportunity.

C. Frost, Esq. then proceeded to read the paper announced for the evening. It was an introductory address, in which Mr. F. took a review of what may be called the literary history of Hull, and afforded his hearers a number of interesting facts connected with natives or residents of this town, who their writings and publications are entitled to rank as authors and contributors to the advancement of literature. The object was to ascertain whether such capabilities existed in Hull of literary nature, would warrant such societies as the present in proceeding in the course in which they were engaged, and the inference drawn by Mr. F. is, our town has possessed and does still possess the quantum of talent and information requisite to aid and stimulate it in so useful and noble a career. The length of the paper, the rending of which did not terminate until half-past nine, effectually precludes us from giving any thing more than a very meagre summary indeed of

its contents.— After some preliminary remarks. Mr. F. gave a short history of the several societies of a literary or scientific nature, that have existed in this town. The first on record, fated to have been a society established in 1792, "for the purpose of literary information," of which Dr. Moyes was the first president. They met at the house of Mr. Brown, and in addition to the president the members were Dr. Forbes, Dr. Alderson, Rev. Miles Popple, Mr. Wray, Rev. J. H. Bromby, Mr. Young, Mr. Frost, and Mr. Bolton : a number the papers read at this society were selected for publication, but owing to circumstances, were yet in manuscript. Shortly after the opening the Subscription Library, a number of the subscribers (in 1801) formed themselves into a society for literary conversation, which was well attended for a considerable time, but afterwards dissolved; from this arose another society in 1803, meeting every fortnight. On the dissolution of this a weekly club was formed, meeting at the houses of the members. In 1804 and 5, besides the above-mentioned, a society met for the study of chemistry. The present society "the Literary and Philosophical" was established eight years ago, and owes its projection Mr. Wm. Dikes. Mr. Frost proceeded to enumerate the names of natives or inhabitants of Hull who had distinguished themselves as authors, accompanying each name with an allusion their works, and short notice of their personal history. first mentioned those who had ceased to live, viz: the Poet Mason ; Commodore E. Thompson, know amongst his shipmates by the name of "Rhyming Thompson;" the Rev. Thos. Clarke, vicar of the Holy Trinity church; the Rev. R. Patrick, Benj. Thompson, Esq. the Rev. Thos. Broadley, John Wray, Esq. the Rev. Edward Hare, P, **W. Watson, Esq.** the Rev. J. Shaw, Andrew Marvel, Robert Whittle, Esq. M.D. F.R.S. John Clark, Thomas Bridges, the Rev. John King, the Rev. Joseph Milner, the Rev. John Beatson, and the Rev. Geo. Lambert, dissenting ministers, the Rev. Robt. Webster, the Rev. Rodwell, Nathaniel Tucker. Esq. M.D. Mr. J. Richardson, Mr. John Hill, the Rev. Thos. Brown, Ralph Darling. Esq. the Rev. Wm. Severn, Mr. R Garland, Aistroppe Stovin, Esq. Thomas Thompson, Esq. F.S.A., J. Alderson, Esq. M.D. He next mentioned as still living, Wm. Wilberforce, Esq. the Rev. Miles Popple, the Rev. J. Bromby, John Broadley, Esq. George Pryme, Esq. Adrian Hardy Hawarth, Esq. the rev. John Barnes Emmett, Wm. Bell, Esq. the Rev. Anthony Norman, Mr. Wm. Wiseman, Mr. Wm. Hendry. Mr. Joseph Clarke (compiler of the library catalogue), Thos. Perronet Thompson, Esq. George Fielding, Esq. Mr. G. Huntley Fielding, the Rev. John Scott, the Rev. Thos. Dikes, Wm, Spence, Esq. Mr. Isaac Wilson, Mr. Thomas Buchanan, Joseph Ayre, Esq. M.D. the Rev. Jos. Gilbert, the Rev. John Birt,—dissenting ministers. Mr. Frost closed his paper some very apposite remarks on the present state and prospects of literature in Hull generally, and this society in particular.

On the motion of the Rev. G. Lee, the thanks of the society were given to Mr. Frost, for the valuable information had communicated; and he was requested to allow the secretaries to take a copy of the paper, that it might enrolled among the archives of the society, after the addition of his own name, which was entitled to honourably mentioned amongst the contributors the literary fame of his native town. Mr. Frost thanked the meeting for the honour done him, and expressed his assent to the proposition. The members then separated.