

THE BEGINNINGS OF PRINTING AND
JOURNALISM IN CONNECTICUT

Thesis for the Degree of M. A.
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Robert Bruce Oliver
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THE BEGINNINGS OF PRINTING AND JOURNALISM
IN CONNECTICUT

by

Robert Bruce Oliver

AN ABSTRACT

Submitted to the College of Communication Arts
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Connecticut, like the other lesser stars that revolved around the brilliance of Massachusetts, was slow to develop its printing industry. It was not until the Cambridge press had been established for seventy-one years that Connecticut finally was successful in convincing Thomas Short to leave Boston and come to New London as official printer to the Colony, in 1709. Even with this time lag, Connecticut was the fourth colony in America to have a printer within its borders.

Any comparison between Connecticut and Massachusetts, or any other colony for that matter, is unfair. It is like comparing the accomplishments of the parent with those of a half-grown child. The first printers in Connecticut came from Boston. With the death of Thomas Short, the Colony again looked north and attracted the son of Samuel Green of Cambridge. This was the beginning of the Green printing dynasty in Connecticut. It became almost ritual for the males of the Green line to be apprenticed to an uncle in order to acquire the printing skills. The Greens controlled printing for forty-one years before a second press was established.

James Parker set up this second press at New Haven. Parker was an absentee owner remaining in New York while the press was run by a junior partner. This press is important because it was

Robert Bruce Oliver

in New Haven that the Connecticut Gazette, the first newspaper in the Colony, made its appearance. The ubiquitous Greens ultimately took over the New Haven press.

The Green family was personified by solid, unimaginative workers. They were not the intellectual pioneers that the Boston printers were. But there was no reason for them to be other than what they were. Connecticut was an unimportant colony, being caught between the important seaports of Boston, Newport, and New York. There was nothing in Connecticut then to attract an enterprising printer.

But Connecticut did have its moments of greatness. It was in this state that the first copyright law in the New World was developed. Andrew Law, a Brown College graduate, was granted a form of copyright protection for a book. It was not long before the Assembly extended copyright protection to all authors after being petitioned by one John Ledyard in 1783 for the same privileges that had been granted to Law. The Connecticut act was the model for the Federal copyright law of 1790.

Mechanically, this Colony led its neighbors in the development of the tools of the printing trade. It was a Connecticut man, Abel Buell, who designed, cut, and cast the first Roman type in English America. The Revolution made this advance of great importance since the colonial printers were prevented from replenishing their type as they had previously from English suppliers.

Connecticut was rather undistinguished as far as its newspapers were concerned. It was not until 1755, that a paper made its appearance, forty-six years after the first press was set up in this Colony. The most important paper was the Hartford Connecticut Courant, and this paper was not started until 1764.

The history of Connecticut printing can be described as rather unimportant to the development of the trade in the Americas. If it had not been for the prolific Greens there would be little in the early history of Connecticut that would be even worth mentioning.

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The Colony of Connecticut, like its neighbors Massachusetts and Rhode Island, was born of religious disagreement and dissatisfaction. As the Puritans who founded Massachusetts sought relief from the oppression of the Church of England and Laudian Court of High Commission, so too did the seekers of religious freedom who founded Rhode Island and Connecticut desire to escape the suffocating oppressiveness of the Puritan theocracy of the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

Driven from their English homes for religious and economic motives, the Puritans sought a purity of worship in the mentally inviting, though physically harsh, climate of the New World. Probably it is only because the Puritans felt themselves to be a chosen people, the lost tribe, that they were able to prosper and live in spite of the many obstacles nature placed in their way. Yet this strength of purpose and aggressiveness of religious belief produced an intolerance of towering proportion and resulted in a Massachusetts oligarchy that suppressed any thought not approved by the reigning religious leaders. Self-appointed godlings, such as John Cotton, ruled the Bible commonwealth where ecclesiastical rule was upheld by law or was, in fact, the law. But, as can be expected wherever man is, there were dissenters, not only among members of the congregations, but also within the ministerial bodies themselves. Roger Williams,

minister to the important community of Salem, escaped banishment by going to the wilderness of Rhode Island where he could preach his religion. Another minister to grow dissatisfied with the Massachusetts theocracy was Thomas Hooker.

Hooker, minister to the Towns of Newtown, Dorchester, and Watertown, rejected both the ideas of Reverend Cotton and the levelling radicalism of Roger Williams.¹ The father of New England Congregationalism led his group of followers to the place that became Hartford, Connecticut. It was in the rather liberal atmosphere of this settlement that the Fundamental Orders, the first constitution of the New World, were passed in 1638. Also in Hartford is the famous "Charter Oak," the tree in which the Royal Charter of the Colony was hidden when the colony's governor demanded its surrender during a visit he made to the Town.² The printing trade has perpetuated the name Charter Oak as a fine grade of paper. While the people of Hartford were concerned with politics in 1638, to the north, in Cambridge, another important event occurred. The first printing press in the New World was set up at two-year-old Harvard College by Stephen Daye and his son, Matthew.³ In 1649, this press was taken over by

¹Vernon Louis Parrington. Main Currents in American Thought. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1927) I, 53.

²J. Hammond Trumbull. The Memorial History of Hartford County, Connecticut, 1633-1884. (Boston: Edward L. Osgood Publishers, 1886) I, pp. 63-72.

³Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt, Ruth Shepard Grannis, and Lawrence C. Wroth. The Book in America. (New York: R. R. Bowker Company, 1939) p. 8.

Samuel Green and run by him until 1692.⁴ Green was to become the patriarch of a long line of printers, many of whom worked in Connecticut as well as in the other colonies. The printing history of Connecticut is linked closely with the history of the descendants of Samuel Green of Cambridge.

In the rough wilderness of Colonial America, mutual assistance between colonies was necessary to the existence of the settlers. The more recently created towns, such as those in Connecticut, depended heavily on Boston for services that they could not provide for themselves. To the credit of the high priests of Puritanism, it must be said that they did not try to wipe up the heresies to the south of Massachusetts. It is questionable whether these towns could have survived had John Cotton and the erratically brilliant Mathers inveighed against the dissidents with the same venom with which they flayed imagined devils that lived within the borders of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. As could be expected by the nature of the printing trade and its dependence on large amounts of equipment, the smaller colonies of Massachusetts and Rhode Island were particularly dependent on Boston for their printing. Most of the print work was made up of the proclamations of fast days and days of thanksgiving which were to be distributed to the churches in the communities concerned. It was not until the volume of printing had reached such proportions that

⁴Ibid.

the proclamations could not be done in time to reach the churches that Connecticut decided that a printer was needed.⁵ Until then Samuel Green of Cambridge or Samuel Green Jr., Bartholomew Green, and John Allen of Boston had done all the printing for the Connecticut towns.⁶

Although the Cambridge press was established in 1638, Connecticut waited until 1709 before a printer was invited to New London.⁷ In the same year, Rhode Island was unsuccessfully trying to attract Andrew Bradford of New York to the seaport Town of Newport.⁸ It is interesting to note that the Towns of Newport and New London are both ports. During the Colonial era, the most important towns were always the seaports, the ocean providing the link to England and the colonies of the South. The undeveloped economy of the country relied heavily on the industry of England and the Continent, and it was the sea that brought news, goods, and additional migrants so necessary to the new country.

⁵W. DeLoss Love, Thomas Short, The First Printer of Connecticut. (Hartford: The Case, Lockwood & Brainard Company, 1901) p. 11.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Isaiah Thomas. The History of Printing in America. (Albany, New York: Joel Munsell Printer, 1874) I, 184.

⁸John Russell Bartlett. Records of the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations in New England. (Providence, Rhode Island: A. Crawford Greene and Brother, 1856) IV, 65.

On November 27, 1707, John Winthrop, grandson of the first Governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony, died in office as Governor of Connecticut. The General Court chose Gurdon Saltonstall to succeed Winthrop as governor. Saltonstall, recognizing that the growth of the community warranted a printing office, immediately moved that the Assembly send for a printer. Turning to Boston, the Assembly invited Timothy Green to accept the position as official printer to Connecticut. Green declined the invitation and the Assembly renewed its quest and finally invited Thomas Short of Boston. Short accepted and became the first official printer of Connecticut.⁹ Thus, in 1709, Connecticut became the fourth colony in America to have a press, following Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and New York.¹⁰

Viewed from the Twentieth Century, the early life of Thomas Short is rather romantic and could very easily be transformed into a television program, sponsored by a dog food and aimed at children. During a massacre of the inhabitants of Salmon Falls, Maine, on March 18, 1689-90, Short's father and mother and three other Short children were killed by the French and Indians. Thomas and his sisters were

⁹Thomas. Loc. cit.

¹⁰Frederick W. Hamilton. A Brief History of Printing in America. (Chicago, Illinois: United Typothetae of America, n.d.) pp. 19-20.

captured and taken to Canada by the Indians where he was kept until ransomed by his brother-in-law, Bartholomew Green, the Boston printer. Thomas' older sister, Mary, had married Bartholomew, and Thomas, though only nine at the time of the massacre, was already apprenticed to Bartholomew, from whom he learned the printing trade.¹¹

Thomas Short accepted the invitation of the Connecticut Assembly and agreed to come to New London and print the Public Acts of the Colony for four years, and to provide a copy to every town or place that had a clerk or Register. The pay was to be fifty pounds a year.¹²

As soon as he reached New London he went to work, publishing in 1709 a proclamation of Governor Saltonstall. This was a three page broadside. The next item to come from the Short press was a sermon of the Reverend Eliphalet Adams entitled, "The Necessity of Judgment, and Righteousness in a Land."¹³ The best known work of Thomas Short is "A Confession of Faith" or, as it is more generally known, "The Saybrook Platform of Church Discipline." This was the first book to be printed in the Colony, and though dated 1710, it was not finished until 1711.¹⁴ In addition to these works of particular

¹¹Love. op. cit. p. 24.

¹²Thomas. loc. cit.

¹³John Clyde Oswald. Printing in the Americas. (n.p.: The Gregg Publishing Company, 1937) p. 231.

¹⁴Ibid.

interest, Short kept himself and his press busy with various religious pamphlets and sermons. In 1712, Thomas Short died at the age of thirty, and was buried in the burial ground in New London. His widow continued the business for some months after his death.¹⁵ Apparently she was not designated an official printer to the Colony although it seems fair to assume that she carried out any ~~comm~~itments her husband had for the print work for Connecticut. In 1714, the widow Short released "The Saybrook Platform of Church Discipline" which she had kept since its completion in 1711.

Connecticut remained without an official printer for the rest of 1712 and part of 1713, until Timothy Green accepted the position that he had declined in 1709.¹⁶ Green moved to New London in 1713, and his family followed him on August 10, 1714.¹⁷ His pay was the same fifty pounds a year that had been paid to Short. In fact, it was not until 1738, that his pay was increased to seventy pounds upon his application to the Assembly.¹⁸

Timothy Green, born in 1679, was the son of Samuel Green of Cambridge and Green's second wife.¹⁹ Isaiah

¹⁵Love. op. cit. p. 33.

¹⁶Thomas. op. cit. I, 185.

¹⁷Love. op. cit. pp. 47-48.

¹⁸Ibid. p. 48.

¹⁹Oswald. op. cit. p. 59.

Thomas, faithful chronicler that he was, erroneously reported that Timothy was the son of Samuel Green Junior and the grandson of Samuel of Cambridge.²⁰ However, the error made by Thomas is understandable and it is due more to the prolific Samuel Green, with at least nineteen children, than it is to faulty memory on the part of Thomas.²¹ Timothy learned the printing trade from his father and began to print independently in 1700, remaining in Boston until he went to New London in 1713.²²

The first work to come from the Green press in New London was a broadside, "Proclamation for a General Fast," by Governor Gurdon Saltonstall.²³ One of the more interesting works done by Green while at New London was John Hart's "Sermon on the Death of Hannah Meigs." This is the only published work of the first actual student at Yale College.²⁴ Green also printed the numerous election sermons, proclamations and laws enacted by the Assembly. A deeply religious man, he

²⁰Thomas. Loc. cit.

²¹Oswald. op. cit. p. 58.

²²Ibid. p. 59.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Albert Carlos Bates. Some Notes on Early Connecticut Printing. (The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America, Vol. 27, Part I: Chicago, Illinois: The University of Chicago Press) p. 3.

1. The first step in the process of the scientific method is to ask a question or make an observation.

2. The second step is to do background research to see what has already been discovered.

3. The third step is to form a hypothesis, which is a prediction about the outcome of the experiment.

4. The fourth step is to design and conduct an experiment to test the hypothesis.

5. The fifth step is to analyze the data and draw a conclusion.

6. The sixth step is to communicate the results of the experiment to others.

7. The seventh step is to repeat the experiment to verify the results.

8. The eighth step is to use the results to make a new hypothesis or to refine an existing one.

9. The ninth step is to use the results to make a prediction about the future.

10. The tenth step is to use the results to make a decision about the future.

11. The eleventh step is to use the results to make a plan for the future.

12. The twelfth step is to use the results to make a decision about the future.

13. The thirteenth step is to use the results to make a plan for the future.

14. The fourteenth step is to use the results to make a decision about the future.

was elected deacon of the church soon after his arrival in New London. He was reported to be an "agreeable companion" because he had a "native fund of humor and pleasantry always at his command."²⁵ In his lifetime he printed so many sermons that when his office was cleaned up after his death, the religious tracts were sold by the bushel for waste paper.²⁶ He died on May 5, 1757, leaving five or six sons and one daughter. Three, and possibly four, of the sons became printers.

In the year 1754, a work entitled, "The History of the Holy Jesus," bears the imprint of John Green and was done in New London.²⁷ Albert Carlos Bates states without hesitation that John was the third official printer to the Colony.²⁸ Isaiah Thomas makes no mention in his work of John. However, in a list of Connecticut printers, James Hammond Trumbull places him as a New London printer.²⁹ Perhaps John was assisting Timothy Junior, who had come to New London in 1752 from Boston, where he had been the partner of Samuel Kneeland.³⁰

²⁵Frances Manwaring Caulkins. History of New London, Connecticut. (New London: Published by H.D. Utley, 1895) p. 471.

²⁶Thomas. loc. cit.

²⁷Bates. op. cit. p. 4.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹James Hammond Trumbull. List of Books Printed in Connecticut, 1709-1800. (Hartford: The Case, Lockwood and Brainard Company, 1904) p. 237.

³⁰Thomas. loc. cit.

Of two other sons, Samuel III and Jonas, Jonas went on to become a printer in Boston and later in Philadelphia and Maryland.³¹ Samuel was associated with his father for a while, but died before him, leaving three sons. Another son, Nathaniel, died in New London, leaving no male heirs.³² In any case, the next important printer in New London and Connecticut was Timothy Green Junior.

Timothy Junior was born in Boston in 1703, and went to New London with his father in 1713.³³ In 1727, he returned to Boston to form the previously mentioned partnership with Samuel Kneeland, remaining there until 1752 when he went to New London to take over his father's business. On August 8, 1758, Green established the Colony's second newspaper, The New London Summary, a weekly that he continued until his death on October 3, 1763.³⁴ It was a folio sheet with a page size of 12" x 8", containing two columns of print. Its heading had an ornamented cut of the Colony seal with the escutcheon of the Town added by way of a crest.³⁵

³¹Oswald. op. cit. p. 61.

³²Caulkins. op. cit. p. 472.

³³Ibid. p. 60.

³⁴Clarence S. Brigham. History and Bibliography of American Newspapers, 1690-1820. (Worcester, Massachusetts: American Antiquarian Society, 1947) I, pp. 59-60.

³⁵Caulkins. op. cit. p. 655.

The paper was brought out during the period of great intellectual activity that preceded the Revolution. The political agitation stirred up throughout these troubled times was a great stimulus to printing. Where previously a community would not be interested enough in daily events to support a paper, now, with politics on everyone's tongue, a paper was necessary to the communication of news and ideas.

New London was a natural place for a newspaper since it was a port. Most papers of the times relied heavily on foreign news, and the best source of this information was the sea captains sailing in and out of port. Another source of news was the letters that individual citizens received from friends and relatives in other countries.

With the death of Timothy Junior, the business was taken over by Timothy III, one of the sons of Samuel Green III. Timothy III learned the print trade in his uncle's shop and was well-equipped to step into the breach left by his uncle's death. He became printer to the Colony, and after three weeks he discontinued the newspaper begun by his uncle and started one of his own.³⁶ The new paper was called The New London Gazette, and was established in November, 1763.³⁷ The Gazette was increased to three columns of print and cost six shillings a year, with one-half of the subscription price to be paid on

³⁶Oswald. op. cit. p. 65.

³⁷Ibid.

delivery of the first number.³⁸ Like other early papers in the colonies, it is certain that the Connecticut papers offered a detailed picture of the social and economic life of the communities. Most of the advertisements in these papers were for such things as clothes, clocks, silver, tools, fruit, liquor, auctions, patent medicines, theater, houses and land, stallions, runaway slaves and apprentices, and naturally, ship sailings.³⁹

One of the mainstays of the early printing trade was the publication of almanacs. After 1750, the Greens published one yearly. The first one was prepared for them by James Davis, and after he stopped doing them, the Greens turned to Boston and reprinted the Boston Almanac of Nathaniel Ames. This arrangement continued until 1766, when Clark Elliott, a mathematician and instrument maker, settled in New London. He began a series of almanacs published under his own name and printed by the Greens. Apparently, in one of these works, he made a mistake in one of his astronomical calculations that so upset him that he refused to continue publishing under his own name. From this time on he used an assumed name, Edmund Freebetter, on all his work.⁴⁰

³⁸Caulkins. loc. cit.

³⁹Clarence S. Brigham. Journals and Journeymen. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1950) p. 28.

⁴⁰Caulkins. op. cit. p. 656.

Timothy III continued the newspaper, The New London Gazette, changing its name in 1773 to The Connecticut Gazette.⁴¹ His son, Samuel, became a partner in 1789, and took over the business completely in 1794.⁴²

In 1773, Timothy formed a partnership with Judah Padock Spooner, a brother-in-law, and they set up a press in Norwich, Connecticut. Judah and Alden Spooner were early Vermont printers and the sons of Thomas Spooner, who had come to New London from Norwich in 1753.⁴³ The Green and Spooner press in Norwich was eventually taken to New Hampshire and finally on to Westminster, Vermont.⁴⁴ Timothy returned to New London and died in that city in 1796.

It was not until 1795 that another newspaper was established in New London. In this year, the New-London Advertiser began operation. In the next two years, the Weekly Oracle (1796), and the Bee (1797) also started, and both folded in five years. The Bee was printed and published by Charles Holt and was the organ of the Democratic party. During the administration of John Adams, Holt was arrested and tried for libel under the Sedition Law. He was found guilty and sentenced to a term of six months imprisonment and a fine of \$200.⁴⁵ These were the

⁴¹Oswald. op. cit. p. 66.

⁴²Caulkins. op. cit. p. 654.

⁴³Ibid. p. 655.

⁴⁴Oswald. loc. cit.

⁴⁵Caulkins. op. cit. p. 657.

other papers to operate in New London, Connecticut, before the turn of the century.

It was not until forty-five years after the first printing house had been established in New London that a second one was set up in Connecticut. In 1754, James Parker, a New York printer, established a press in New Haven.⁴⁶ Parker had been appointed postmaster for New Haven by Benjamin Franklin and William Hunter, joint deputy postmasters-general for the colonies.⁴⁷ For some reason, Parker never spent too much time in New Haven and he left the business to be run by John Holt. Holt turns out to be the brother-in-law of the aforementioned William Hunter.⁴⁸ Perhaps the reason Parker was appointed postmaster at New Haven was due to his willingness to let Holt handle the printing as well as the post office. This smacks strongly of a "make-work" deal to satisfy the demands of insistent relations. But perhaps we are too suspicious because it is hard to believe that Ben Franklin would condone any such actions, and Thomas says that Parker established the press at New Haven on the advice of Franklin.⁴⁹ Still, it is rather interesting to speculate.

⁴⁶Thomas. op. cit. p. 188.

⁴⁷Oswald. op. cit. p. 232.

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹Thomas. op. cit. p. 188.

The New Haven press imprinted its material James Parker & Company. According to Isaiah Thomas, the first work done was a Latin rendition of the laws of Yale College.⁵⁰ However, there is a record of the work, "The present state of the colony considered" dated 1755, and this may have been printed before the laws of Yale.⁵¹ It was not until late 1754 that James Parker & Company was set up at New Haven, so it would not be at all unusual to find a date of 1755 on the earliest work to come from this press.

The first newspaper in Connecticut was brought out on April 12, 1755, by James Parker, and was called The Connecticut Gazette.⁵² It was published on Friday and printed on a half sheet of foolscap. Beginning with the issue of December 13, 1755, the paper was published by James Parker & Company with John Holt, junior partner of the firm, handling the actual editing.⁵³ This arrangement continued until 1759, when Holt left New Haven to join Parker in New York. Parker had ended a partnership he had had with William Weyman and he sent for Holt to join him.⁵⁴ The newspaper and the printing business

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Oswald. op. cit. p. 233.

⁵²Brigham. History and Bibliography of American Newspapers, 1690-1820. p. 39.

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Oswald. loc. cit.

remained the property of James Parker & Company and Thomas Green was hired to run the New Haven operation in the absence of the owners.⁵⁵

Thomas Green was born on August 25, 1735, and was the son of Samuel Green III of New London.⁵⁶ Like his brother, Timothy III, he was apprenticed to his uncle, Timothy II, in learning the trade in the New London shop. After being hired by James Parker he stayed in New Haven until 1764, when the Parker interest was sold to Benjamin Mecom. Thomas wasted no time in moving to Hartford after the change of ownership, where he began his own printing business.⁵⁷

Benjamin Mecom was the attorney for James Parker & Company and, apparently, he had been a printer in both Antigua and Boston.⁵⁸ Assuming the printing business in New Haven, Mecom also was appointed postmaster for the Town by Benjamin Franklin. The change of ownership resulted in the suspension of the Gazette on April 14, 1764. In June, Mecom issued a broadside saying that if he received enough encouragement he would revive the paper.⁵⁹ Apparently the hoped-for response was not forthcoming because the paper was not issued until July 5, 1765, a year later.

⁵⁵Thomas. op. cit. II, 85.

⁵⁶Oswald. op. cit. p. 66.

⁵⁷Ibid. p. 66.

⁵⁸Thomas. op. cit. I, 189.

⁵⁹Brigham. loc. cit.

This seems rather surprising when you consider the political unrest existing in the colonies during these years before the Revolution. It may be that there were other reasons than lack of public support that prevented the issuance of the paper until 1765.

Mecom's successor in New Haven was Samuel Green IV, the third son of Samuel III, and the grandson of the first Timothy of New London. He received his training in his uncle Timothy's office.⁶⁰ His brother, Thomas, returned from Hartford to join him. They issued a weekly newspaper called The Connecticut Journal: & New Haven Post Boy. This paper first came out on October 23, 1767.⁶¹ At the same time, the Gazette was still being issued and, until February 19, 1768, the papers existed side by side. There seems to be no authority for assuming that the Greens were issuing two papers during this period. Probably, while the Greens were taking over the business, Mecom remained in New Haven and continued the Gazette until such time as the transfer of ownership was complete.

The colonial printer had a hard time collecting his money when he did not get his subscriptions paid for in advance. Thomas and Samuel Green were forced to chide the readers of the Connecticut Journal and New Haven Post-Boy for their failure

⁶⁰Thomas. loc. cit.

⁶¹Brigham. loc. cit.

to pay for the paper. The issue of April 12, 1773, carried the following notice:

The printers are sorry, they can with truth inform the public, that they have not, for this year past, received from all the customers for this Journal, so much money as they have expended for the blank paper, on which it has been printed; and that they shall be under the necessity of reducing it to its original size and price, unless subscribers for it are more punctual in their payments.

The Green brothers printed under the name of Thomas and Samuel Green up to December 27, 1798.⁶² In January, Thomas began to conduct the business by himself, undoubtedly because Samuel was in poor health. The following month Samuel died, shortly after Thomas had taken his son into the firm and changed the name to Thomas Green and Son.⁶³ There probably is no connection between these occurrences. This partnership of father and son lasted for ten years; in January, 1809, Thomas Collier, a printer from Litchfield, Connecticut, became a partner and the firm continued as Thomas Green and Company.⁶⁴ Collier was made a partner because of the impending retirement of Thomas Green, the father. Within three years after his retirement, he died.⁶⁵

The partnership of Green and Collier continued for six months of 1809, the paper being published under their imprint.

⁶²Ibid.

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴Thomas. op. cit. I, 190.

⁶⁵Ibid.

On July 6, Eli Hudson took over the business, and until June, 1814, he printed the paper under his own imprint.⁶⁶ Thomas Green Woodward was taken in with Hudson for two years. Eventually, the paper reverted to Hudson and finally, for the purposes of this report, it went to one Sherman Converse.⁶⁷ During this period, it had undergone innumerable changes of name.

New Haven had received a good start in the printing trade from James Parker & Company. Before the turn of the century, eleven other printers had turned out work while living in this town, and five newspapers served the inhabitants, some for a very short time, however.

When James Parker and Company sold its press in New Haven to Benjamin Mecom, Thomas Green, printer and editor for the Parker interests, moved to Hartford. He became the first printer to work in Hartford, and he proceeded to bring to the people of Hartford their first newspaper, a weekly named The Connecticut Courant.⁶⁸ Thus, this paper became the third in the Colony and was continued by Thomas Green until April 25, 1768.⁶⁹ His first work was an almanac for 1765 prepared by

⁶⁶Brigham. History and Bibliography of American Newspapers, 1690-1820. p. 43.

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸Thomas. loc. cit.

⁶⁹Brigham. loc. cit.

Nathaniel Ames, and which he printed in 1764.⁷⁰ At this time, the name Ebenezer Watson was coupled with Green's on the mast-head.⁷¹ Probably Green had already left to join his brother Samuel in New Haven and Watson was the active partner, with Green retaining his interest in the business in Hartford. On March 26, 1771, the Courant was brought out solely in Watson's name, indicating that he had taken over the business entirely.⁷²

From the beginning, the Connecticut Courant contained very little local news. The editors apparently thought that happenings on the local scene were known by the townspeople and it would be a waste of space to cover these events. The paper did devote a great deal of space to the publication of some of the earliest American literature.⁷³

Under Watson's stewardship, the Courant prospered, particularly during the Revolution when the British occupied New York. The New York papers had stopped publication, and the circulation of the Courant increased as the news-hungry New Yorkers sought information concerning the war.⁷⁴ They probably found out what was happening in England with much less trouble than they had

⁷⁰Albert Carlos Bates. The Work of Hartford's First Printer. ("Bibliographical Essays, A Tribute to Wilberforce Eames," Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1924) p. 348.

⁷¹Brigham. History and Bibliography of American Newspapers, 1690-1820. p. 39.

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³J. Hammond Trumbull. The Memorial History of Hartford County, Connecticut, 1633-1884. (Boston: Edward L. Osgood Publishers, 1886) I, 605.

⁷⁴Thomas. op. cit. II, 89.

in knowing about occurrences in Hartford, considering the Courant's rather interesting philosophy of news coverage.

Ebenezer Watson died in September, 1777, and the paper was continued by his widow, Hannah, and George Goodwin. Goodwin had been apprenticed at the age of nine to Thomas Green, when the Hartford press was owned by Green.⁷⁵ Hannah and George worked together until February, 1779, when Hannah married Barzillai Hudson, and Hudson and Goodwin became partners.⁷⁶ This partnership lasted well into 1815, when the imprint showed that the printing business and paper were not being run by George Goodwin and Sons.⁷⁷

Other Hartford papers were the American Mercury, established in 1784 by Joel Barlow; the Freeman's Chronicle, begun in 1783 by B. Webster; the Hartford Gazette, which ran from 1794 to 1795; and, finally, the New Star, which lasted only during the year 1796.

Norwich was the fourth Connecticut town to have a printer. Two shops opened up in 1773, the first being run by Timothy Green III from New London and Judah Padock Spooner.⁷⁸ This is

⁷⁵William DeLoss Love. The Colonial History of Hartford. (Hartford, Connecticut: Published by the author, 1914) p. 315.

⁷⁶Thomas. op. cit. p. 191.

⁷⁷Brigham. History and Bibliography of American Newspapers, 1690-1820. p. 22.

⁷⁸Thomas. op. cit. p. 192.

the press that was moved to New Hampshire and eventually Vermont. The other press was owned by the Robertson brothers and John Trumbull.

Alexander and James Robertson were the sons of a Scottish printer. They had worked at their trade in Albany before coming to Norwich. Alexander apparently had been struck with a paralysis, probably polio, and was unable to use his limbs. He was reported to be intelligent, well-educated, and to possess ability as a writer.

John Trumbull was born in Massachusetts and had served his apprenticeship with Samuel Kneeland in that city.⁷⁹ He and the Robertsons brought out the Norwich Packet, a weekly paper, in October, 1773. The partnership lasted until 1776, when the British took New York City. The Robertsons were strong loyalists and they left Norwich for New York to join the British. Trumbull continued the paper until his death in 1802.⁸⁰ His widow then printed the paper for a period of time, after changing its name to The Connecticut Centinel.

The Robertsons stayed in New York until the British left the city in 1783. Then they went to Shelburne, Nova Scotia, where they published a paper. After the death of Alexander, James returned to Scotland.⁸¹

⁷⁹Ibid.

⁸⁰Ibid. II, 91.

⁸¹Ibid. I, 193.

The only other papers that operated in Norwich before 1800 were the Courier and the Weekly Register. Both started late in the 1700's and only lasted for four years.

One of the more interesting occurrences connected with Connecticut printing took place in 1781, before the close of the Revolution. In this year, the Connecticut Assembly gave an author copyright protection for a book. This was the first time that protection of this nature had ever been extended to anyone in the New World. Up to this time, once a work was published it could be stolen without fear of punishment by anyone with a mind to do so.

Andrew Law, a Brown College graduate, was something of a musician and composer. He published a book of tunes, and in 1781, petitioned the Assembly stating that he had spent 500 pounds in the compilation and printing of his "Collection of the Best Tunes," brought out in New Haven in 1779, and that someone was now counterfeiting his work. In the way of redress, he requested the sole right to print and sell the edition for the term of five years, pointing out that works of art should be protected. By a special act, the Assembly protected his current publication, "Collection of the Best Tunes for the

Promotion of Psalmody," which presumably had been printed in New Haven in 1781.⁸²

The success of Andrew Law undoubtedly prompted a similar application for copyright protection by John Ledyard, a world explorer. And it was the success of Ledyard that resulted in copyright legislation being passed by the Assembly in 1783.

Ledyard had accompanied Captain Cook on the celebrated third voyage that had cost Cook his life, but which had brought him fame. A few years after returning from this trip, Ledyard decided to publish an account of this last voyage of Captain Cook. In 1783, he appealed to the Assembly for the exclusive publication rights to his book, "A Journal of Captain Cook's Last Voyage to the Pacific Ocean," which had been published in Hartford in the same year.

The petition and the resulting action taken by the Assembly are interesting reading and are presented here in full.

"To his Excellency the Governor and the
Honorably General Assembly of the State of
Connecticut

The Memorial of John Ledyard Humbly sheweth
that in the month of March 1774 the memorialist
left New York in a Merchant Ship in which he sailed
to Falmouth in Great Britain but finding his

⁸²Lehmann-Haupt. op. cit. pp. 87-88.

situation unprofitable and unpleasant in the ship to which he then belonged he proceeded to the city of Bristol hoping to ment it; he was however so unfortunate then as to be apprehended by a kind of Police in that city who obliged him either to ship himself for the coast of Guinea or to enter the British Army. Your Memorialist, young, inexperienced & destitute of friends, chose the latter as the least of the two evils: he continued in the Army untill early in the Year 1775 when he was ordered to Boston in New England: to this your memorialist objected being himself a native of that Country & desired he might be appointed to some other duty, which ultimately was granted; matters continued thus until July 1776 when the equipment for discovery came round from London to Plymouth & your memorialist esteeming this a favourable conjuncture to free himself forever from coming to America as her enemy & prompted also by curiosity & disinterested enterprise embarked in that expedition. In the year 1780 your Memorialist returned to London & after having solicited the Earl of Sandwich in vain for his discharge from the service he was obliged in October 1781 to take his tour of duty which was to America where he remained on board a British Frigate many months before he could meet with an opportunity to renounce the service & return to his country - he has now effected it and if he has acquired any merit by his conduct, his travels, your Memorialist having lost his pecuniary assistance by his abrupt departure from the British is thereby incapacitated to move in a circle he could wish without the Assistance of his friends & the patronage & recommendations of the Government under which he was born & whose favour & esteem he hopes he has never forfeited: he therefore proposes as a matter of consideration to your Excellency and Council that he may be introduced into some immediate employment wherein he may as well be usefull to his country as himself during the War. He also humbly intreats the honourable Assembly to take into consideration a history of the memorialists last voyage round the world which he proposes to publish in a manner which he thinks will not only be meritorious in himself but may be essentially usefull to America in general but particularly to the northern States by opening a most valuable trade

across the north pacific Ocean to China & the east Indies - and that the memorialist may have the exclusive right of publishing this said Journal or history in this State for such a term as shall be thot fit & he shall ever pray Dated at Hartford this 6th day of January 1783.

John Ledyard

In the upper House

Samuel Huntington Esqr, and such Gentlemen as the lower House may joyn with him; are appointed a Committee, to enquire & examine into, and Consider the Subject Matter of the foregoing Memorial of Mr. John Ledyard, And make Report of their Opinion thereon to this present Assembly

Test George Wyllys, Secret.

In the Lower House, Col: Porter & Col. Mott are appointed to Join on the Subject above mentioned.

Test Increase Moseley Clerk P.T.

Jan 1783

Your Honours committee appointed to take into consideration The Memorial of John Ledyard prefer^d to this Assembly, take leave to report that in their Opinion a publication of the Memorialists Journal in his voyage round the Globe may be beneficial to these United States & to the world, & it appears reasonable & Just that the Memorialist should have an exclusive right to publish the same for a Reasonable Term, and as it appears that several Gentlemen of Genius & reputation are also about to make similar Applications for the exclusive right (to) publish Works of their Respective Compositions, your Committee are of opinion that it is expedient to pass a general bill, for that purpose and thereupon report the Annexed Bill.

All which is Submitted by your Honours humble Servants

Sign^d p^r Order

Sam Huntington

In the upper House

The above Report of the Committee is accepted and approved

Test. George Wyllys, Secrety.⁸³

The general law that was put on the statute books was the "Act for the encouragement of Literature and Genius." This act became a model for the copyright legislation of the other states and ultimately for the Federal copyright law of 1790.

The preamble to the Connecticut law says:

Whereas it is perfectly agreeable to the Principle of natural Equity and Justice, that every Author should be secured in receiving the Profits that may arise from the Sale of his Works, and such security may encourage Men of Learning and Genius to publish their Writings; which may do Honor to their Country, and Service to Mankind....Be it enacted

The act gave the author of any book not previously printed the sole right to print, publish and sell the book in Connecticut for a period of fourteen years. There were penalties provided for counterfeiting books and a method of registration was established. There also was a right of renewal given to authors and they could extend the copyright protection for another period of fourteen years after the expiration of the first term. The Superior Court was given the authority to withdraw the copyright protection from any author who neglected to furnish the public with sufficient editions of the book, or who offered the book for sale at a price that was deemed too high.

⁸³Ibid. pp. 88-90.

The Ledyard book thus became the first book in the United States to be copyrighted even though it contained no actual statement of copyright. Charles Henry Wharton's "Letter to the Roman Catholics of the City of Worcester", printed in Philadelphia in 1784, may have been the first book to contain a printed notice of copyright.

Other states soon followed the lead of Connecticut in passing copyright laws for the protection of authors. Congress recommended a similar law in 1783, and on May 31, 1790, it passed "An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned" and the Federal copyright law thus came into existence.

Connecticut had a vigorous intellectual life during the Colonial era. It was a self-contained unit in many ways after its founding. There were many particularly successful experiments in the mechanical arts and sciences conducted within its borders during the early years.

For example, Connecticut printers were unable to replace their broken and worn type during the war with England. Up to this time, all type had come from England. Their desire for type forced Abel Buell to get over his "personal instability" and to cast type for Connecticut printers.⁸⁴ Buell

⁸⁴Ibid. p. 20.

of Killingworth, Connecticut, had designed, cut, and cast, the first roman type in English America in the year 1769. He had received a subsidy from the Connecticut Assembly to manufacture type for sale, but he had not done so. Prodded by the Revolution, he got to work and provided local printers with type from 1781 on.⁸⁵

Connecticut was at the forefront in the development of presses. In 1769, Isaac Doolittle developed a press and sold it. And, it is said that the earliest patent for a cylinder press was granted to Apollos Kinsley, of Connecticut, in 1796.⁸⁶

As the history of Connecticut printing shows, the Colony lacked the strife that characterized the struggle for the freedom of the press in Massachusetts. One of the reasons for this can be found in the time lag that occurred between the founding of the first press in Massachusetts and the founding of the press in Connecticut. However, this reason does not suffice to explain the difference between the two colonies. Probably the reason is twofold. First, Connecticut was a much more tolerant community and it lacked the overbearing influence the Mathers exerted on Massachusetts. Secondly, the men who started printing in Connecticut seemed to lack the radical zeal that characterized the Boston group.

⁸⁵Ibid.

⁸⁶Ibid. p. 87.

There is no counterpart for a James Franklin in Connecticut. But, there was no need for a Franklin here. The Colony was nowhere near as important as Massachusetts, the acknowledged leader.

The great contribution Connecticut made to early printing, and even in this field it must admit its debt to Massachusetts, is in the establishment of the Green dynasty. Without the Green family it is doubtful if Connecticut would have a history of printing. This family is without a peer in the annals of American printing, and it is amazing that so many members could follow the craft without stirring up trouble in the troubled times of early America. Non-political men, the Greens are representative of the industrious and capable people who made the toehold that was the original America expand and grow stronger through Revolution, and ultimately result in a nation unique in the history of the world.

APPENDIX I
EARLY CONNECTICUT NEWSPAPERS

Bridgeport Advertiser, 1806-1810
(Bridgeport) American Telegraphe, 1800-1804
(Bridgeport) Connecticut Courier, 1814-1820+
Bridgeport Gazette, 1810-1811
Bridgeport Herald, 1805-1806
(Bridgeport) Patriot of Seventy-Six, 1804
(Bridgeport) Republican Farmer, 1810-1820+
(Brooklyn) Independent Observer, 1820+
(Danbury) Connecticut Intelligencer, 1809-1810
(Danbury) Day, 1812
(Danbury) Farmer's Chronicle, 1793-1796
(Danbury) Farmer's Journal, 1790-1793
(Danbury) Farmer's Journal, 1800-1803
Danbury Gazette, 1813-1814
(Danbury) New-England Republican, 1804-1809
(Danbury) Republican Farmer, 1803-1809
(Danbury) Republican Journal, 1796-1800
(Danbury) Sun of Liberty, 1800
Fairfield Gazette, 1786-1789

(Hartford) American Mercury, 1784-1820+

(Hartford) Connecticut Courant, 1764-1820+

(Hartford) Connecticut Intelligence, 1804

(Hartford) Connecticut Mirror, 1809-1820+

(Hartford) Freeman's Chronicle, 1783-1784

Hartford Gazette, 1794-1795

(Hartford) New Star, 1796

(Hartford) Times, 1817-1820+

Litchfield Gazette, 1808-1809

Litchfield Journal, 1818

Litchfield Monitor, 1784-1807

Litchfield Republican, 1819-1820+

(Litchfield) Witness, 1805-1807

(Middletown) Connecticut Spectator, 1814-1815

(Middletown) Middlesex Gazette, 1785-1820+

(New Haven) Belles-Lettres Repository, 1808

New-Haven Chronicle, 1786-1787

(New Haven) Columbian Register, 1812-1820+

(New Haven) Connecticut Gazette, 1755-1768

(New Haven) Connecticut Herald, 1803-1820+

(New Haven) Connecticut Journal, 1767-1820

(New Haven) Connecticut Post and New Haven Visitor, 1803-1804

(New Haven) Federal Gazetteer, 1796-1797

New-Haven Gazette, 1784-1786

New-Haven Gazette, 1791

New-Haven Gazette, and Connecticut Magazine, 1786-1789

(New Haven) Herald of Minerva, 1802

(New Haven) Messenger, 1800-1802

(New Haven) Sun of Liberty, 1801

(New Haven) Visitor, 1802-1803

New-London Advertiser, 1795

(New London) Bee, 1797-1802

(New London) Connecticut Gazette, 1763-1820 +

(New London) Republican Advocate, 1818-1820 +

New-London Summary, 1758-1763

(New London) True Republican, 1807

(New London) Weekly Oracle, 1796-1801

(Newfield) American Telegraphe, 1795-1800

(Newfield) Humming Bird, 1798

(Norwalk) American Apollo, 1801-1802

Norwalk Gazette, 1818-1820 +

(Norwalk) Independent Republican, 1802-1803

(Norwalk) Sun of Liberty, 1800-1801

(Norwich) Connecticut Centinel, 1802-1807

(Norwich) Courier, 1796-1820 +

(Norwich) Native American, 1812-1813

Norwich Packet, 1773-1802

(Norwich) True Republican, 1804-1806

(Norwich) Weekly Register, 1791-1795

(Sharon) Rural Gazette, 1800-1801

(Stonington) America's Friend, 1807-1808

(Stonington) Impartial Journal, 1799-1804

(Stonington) Journal of the Times, 1798-1799

(Stonington-Port) Patriot, 1801-1802

(Suffield) Impartial Herald, 1797-1799

(Windham) Advertiser, 1818-1819

Windham Herald, 1791-1816

(Windham) Political Visitant, 1819-1820

(Windham) Register, 1817-1818

APPENDIX II

EARLY CONNECTICUT PRINTERS

(Dates Indicate Appearance of First Imprint)

Adam, _____. Litchfield, 1788

Allen, Joel. Cheshire, 1782; Farmington, 1779

Babcock, Elisha. Hartford, 1784

Babcock, John. Hartford, 1793

Barlow, Joel. Hartford, 1784

Beach, Lazarus. Bridgeport, 1800; Hartford, 1794;
Newfield, 1798

Bowen, Daniel. New Haven, 1784

Buell, _____. Litchfield, 1791

Bulkley, _____. Fairfield, 1789

Bunce, George. New Haven, 1797

Bushnell, Ebenezer. Norwich, 1791

Byrne, John. Windham, 1790

Collier, Thomas. Litchfield, 1787

Copp, William. Litchfield, 1784

Dana, Eleutheros. New Haven, 1784

Doolittle, Amos. New Haven, 1783

Douglas, Nathan. Danbury, 1793; Ridgeford, 1794

Dunning, Tertius. Middletown, 1798
 Ely, Edward. Danbury, 1790
 Farnsworth, Havila. Suffield, 1797
 Farnsworth, Oliver. Suffield, 1797
 Forque, _____. Fairfield, 1786
 Goodwin, George. Hartford, 1778
 Gray, Edward. Suffield, 1800
 Green, John. New London, 1754
 Green, Nathaniel. New London, 1758
 Green, Samuel. New Haven, 1766
 Green, Samuel. New London, 1794
 Green, Thomas. Hartford, 1764; New Haven, 1767
 Green, Thomas. Middletown, 1785
 Green, Thomas C. New London, 1795
 Green, Timothy Jr. New London, 1754
 Green, Timothy. New London, 1713
 Green, Timothy. New London, 1774; Norwich, 1773
 Green, Timothy. New London, 1774; Norwich
 Holt, Charles. New London, 1797
 Holt, John. New Haven, 1755
 Hopkins, E. Sharon, 1800
 Hubbard, Thomas. Norwich, 1793
 Hudson, Barzillai. Hartford, 1778

Jocelin, Simeon. New Haven, 1787
 Jones, Ira. Hartford, 1795; Newfield, 1795
 Law, William. Chesire, 1792
 Mecom, Benjamin. New Haven, 1764
 Meigs, Josiah. New Haven, 1784
 Miller, _____. Fairfield, 1786
 Morse, Abel. New Haven, 1786
 Nichols, Stiles. Danbury, 1797
 O'Brien, Edward. New Haven, 1796
 Parker, James. New Haven, 1755
 Patten, Nathaniel. Hartford, 1777
 Pratt, Luther. East Windsor, 1799
 Read, Daniel. New Haven, 1786
 Robertson, Alexander. Norwich, 1773
 Robertson, James. Norwich, 1773
 Short, Thomas. New London, 1710
 Spooner, Judah Padock. Norwich, 1773
 Springer, James. New London, 1796
 Sterry, John. Norwich, 1795
 Storrs, _____. Hartford, 1794
 Tiebout, _____. New Haven, 1796
 Trumbull, John. Norwich, 1773
 Trumbull, Samuel. Stonington, 1798; Stonington-Port, 1799

Washburn, Edmund. Danbury, 1795

Washburn, Ephraim. Danbury, 1795

Watson, Ebenezer. Hartford, 1768

Watson, Hammel. Hartford, 1777

Webster, Babil. Hartford, 1780

Wilson, James. New Haven, 1796

Woodward, Moses Hawkins. Middletown, 1791

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