American Antiquarian Society

# SOME NEW JERSEY PRINTERS AND PRINTING IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

BY

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whence he removed to Staten Island. By indenture dated January 1, 1726 (1727, N. S.), we learn that, Parker's father being deceased, the boy put himself apprentice to William Bradford, of the city of New York, Printer, "with him to live and (after the manner of an apprentice) to serve from the first day of January —Anno Domini One thousand seven hundred and twenty-six—till the full Term of Eight years be compleated and Ended," with the usual pledges to serve as an apprentice; his master binding himself that during the said term he should "by the best means or Method that he can Teach or Cause the said Apprentice to be Taught, the Art or Mystery of a Printer and Book-Binder," he to furnish him during the said term "with sufficient Meat, Drink, Apparel, Lodging and washing fitting for an apprentice and at the Expiration of said Term of Eight years shall give to said Apprentice two suits of Apparel one of them to be new." The boy seems to have found his service a hard one, for in the "New York Gazette" of May 21, 1733, Bradford advertised him as having run away. It is not unlikely that he wandered to Philadelphia and found employment in the office of Benjamin Franklin. That shrewd judge of boys and men afterwards proved himself to be a substantial backer and life-long friend of the Jersey printer. On February 26, 1741-2, Franklin formed a copartnership with him "for the Carrying on the Business of Printing in the City of New-York," for the term of "Six Years from the Day on which he, the said James Parker, shall be in possession of a Printing-Press, Types and Materials in the City of New-York aforesaid, provided by the said Benjamin Franklin," who was to furnish a printing press, with its appurtenances, and four hundred weight of letter, delivered at New York to Parker. The business and working part of the printing was to be under the management and control of Parker. The supplies, rent, etc., were to be divided into three equal parts, two-thirds to be defrayed by Franklin, and the other third by Parker. The profits were to be divided on the like

in the heading, the symbol being printed from different cuts, one of them enclosed within rules. The type also has been reset. Another edition has no such device in the heading. All three of these issues have the same title, "The Constitutional Courant," and are dated above the heading, "Saturday, September 21, 1765, Numb. or Num. 1." A copy with the device in the heading, in the Ridgway Branch of the Philadelphia Library Company, has a note under the colophon, in the handwriting of Du Simitiere: "This is the Original, Published in New York." Most of the copies extant consist of two pages, of three columns each. In the Library just named there is a copy having but one page, with three columns, and lacking the device. At the end Du Simitiere has printed: "This was published in Philadelphia." Still another edition has two pages, with two wide columns and one narrow column. Some years ago I located two copies, of different issues, in the Harvard Library; one in the Boston Athenæum, and one in the Massachusetts Historical Society—making four in all in this intellectual center; one at Yale; one in the Lenox Library, New York; two, of different issues, in the Philadelphia Library, Ridgway Branch; one in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania; and one in my own collection, the last since consumed in the Paterson fire of 1902. This leaves nine in America; perhaps there are more. I found six copies in the House of Commons papers in London, probably sent over by Governor Colden, and I think one in the Public Record Office.

### The Work of the Woodbridge Press.

I have listed seventy-nine issues of the Woodbridge Press, from 1754 to 1770, inclusive. Of these, two were issued in 1776, with the imprint of Samuel F. Parker, James Parker's son. Twenty-five of them were occasional orations, sermons, discourses, and the like. The rest were the acts and votes of the Legislature. The two works mentioned above were the most compre-

of New Jersey:—I had told him seven years ago, if he had it printed by me, I would go to Burlington to do it:—A few Weeks ago, he claim'd my Promise, and as I have not much Work here, and I was otherwise strongly invited thither, upon deliberating of it,—I apprehended, that the Printing Materials of Ben: Mecom's which were in my Store Room in New York, if you wanted them for any Cause, they would be handier for you at Burlington, than at NYork, but that, if not, I would take them myself and pay you for them:—They are indeed valued in B. Mecom's Book, as they cost new, whereas they are not quite so: However, I apprehended, we should not differ about them; and if you did not chuse to let me have them, I could but allow you for the little Use I might make of them till called for: I went to New York, and this Day Week shipp'd them on board of a sloop to go round by Water to Philadelphia, in order that they might not be bruised by Land Carriage:—I hope they will get there safe tho' this Month is a precarious Season, but as its but a little Way, I flatter myself they will be safe:—. . . . I shall take two or three of my Boys with me, and leave my Wife here, as also my Son with this Printing-Office if happily he may get or do as much Work as will maintain him. it is probable I shall finish in 5 or 6 Months, or perhaps sooner, unless more Work than I expect should offer; and if any such Encouragement should offer, it is not improbable but I may remove thither entirely.

P. S. April 2, 1765 . . . The printing Material which I shipped round, are arrived safe at Burlington, and I am going to set off for that place as soon as y$^{e}$ Roads will let me;

Burlington. April 25, 1765 . . . In my last to you, I acquainted you of my intention to remove the Press and printing Materials, late B. Mecom's to this Place, and of my having shipped them accordingly:—By a small Pamphlet, you will receive from the Gov$^{r}$ you will perceive it done:—I am just now finishing it:—I then told you, I apprehended, that if you were desirous of doing any Thing else with them, they would be handy here; but if you inclined to part with them if such Prospect appeared that I could purchase them, I would:—We had some Design of doing a News paper here, but the News of the Killing Stamp, has struck a deadly Blow to all my Hopes on that Head.— . . . . I should not have come to Burlington, where my Family of Boys only are with me, but for the Governor's Desire, and a Book I am going to print for Sam: Smith, Esq$^{r}$ called *The History of New Jersey*, which I had promised him to come and do seven years ago, if he proceeded on with it.—I might probably have removed for good, as the printing Business is so very frivolous and triffling at Woodbridge, but

Thus we see that Parker *did not* remove his printing plant from Woodbridge to Burlington, but that he set up an independent establishment there for the purpose not only of printing Smith's History, but of doing other printing as well.

As I have said, it is a pretty story.

Non é vero, é ben trovato.

Parker continued his outfit at Burlington until his death, July 2, 1770, in his fifty-sixth year. He had been a great sufferer for several years from the gout. He was buried the day after his death, with much pomp, at Woodbridge. Besides the press and types at Burlington, he left one press at New Haven, two at New York and one at Woodbridge, all of which he bequeathed to his son. "The New York Gazette or Weekly Post-Boy," in giving a brief account of his death and burial, added this scanty characterization: "Mr. Parker has carried on the Printing Business, chiefly in New-York, and some Time in New Jersey, for about 30 Years, and was eminent in his Profession. He possessed a sound Judgment, & extensive Knowledge: He was industrious in Business, upright in his Dealings, charitable to the Distressed, and has left a fair Character, on which we have neither Time nor Room to enlarge." Thomas says: "Parker was a correct and eminent printer . . . he possessed a sound judgment, and a good heart; was industrious in business, and upright in his dealings."

Immediately on the death of Parker, a petition was presented to the Assembly of New Jersey, dated September 28, 1770, by Samuel F. Parker, his son, stating that the printing office at Woodbridge had devolved on him, and praying the house to appoint him their printer. The next day, Isaac Collins memorialized the Assembly that having been informed of the death of the late James Parker, he had removed his printing office from Philadelphia to Burlington, and asked to be appointed their printer. Three days later a vote was taken on the question, eight members voting for young Parker,

twenty-six shillings per year; 3. The Legislature to guarantee seven hundred subscribers within six months; 4. A Cross-Post to be established from the Printing Office, to the nearest Continental post office at the expense of the State; 5. The printer and four workmen to be exempted from service in the militia. These recommendations were adopted, and the first number of this subsidized newspaper was issued to the world, December 5, 1777. It was a neatly-printed four-page sheet, four columns to the page. Collins removed his printing plant to Trenton with the issue for March 4, 1778. He received such feeble support that in July, 1783, he discontinued the publication. He resumed, however, in a number for Tuesday, December 9, 1783, and continued until Monday, November 27, 1786, when with Number 446 he suspended publication for the second and last time. He continued, nevertheless, to print at Trenton, so late as 1796, holding the office of public printer during most of that time. Among the issues of his Trenton press were a compilation of the laws, 1776-1783, printed in 1784 in a large folio; Ramsey's History of the Revolution of South Carolina, in two very creditable octavo volumes; a well printed octavo New Testament in 1788; another edition of the New Testament in the same year in 16mo., of which I am fortunate enough to be the owner of the only copy extant. His edition of the Bible in quarto, published in 1791, was a most formidable undertaking, and was a highly creditable specimen of typography, enjoying a deserved popularity for thirty or forty years. He issued an octavo edition of the Bible in 1793. Altogether, the issues of his press at Burlington were fifty in number; while those at Trenton foot up more than one hundred and thirty.

Isaac Collins was born 2d mo. 16, 1746, in New Castle County, Delaware. He was apprenticed to James Adams, printer, in Wilmington, Delaware, and at his request, in his twentieth year entered the office of William Rind, at Williamsburg, Virginia. He removed to

his estate to his son, Shelly, "if he returns within ten years after my decease."

Abraham Blauvelt was a very industrious printer, doing much and good work. His principal book was an edition of the "Laws of the State of New Jersey, revised and published under the authority of the State Legislature, by William Paterson," printed in 1800, in a huge folio—title, one leaf, pp. xxii, 455, (32)—the type-page being $7\frac{5}{8}$ by 13 inches. Blauvelt was an educated man, graduating at Queen's (now Rutgers) College in 1789. He died at Quibbletown, near New Market, N. J., March 23, 1838, after a long and distressing illness. He "always maintained an honorable distinction with his contemporaries," says a Newark newspaper in announcing his death.

### Some Later Newspapers of Trenton.

The discontinuance of the "New-Jersey Gazette" was sorely felt by many of its former clientele. To satisfy this want, and probably to enhance their chances of getting some of the public printing, a new paper was started, probably May 15, 1787, with the title "The Trenton Mercury, and the Weekly Advertiser," by Frederick C. Quequelle and George M. Wilson. The name was subsequently altered to "The Federal Post, or, the Trenton Weekly Mercury," which is the title of Numb. 13, Vol. II, Total Numb. 65, Tuesday, August 5, 1788. Its pages were at first 10 by 16 inches, but on October 3, 1788, the editors informed their subscribers that on account of the scarcity of paper, it was necessary to reduce the newspaper in size (to 9 by 15 inches), but to make up for this it would be printed twice a week, being the first semi-weekly in New Jersey. The name was now abbreviated to "The Federal Post." On October 21, the weekly publication was resumed, in larger size. The latest number known is January 27, 1788 (1789), Total Numb. 85. There are nineteen separate issues in the New Jersey State Library, and three in the Antiquarian Society.

In March, 1791, appeared the "New-Jersey State Gazette," published by George Sherman and John Mershon, who about three years later sold out to Matthias Day, the issue for Wednesday, September 17, 1794, Vol. III, No. 106, appearing under his name. The title was changed between May 31, 1796, No. 195, and July 19, 1796, No. 202, to "The State Gazette and New-Jersey Advertiser." On July 9, 1798, it was bought by Gershom Craft and William Black, who changed the name to "The Federalist: New-Jersey Gazette," starting a new series of numeration, the first issue, Vol. I, No. 1, being dated Monday evening, July 9, 1798. The next number contains the advertisement, dated July 14, 1798, that William Black had sold out to Craft, "after the first side of the paper was struck off." In the issue of Monday evening, October 8, 1798, it is announced with much satisfaction, "One thousand and eighty copies of the *Federalist*, are this week struck off, for the supply of subscribers," and we are assured by the printer that "interest did not prompt him to the present undertaking, but a desire of being useful to his fellow citizens." The "Federalist" was continued until June 23, 1800, the last issue under that title being No. 103.

In the meantime, George Sherman, John Mershon and I. Thomas started a new paper entitled "New-Jersey State Gazette," the earliest known issue being No. 6, Vol. I, Tuesday, April 9, 1799, from which it is to be inferred that the first number appeared March 5, 1799. It was announced in the prospectus that the paper was printed at the former office of Matthias Day, who before this had removed to Newark. Thomas was a nephew and namesake of the famous Worcester printer.

The publishers of these two rival papers very sensibly concluded that there would be more money in the business by uniting the two offices, and accordingly on June 30, 1800, there appeared "The Federalist, and New Jersey State Gazette," the titles of the two papers being thus

cleverly merged. The prospectus informing the public of the change was signed G. Craft, G. Sherman, J. Mershon and I. Thomas, and the firm name was given in the imprint as Sherman, Mershon, Thomas and Craft. The first issue was Vol. II, No. 71. Craft withdrew from the new firm the following September, the remaining partners continuing the publication. The paper is still published, as the "Trenton Daily Gazette."

### Some Later Burlington Printers.

It was twelve years after Collins left Burlington, before another printer ventured into that field, the proximity of Philadelphia discouraging such attempts. Isaac Neale and Daniel Lawrence, two enterprising young men from Philadelphia, began the publication of "The Burlington Advertiser, or Agricultural and Political Intelligencer," Vol. I, Numb. 1, Tuesday, April 13, 1790. This was a really handsome newspaper of four pages, three wide columns to the page, well-printed, on good paper, with new type. Lawrence withdrew from the firm July 7, 1791, and the paper was continued thereafter by Neale alone. He held bravely on five months longer, but in his issue of December 6, while returning "his sincere thanks to those gentlemen who have contributed to the support of the paper since its commencement," he announces that he "is sorry to inform them, that on account of the small number of subscribers, he finds himself under the necessity of declining the publication thereof at least for a few months, when, if he should meet with sufficient encouragement, it will be re-commenced on an improved plan." Accordingly, he "declined the publication" with Vol. II, Numb. LXXXVIII, Tuesday, Dec. 13, 1791. Of course, he did not "meet with sufficient encouragement" to resume the publication. Neale remained in Burlington four years longer, doing a variety of printing, and doing it very neatly. In 1794 and 1795, H. Kammerer, jun., was associated with him in the business. Altogether, he has thirty-three items cred-

ited to his press. He was succeeded in 1796 by Elderkin & Miller.

Stephen C. Ustick was printing at Philadelphia in 1796 or earlier. In 1799 we find him at Mount Holly, near Burlington. He was a Baptist, and seems to have made a specialty of publishing sermons, and the like, of prominent Baptists of the day. Later he printed at Burlington.

### The First Printing at Newark.

Although Newark was quite an important town in the latter part of the eighteenth century, and on the direct route of travel between Philadelphia and New York, it was not until 1791 that a newspaper was established there. This was "Woods's Newark Gazette and New Jersey Advertiser," printed by John Woods, a pronounced Federalist. No. 5 is dated June 16, 1791, implying that the paper first appeared May 19, 1791. In October, 1793, the importance of the newly established town of Paterson was recognized by a change of title in the paper to "Woods's Newark Gazette, and Paterson Advertiser." In November, 1797, Woods sold out, and the title was again altered to "Newark Gazette, and New Jersey Advertiser," a new numeration beginning with the issue for November 8 of that year. He continued to publish the paper for two or three weeks, when John H. Williams succeeded him and printed the "Gazette" for the "proprietors." Woods removed to New York, and did a little printing up the Hudson River. He returned to New Jersey about 1800, and in that year had a printing office at Elizabeth-town, where he appears to have published another newspaper for a time; but he advertises in the "New Jersey Journal," of Elizabeth-town, under date of March 5, 1804, that "being about to remove out of this State," he again requests "that all those who are in arrears for subscriptions to the *Federal Republican*, Advertising, Handbills, &c., would call and discharge the same previous to the 20th inst.," since he has been at much expense "since

printing business with Shepard Kollock in Elizabethtown. "The Gazette" was continued until May 15, 1798, thus completing one year of publication. It was a fairly well-printed paper, of four pages, with four columns to the page.

Mann changed the name to "The Genius of Liberty," beginning a new numeration, Vol. I, No. 1, May 24, 1798. The imprint directly under the heading reads: "Morris-Town: printed and published by Jacob Mann, nearly opposite the Academy." The appearance of the paper was improved under his management. He continued the paper for three years, or until May 14, 1801, when he retired and went to Trenton, where he established the "Trenton True American," in company with James J. Wilson. Mr. Russell then turned over the printing office at Morristown to his son, Henry P. Russell, who continued the press and newspaper for several years on his own account. The most notable issue of the Morristown press, in the eighteenth century, was an edition of Vicesimus Knox's "Spirit of Despotism," in a neat 12 mo. volume. Jacob Mann (who had returned to Morristown) and ——— Douglass published, in 1805, a very creditable octavo edition of the Bible, which has been sometimes called the "Arminian Testament" because of the reading of Hebrews vi, 4-6: "For it is possible," etc.

### Some Lost and Forgotten Newspapers.

I have sketched for you the outline history of some of the best known early printers and newspapers of New Jersey. From the experience of your Society in gathering its incomparable mass of newspaper files, you can guess some of the difficulties encountered in acquiring the information presented to you in this paper.

Of all the newspapers mentioned, complete files have rarely been preserved. There are several sets of the first, "The New-Jersey Gazette," issued by Collins in 1777-86. His office file, bound in three volumes, he presented to the New York Historical Society in 1815.

The New Jersey Historical Society, the Princeton University Library, and the New York Public Library (Lenox Collection) also have complete files, there thus being four in all.

An approximately complete file could be made up from the scattered numbers of the "New-Jersey Journal," published by Shepard Kollock at Chatham, and afterwards at Elizabethtown. The best file extant is in the hands of a private collector in New York. The Antiquarian Society has a long series of numbers.

A former resident of Newark, on removing to Connecticut, carried with him a nearly perfect file of the early volumes of the "Centinel of Freedom," published at Newark, from 1796. This file he kept, and with praiseworthy industry continued the series until 1852, when he presented the whole collection to the New Jersey Historical Society.

There is nothing like an approximately complete collection of the early New Brunswick newspapers known.

Nor is there a full file of the "Newark Gazette," although a few years ago I acquired from a stranger in North Carolina, a bound volume which had formerly contained fifty or sixty numbers, but from which about twenty-five had been torn out as needed for domestic purposes.

There is a perfect file of Freneau's "Jersey Chronicle," lacking No. 27, but including several supplements, in the New York Historical Society, and the Morristown Library has very appropriately acquired a complete file of the "Morris County Gazette."

But what has become of the remaining issues of these several papers?

And what shall we say of the other newspapers, whose existence in some cases is merely a matter of tradition, and in other instances but little more?

The first "newspaper" in New Jersey was not printed at all, but was, like the early English News-Letters, actually written, the original being "left at Matthew Potter's bar," at Bridgeton, where it might be copied

his old office in New York. There is some mystery about this transaction. Did he actually, as stated by Ford, "remove part of his presses and types to Newark early in September?" Of course it is quite possible. Did he have two sets of the engraved heading, one for Newark and one for New York, or did he merely print this Newark edition in New York for circulation in New Jersey? A file of the Newark issue is preserved in the New York Public Library (Lenox Collection). Proceedings were taken in 1778 by the commissioners of forfeited estates for Essex County and for Morris County, New Jersey, against Hugh Gaine for the confiscation of his property in those counties on the ground that he had violated the law by becoming a "fugitive and offender with the enemy, against his country."

Joseph Lewis, of Morristown, made this entry in his diary, under date of Wednesday, June 30, 1784: "Cloudy & a small shower.—This day David Cree printed the first newspaper that was ever printed in Morristown." The most diligent search has failed to bring to light a copy of this newspaper, or to reveal its title. Moreover, the name of David Cree is utterly unknown in local annals. But in the "New York Gazetteer" of March 17, 1786, appears this advertisement: "To be sold on Wednesday, the fifth of April, at Springfield, New Jersey, Sundry Printing Materials, Formerly belonging to David Cree, distressed for Rent." Springfield is scarcely ten miles from Morristown. It is quite possible that Cree had rashly started a newspaper at the latter place, on the day mentioned in Lewis's diary, but it was so ephemeral that its very name has been forgotten. When he abandoned his printing materials, to be sold for arrears of rent, he journeyed to Philadelphia, where we find him a few months later in a company of Journeymen Printers of that city combining to resist a threatened reduction of their wages to thirty-five shillings per week, and pledging themselves not to "engage to work at any Printing Office in the city or country under the sum of six dollars per week"

and that the publication would be carried on by Alexander M'Kenzie alone. It is said that a year later the paper passed into the hands of John Westcott, a brother of one of the original publishers, who gave it a new name, which, however, is unknown at this date. It is said also that he continued the publication until 1805. The most diligent and persistent investigation has failed to discover a single copy of this forgotten newspaper within New Jersey, and indeed the only issues known to me are six in the Library of Harvard University.

On January 8, 1796, there was published at Newton, in Sussex county, "The Farmer's Journal, and Newton Advertiser," by Eliot Hopkins and William Hurtin, under the firm name of Eliot Hopkins and Co. But one copy of this paper is known to exist in New Jersey, being the issue for September 15, 1797, Vol. II., Number 86. What has become of all the other numbers? Some years ago I caused to be published in a leading Sussex county paper the emphatic statement that but *one copy* of this paper was in existence, and I challenged the production of any other. I hoped for a loud chorus of indignant protests and triumphant holdings forth of numerous copies of the "Journal." But alas! not a single resident of New Jersey came forward to disprove the accuracy of that statement. I did, however, receive from a man out in Wyoming a fragment of the paper in question, which he had derived from his ancestors, and had carried out to the Rocky Mountains among his cherished lares and penates! The Library of Harvard University has something like twenty-four numbers of this forgotten newspaper, the latest bearing date October 17, 1798, Vol. III., Whole No. 140, the publishers being E. Hopkins and P. Smith.

More than forty years ago I talked with an old gentleman who had been editor and printer of a newspaper established in my town in 1825. He said he had heard that after a certain newspaper had been burned out in Paterson in 1824, there had arisen from the flames, as it were, a new paper called the "Phoenix," but he

omission, "seeing that the then particular Emergency called the Printers off as it did likewise Thousands of others belonging to the Province in the service of their King and Country." "The particular Emergency" referred to was the investiture of Fort William Henry by the French and Indians. The delay in issuing the "Gazette" for March 11, 1762, was because the Boston and Hartford Post-rider "was so hindered by the Snow, which in some places was prodigiously deep, especially between Springfield and Hartford, that he did not arrive till Sunday Night. However, he brought the Boston papers a week later than the other Post that came in the Night before." These post-riders from New York to Hartford were "supported by the printers of the Gazette at a great Expence." In the "Gazette" for October 17, 1759, persons indebted to the printer were "earnestly requested immediately to discharge their Accounts, as the Printer is under the greatest difficulties and Distress for Money, not only to carry on his Business, but to pay his just Debts." Another trouble was that "notwithstanding the utmost Endeavours of the Printer, his Boys frequently forgot to carry his Customers their Papers"—an experience which has probably befallen many of my hearers in their younger days in smaller towns than New York.

The early printers had great difficulties in securing paper. When Isaac Collins began the publication of "The New-Jersey Gazette," he found this to be an immediate and most pressing need. In his paper for Wednesday, December 24, 1777, it was announced that "A good price and ready money is given by the Printer hereof, for clean linen rags, and hogs bristle," and this advertisement was repeatedly published, while the "good women" of the State were continually urged to preserve their rags for the paper mill. In the issue for Thursday, April 23, 1778, it was stated that "No more subscriptions can be received at present for this Gazette for want of paper." A frequent embarrassment was the non-arrival of the posts from the Eastward or South,

check the circulation of newspapers and degrade the freemen of this country."

"The Journal" of December 24, 1799, contained this startling intelligence: "Washington, the Friend, the Protector, of his Country, is no more!!! Washington, the Great, the Good, Defunct!"

The appearance of a weekly paper with a "ghost" for the fourth page was accounted for by an "unavoidable accident which there was not time to remedy before the day of printing." A frequent complaint was: "We were hindered in getting out our paper this week because our printer left us last Monday without any explanation." Freneau slipped over one week without issuing his "Jersey Chronicle," with the simple explanation the following week, that it was "on account of sickness." You can imagine the righteous indignation of the publisher who penned this paragraph: "Last Tuesday night, some dastardly villain entered our office and so severely beat our printer that he was unable to work as usual in getting out the paper this week."

But on the whole it must be admitted that the printers of the eighteenth century, with their limited resources, displayed quite as much energy and enterprise in overcoming the obstacles of those days, as do the gigantic printing establishments of the present time, with all their mighty facilities, in meeting fires, earthquakes, dynamite explosions and the like, peculiar to our own times.

### Whence Came the Young Printers?

The printer's art is one of the most conservative of all arts. Many of its customs and technical terms are survivals from mediæval days. You know that in Germany, until recent years, and perhaps even now in the rural districts, it was always the custom when a young man had finished his apprenticeship, for him to start off with the implements of his trade on his back and try to make a living at his vocation away from home for at least a year. This was called his "*Wanderjahr.*"

They were profit-seeking, yes; usually their first object in life was to make a living. But with the vision of youth they saw far ahead, and advocated opinions that blazed the way for many a change in the body politic. They contributed to the unification of the country. Franklin, Parker and Thomas bred up scores of young printers to their ideas, not only of their trade, but of their political beliefs as well. Their apprentices were taught the value of the freedom of the press. This led to the idea of the freedom of the people. These young men came in contact with the ablest, the most intelligent men in the country. They learned from them. They helped spread their views. So they became a power in the land. They were the pioneers who laid the foundations, broad and deep, for that mighty structure which in England has been termed the Fourth Estate, and which in this country has aspired to be the Voice of Public Opinion. Surely, the present generation is largely indebted to these gallant young printers of the eighteenth century. It is but a small return for their efforts thus to rescue their names and their history from oblivion, which has been one of the aims of this paper, and is a special function of the American Antiquarian Society.