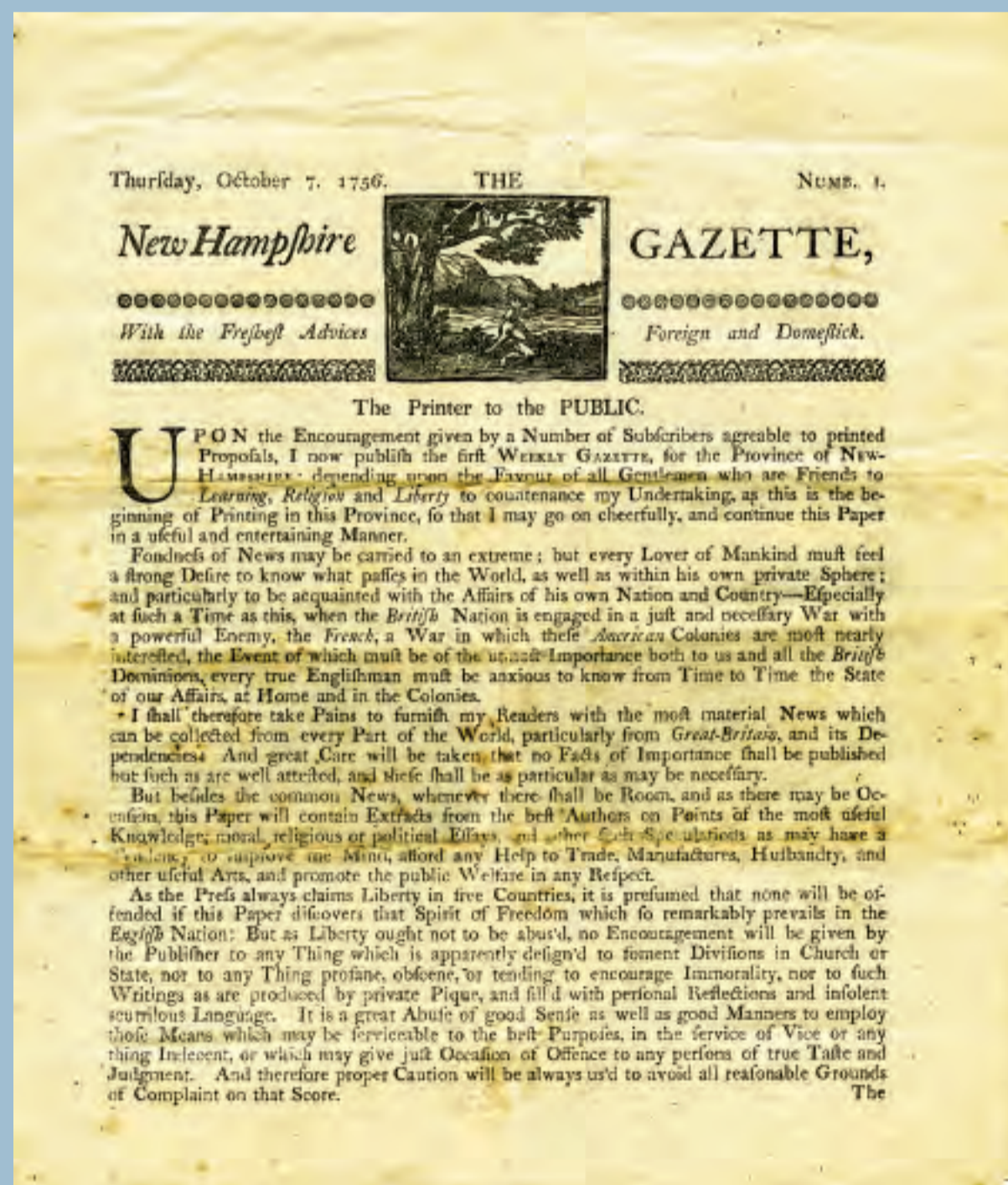




# FIRST PRINTING HOUSE in N.H.

IN THE MID-EIGHTEENTH CENTURY, DANIEL FOWLE (1715-1787) established the first printing press in New Hampshire here in Portsmouth. Fowle began his long career in 1740 in Boston, printing *The American Magazine* and the first New Testament ever printed in America. He was imprisoned in 1754 for printing and selling a pamphlet entitled *Monster of Monsters*, in which criticized members of the Massachusetts House of Representatives. He later published *A Total Eclipse of Liberty*, detailing the injustices he had suffered, and unsuccessfully sued the provincial government for wrongful imprisonment. Years later he was awarded monetary damages for his ordeal.

Invited by prominent residents to set up his press in Portsmouth, Fowle published the first issue of *The New Hampshire Gazette* on October 7, 1756 and continued to do so weekly for thirty years. He printed the first book in New Hampshire entitled *Good News from a Far Country*, was appointed official printer to the Province of New Hampshire, and produced over 450 titles as a printer, publisher, and editor. He resided in Portsmouth until his death in 1787.



## THE NEW HAMPSHIRE GAZETTE

*The New Hampshire Gazette* measured 17 x 10 inches and folded to four pages. Fowle had brought with him from Boston a set of woodcuts of Croxall's *Aesop*, and he used an image relating to the fable of the fox and the crow to ornament the masthead. When it was later damaged, this woodcut was replaced by Aesop's "Jupiter and the Peacock," and later still by the Royal Coat of Arms until the start of the American Revolution. In 1785 Fowle transferred ownership of the newspaper to George Jay Osborn and Fowle's apprentice John Melcher. As of 2011, *The New Hampshire Gazette* is still published biweekly by Steve Fowle, a collateral descendant of Daniel. It is the oldest surviving newspaper in the United States.

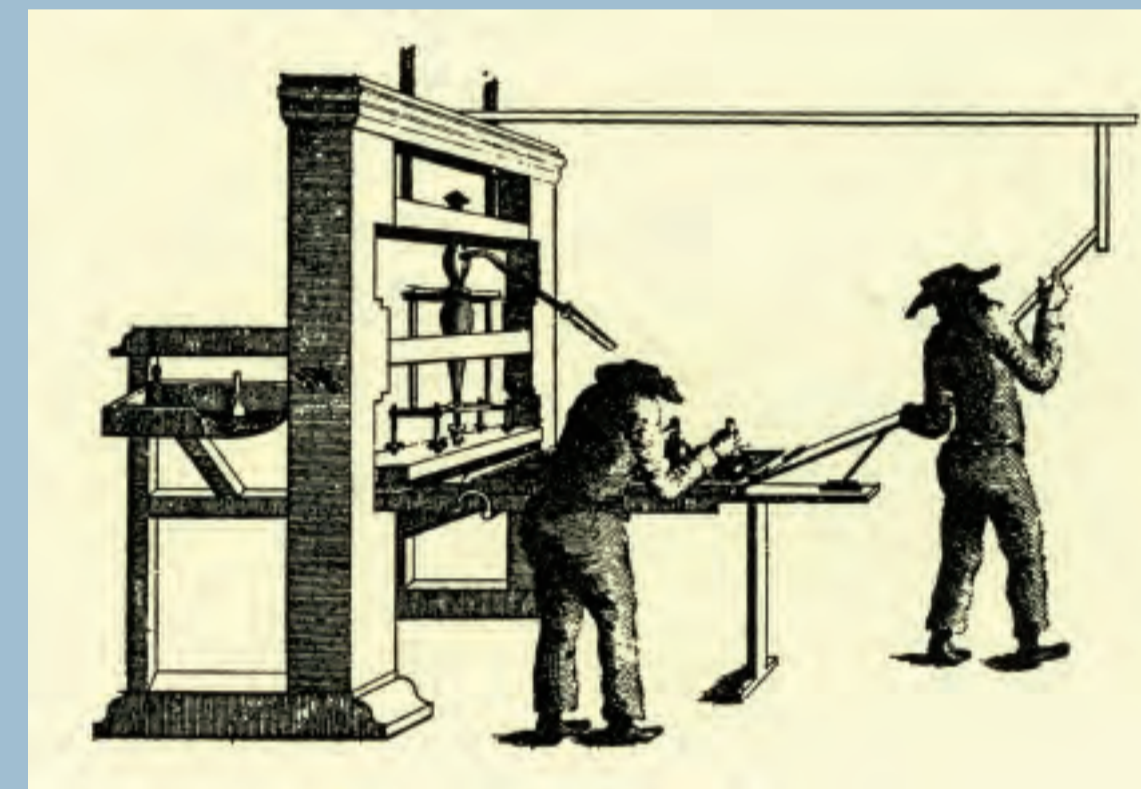
A reprint of the front page of *The New Hampshire Gazette*, 1856. Courtesy of Portsmouth Athenæum.

## DANIEL FOWLE'S PRINTING OFFICE

In this wooden building shown below that stood at the corner of Pleasant, Washington, and Howard Streets, Daniel Fowle installed the colony's first printing press in 1756. Here he published *The New Hampshire Gazette*, the colony's first newspaper. He later moved his press to Paved Street, as Market Street was then called. The building in this image was torn down in 1877 and replaced by the brick house which stands on the site today.



Below: Watercolor by Sarah Haven Foster (1827-1900). Courtesy of Special Collections, Portsmouth Public Library.



## PRESSMEN at WORK

A typical scene (above) of printers using a press similar to that of Daniel Fowle. They are shown inking the type and readying the press for printing.

Engraving, from *Encyclopaedia*, 1st American Edition, Philadelphia, 1790-97.



## DANIEL FOWLE PRESS

Daniel Fowle arrived in Portsmouth with an English Common Press that was previously owned by Thomas Draper of Boston (marked T.D. 1742). He also brought his slave Primus, who worked as his pressman and typesetter for over fifty years. Primus outlived his owner, dying in 1791. In 1841, the press was in the office of John Melcher, former apprentice, partner and heir of Fowle and first State Printer of New Hampshire. It was eventually sold to the Campbell Printing Press Co. of New York City and exhibited at the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago, where it was last seen. Local historians and Fowle descendants remain hopeful that the press will one day be discovered intact and returned to Portsmouth.

Photograph of Daniel Fowle Press at the Columbian Exposition from *The Book of the Fair* by Hubert Howe Bancroft, Chicago, San Francisco: The Bancroft Company, 1893.

Funding for this historic marker was provided by the City of Portsmouth, 2011.

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