

# 18<sup>th</sup> Century American Textile Printers

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## From Newspaper Advertisements

Boston has claimed "America's First Calico Printery" in 1712. Philadelphia is proud of John Hewson, "America's First Calico Printer," who opened in 1774.

There is no way to know who was first. Earlier printers remain unrecorded because there were so few newspapers. Some papers are lost and some printers did not advertise. Following is a list of advertisements. As more papers are digitized more ads will be found.

**1712.** April 23. Geo **Leason** & Thos **Webber** in Boston. *Boston Newsletter* ad for printing "all sorts of linens." Pettit, pg. 90.

**1716.** Francis **Dewing**, Boston. "Printeth calicoes etc." *Montgomery*, page 84.

**1720.** April 18. James **Franklin**, Boston. "Prints Linens, Calicoes, Silks, &c. in good Figures." Dow, page 268.

**1735.** June 16-23. Francis **Gray**, Roxbury, Massachusetts. "Prints all sorts of Calicoes." Dow, page 127.

**1739.** April 12. Wm. **Kitchingman**, an English convict servant man

ran away from Willis & Boyd of Fredericksburgh, VA, "He is by trade a linen printer." *Pennsylvania Gazette*.

**1747.** John **Williams**, Boston.

**1747.** Sarah **Hunt** "linen stamper". Dow, page 268. **Unknown** counterpane stamper" going out of business. Dow, page 261.

**1756.** March 11. John **Hickey** "continues to carry on the business of dyeing and linen stamping as usual, in Second street." *Pennsylvania Gazette*. (Philadelphia? Did he move to Boston or just advertise widely?) In 1756 John Hickey of Dublin advertised wallpaper in *New York Mercury*.

**1759.** John **Hickey** from Dublin, Boston. Linen printer and dyer. Dow, pages 269-70. See **1756**.

**1761.** Mrs. John **Haugen**, Boston "stamps linens china blue or deep blue. etc." Pettit, pages 159, 106.

**1774.** Joseph **Barth**, Philadelphia. Pettit, page 156. Knauss says in Bethlehem, page 133.

June 1. John **Hewson** (1745-1821) "calico



*First Calico Printery Boston 1712.*

"Firsts" are often dubious history. Leason & Weber advertised printing "all sorts of linens" in 1712. A Boston bank used this picture in their advertising in 1941, alluding to that ad. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

printer at Kensington," Philadelphia, advertises he has found some cattle. *PA Gazette*. Hewson retired about 1810; firm closed about 1820. Hewson worked with William **Lang**, son John Hewson Jr. and Nathaniel **Norgrove**.

**Walters & Bedwell** ad "a single gown may be printed..." Germantown, PA. Scharf & Westcott, page 2310 [but see **1775** for more likely date.]

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**1775.** March 13. John **Walters** & Thomas **Bedwell** & Philadelphia. Gillingham. Eaton, page 89. [Out of business in 1777.]

**1777.** March 1. Nathaniel **Norgrove**, Philadelphia, advertises opening manufactory printing linen, cotton calico," Gillingham. [had worked with Hewson.]

**1780.** Herman **Vandausen**. East Greenwich RI. Pettit, page 237. Mentioned in Slater.

Zachariah **Allen**. East Greenwich RI. Pettit, page 237.

Jeremiah **Eddy**. East Greenwich RI. Pettit, page 237.

**Alverson**, Providence RI. Pettit, page 237.

**1781** September 5. Saml **Jennison**. Oxford MA advertises "Printing Linens in Oyl, and with the best of colours, and a diversity of figures, agreeable to the

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European method." *Massachusetts Spy*.

**1782.** Jabez **Grover**, Foxboro, MA. Pettit, page 237.

**1784.** September 18. Henry **Royle** or Royl, Philadelphia. Gillingham, page 109. Pettit page 237. [He sells out by 1787.]

Robert **Taylor** of Lower Merion Township, PA "linen, cotton & calico printer" petitions Commonwealth for a loan, unsuccessfully. *Journal of PA*, 1784, page 253.

**1789.** **Harrison, Ansley & Co.** Philadelphia. "job prints". Montgomery, page 84.

**1790.** Zachariah **Allen**, Providence, RI. Pettit, pg. 178.

**1791.** Nicholas **Mayer**, Philadelphia. Pettit, page 237.

**Pffaffhauser & Schwab**, Philadelphia, Knauss, page 133. [This may be Conrad Pffafhausen (1768-about 1793)]

**1792.** Stephen **Addington**, Springfield, NJ. Pettit, page 237. [Sells out in 1797. Eaton, page 91.]

**1794.** **Schaub Tissot & Dubosque**, Providence, RI. Pettit, page 237.

A Patterson NJ, cotton mill printed calico.

**1795.** William **Codman** NYC. Pettit, page 237.

Archibald Hamilton **Rowan**. Pettit, page 237. [but see **1797**]

**1796.** G. **Mountcastle** Philadelphia. Pettit, page 237.

**Unknown.** Pompton, NJ Pettit, pg 237

**1797.** March 13, Archibald Hamilton **Rowan** (1751-1834) first ad in Wilmington, Delaware. Eaton, page 91. [Sells out in 1799.]

June 27, **Oakford & La Collay**(??), Darby, PA. Gillingham.



A custom table might be the largest piece of equipment a block printer owned. The apprentice seems quite young.

Wm. **Combs & Co.** Pettit, page 237.

Robert **Newell** (& Peter **Schaub**) East Greenwich, RI. Pettit, page 237.

John **Thurman**, Johnsbury, NY. *Historical & Statistical Gazetteer of New York State* (Syracuse: 1860) pg 67.

**1798.** William **Davy** & Josiah **Roberts** & Co, Germantown, PA. "Calicoes printed at Germantown equal to any London work." Gillingham, pp/109-110. [May have been retailers not printers]

## References

Several authors did extensive research in 18th century newspapers, primarily Dow and Pettit.

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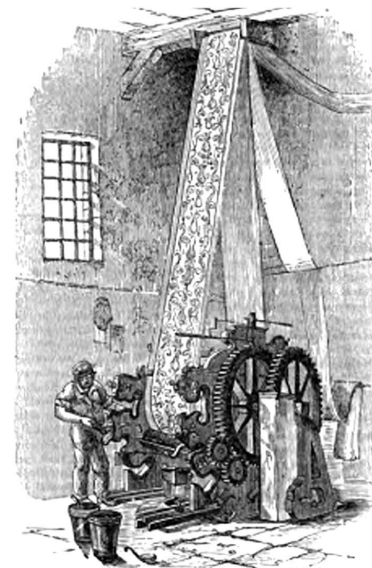
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An early roller printing machine. The first cylinder machines were installed in America in the 19<sup>th</sup> -century.