

194 GREEN, TIMOTHY – [TIMOTHY GREEN IV]

Printer & Publisher

Fredericksburg

Founder and publisher of the *Virginia Herald* (1787-1819) at Fredericksburg; in his last years with Ebenezer P. Cady (070), William F. Gray (192), and James D. Harrow (204).

Timothy Green was a member of the most prominent print-trade family in early America. That lineage began with his great-great-grandfather Samuel Green Sr. (or Samuel I, 1615-1702), who was given control in 1649 of the first press brought to New England. Two of his sons, Bartholomew and Timothy (or Timothy I, 1679-1766), and a son-in-law, John Draper, followed him into the trade through that Cambridge press. In 1713, Timothy I was invited to become printer to the colonial government of Connecticut, a post that he held until 1751. Under his guidance and that of his familial successors, his New London press was a training ground for many of the printers who became renowned figures in Revolutionary and early-Republic America. One of those tradesmen was his youngest son, Jonas Green; in 1740, he took over the Annapolis printing office originally conducted by William Parks (321), the first authorized printer in Virginia, where he trained William Rind (358), the Revolutionary era printer who challenged Alexander Purdie (345) and John Dixon Sr. (140) in Williamsburg. Timothy I's middle son, Samuel (or Samuel II, 1706-52), was also trained in his New London shop and worked with his brother Timothy (or Timothy II, 1703-63) after their father's 1751 retirement; while Samuel II never conducted a press of his own, he had three sons who did: Samuel III (1743-99), Thomas (1735-1812), and Timothy III (1737-96), the father of the Fredericksburg printer considered here.

In 1763, Timothy III took control of his family's New London press from his uncle Timothy II; he continued operating that office until 1793. He had married Rebecca Spooner that same year, just before the birth of their first son, Timothy IV. The scion was raised and trained in his father's office before setting out in 1780, at age seventeen, to aid his maternal uncle, Judah P. Spooner, in his new role as the printer for the state of Vermont and as publisher of the *Vermont Gazette and Green Mountain Post-Boy* in Westchester. After that journal's demise in 1782, young Green returned to New London to await another chance for trade independence elsewhere. In late 1786, he chose Fredericksburg as that opportunity, leaving the family shop behind, but apparently relying on its continuing support.

The publishing firm that Timothy IV established in the Rappahannock River port was that of Timothy Green & Co., indicating that he had unnamed financial partners, probably familial ones given his non-native origins. Such a foundation was a substantial and unprecedented one upon which to build a Virginia press office, and it gave Green an unequaled advantage in dealing with challenges of the economic ebb and flow seen in the early-Republic era. Moreover, the weekly he first issued in June 1787 – the *Virginia Herald and Fredericksburg Advertiser* – put him at the center of the town's merchant community almost immediately. As with Virginia's other journals in the 1780s, the *Herald* was first and foremost a mercantile advertiser, a paper designed to support and advance a town's businesses. That *raison d'etre* also meant that as the political divisions of the 1790s emerged and grew, Green's *Herald* became a major Federalist voice in Virginia, consistent with the views then emanating from

his brother's *New London Gazette* as well. As such, Green's journal became the publisher trusted in December 1799 with the single longest and most detailed account of George Washington's death published before the 1840s. Still, the *Virginia Herald* was repeatedly challenged by a series of Republican papers in Fredericksburg from 1796 onward; however, those efforts all failed because they did not have the financial or societal foundation that Green's operation had developed. These factors established a prominence that the *Virginia Herald* would never relinquish.

As Green aged though, he wanted to incorporate younger men into his business, relieving himself of the burden of his office's daily operations while auditioning potential successors, though not yet actually transferring ownership of his office. In mid-1811, he turned to his New London roots for his first candidate: Ebenezer P. Cady. Trained in the Green family's offices in New Haven (under uncle Thomas) and New London (under brother Samuel III), Cady had acquired the *Connecticut Gazette* in 1805 from Samuel III as part of the settlement of Timothy III's estate; after selling the paper back to the family in 1808, he became Samuel III's bookstore manager. That loyalty and flexibility kept Cady in the Green network for the rest of his print-trade career, starting with a call from Timothy IV to join him in Virginia. On January 1, 1812, the *Virginia Herald* became a production of the firm of Green & Cady, with the younger Cady carrying on the bulk of the work. Cady successfully steered the *Herald* through the travails accompanying the War of 1812. But after the war, Cady turned away from journalism to return to bookselling, evidently his greater interest; in July 1815, he formed a partnership with William F. Gray, a part of the Alexandria family of booksellers who was then managing Green's attendant bookstore. This transaction gave Gray the wherewithal to replace Cady as partner to Green that same summer; but after two years in this arrangement, Gray set out on his own, giving way to James D. Harrow, a Green-trained Fredericksburg-native whose father, Gilbert Harrow, was principal of a prestigious local academy.

In these three, Green identified and employed talented young men in the same mold as those who associated with the Green family network in earlier times; but only one could succeed him. Cady continued in Fredericksburg as a bookseller until in 1823 when he returned to Connecticut to manage his family's large farmstead. After a second brief stint in 1819 as Green's partner, Gray eventually moved on to the law and to Texas, becoming a noted figure there later in the 1830s. In the end, Harrow became Green's chosen successor as proprietor of the *Virginia Herald*; he bought out his master and patron when Green at last retired from the printing trade in 1820 at age fifty-seven.

In retirement, Green was still a respected and influential figure in Fredericksburg, drawing in part on personal tragedy, or it seems. After the death of his first wife and the premature deaths of three of his ten children, Green became a leader in Fredericksburg's Methodist community, someone who was often noted for his piety and devotion. He also became a patriarchal figure as his two sons became successful businessmen in their own rights – even though breaking with family traditions by not following their father into the trade – while five of his daughters married prominent men. Green continued to be a major property owner in town after 1820. And he may also have retained some influence over the *Virginia Herald*, as his long retirement coincided with Harrow's lengthy ownership of that paper.

Indeed, the old Connecticut-born printer died just six months before Harrow did in 1851, and his estate sold the *Herald*, some sixty-five years after Green had founded it.

Personal Data

Born: Sept. 23 1763 New London, Connecticut.
Married [1]: ca. 1783 Elizabeth Richards @ New London, CT. (d. 1816)
Married [2]: June 1817 Lucy Carter @ Stafford County, Virginia.
Died: Jan. 11 1851 Fredericksburg, Virginia.
Children: By Elizabeth: Henry F. (1785-1820), Elizabeth R. (1787-1813), Francis (1788-1841), Mary Ann (1791-1811), Emily (1792-1841), Rebecca S. (1793-1867), Harriett (1797-1825), Julia M (1799-1805), Ann Lee (1800-03).
By Lucy: Timothy Jr. (1818-30).

Sources: Imprints; Brigham; Cappon; Queznel, *Fredericksburg Checklist*; Fredericksburg Hustings Court Deed Books; Quinn, *Fredericksburg*; Johnson, *Fredericksburg United Methodist Church*; Kiessel, "The Green Family of Printers," (1950); *Marriage Records of Fredericksburg*.

Histories of the Green family of printers vary in their numbering of the first names repeated between generations; this entry numbers those names from their first occurrence, not from subsequent ones.