

## Keith, Robert <sup>[1]</sup>



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## Keith, Robert

by Thomas A. Bowers, 1988

fl. 1782–85



Publisher's imprint of Robert Keith, publisher of the *North Carolina Gazette* (New Bern, NC), issue dated September 2, 1784. North Carolina Digital Collections.

<sup>[2]</sup>Robert Keith, printer and journalist, originally from Philadelphia, went to Charleston, S.C., in 1782 and became a partner of John McIver, Jr. He settled in New Bern in 1783. From [James Davis](#) <sup>[3]</sup>, the state's first printer and first journalist, he borrowed both equipment and newspaper title; the first issue of Keith's *North Carolina Gazette, or Impartial Intelligencer and Weekly General Advertiser* appeared on 28 Aug. 1783. In the first issue, he remarked that the state had been without a newspaper for several years—James Davis had ceased publication of his *North Carolina Gazette* <sup>[4]</sup> in November 1778—and he felt the citizens were eager to have one again. He gave his address as "near the Church," the same address used by Davis and his son Thomas. In addition to his newspaper, Keith also had a bookstore and trained printers' apprentices. One of them apparently was [Francis Xavier Martin](#) <sup>[5]</sup>, who later published his own version of the *North Carolina Gazette* before becoming a well-known author and jurist in the Louisiana Territory.

The last known issues of the *Gazette* bearing Keith's imprint are dated early September 1784, and he evidently ceased publication soon afterwards. It is not known whether he continued in the printing trade, but James Davis's will of 1785 bequeathed his printing equipment to his son Thomas and mentioned that some was in the hands of Robert Keith.

### References:

- C. S. Brigham, *History and Bibliography of American Newspapers, 1690–1820*, vol. 2 (1947).
- C. C. Crittenden, *North Carolina Newspapers before 1790* (1928).
- D. C. McMurtrie, *A History of Printing in the United States* (1936).
- Stephen B. Weeks, *The Press of North Carolina in the 18th Century* (1981).

### Additional Resources:

Robert Keith. *North Carolina Gazette or Impartial Intelligencer and Weekly General Advertiser* (New Bern, NC), September 2, 1784. <http://digital.ncdcr.gov/cdm/ref/collection/p15016coll1/id/15366> <sup>[2]</sup> (accessed June 6, 2014).

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### Subjects:

[Biographies](#) <sup>[6]</sup>

[Publishers and Printers](#) <sup>[7]</sup>

[Writers, journalists, and editors](#) <sup>[8]</sup>

### Authors:

[Bowers, Thomas A.](#) <sup>[9]</sup>

### Origin - location:

[Craven County](#) <sup>[10]</sup>

[New Bern](#) <sup>[11]</sup>

### From:

[Dictionary of North Carolina Biography](#), University of North Carolina Press, <sup>[12]</sup>

1 January 1988 | Bowers, Thomas A.

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