

Charles Fothergill

From the moment he walked away from his father's business in ivory brushes and combs in favour of artistic and scientific pursuits, **young Charles Fothergill's life was characterized by one failure after another.**

Nevertheless, his life was a worthy one, and his contributions to early Upper Canada should not be forgotten. He was a naturalist, artist, writer, businessman, office holder, newspaperman, publisher and politician. Given this list, it is not surprising that **his chief failing seems to have been dreaming too big**, leading to disaster in his business ventures and disappointment in his artistic and scientific endeavours.

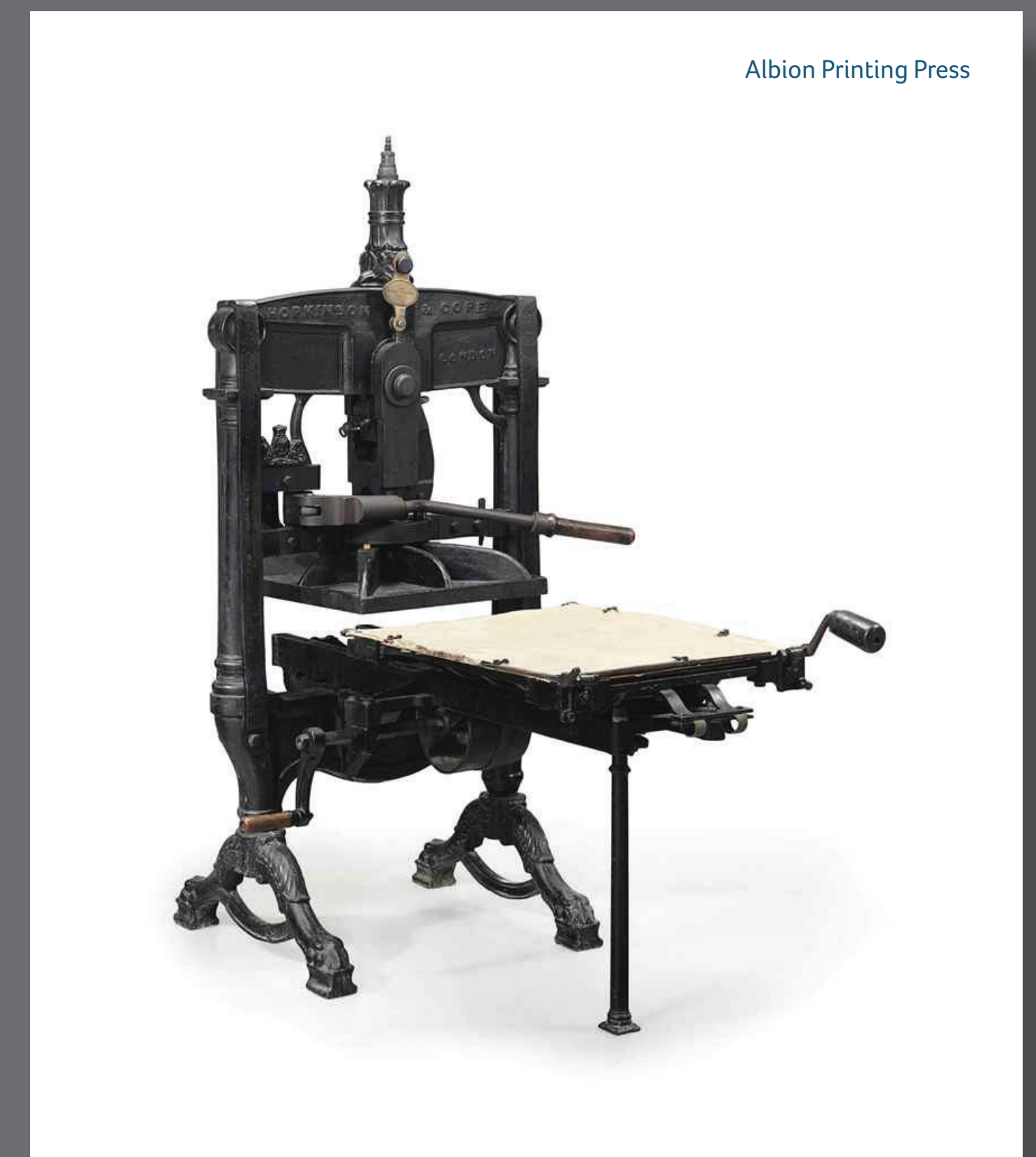
Charles was born in York, England in 1782, into a family which traced its heritage back at least to one of William the Conqueror's generals. Perhaps that brought expectations to the boy which he was generally unable to fulfill.

By the time he immigrated to Canada in 1817, he had already tried his hand, unsuccessfully, at acting, farming, studying to become a doctor, and horse breeding. His attempts to get a commission in the Royal Navy also failed. Canada offered a new start, and a promising one when he was granted 1,200 acres on Rice Lake by the Lieutenant Governor.

Fothergill settled in **Port Hope and was soon named the town's first Post Master.** He quickly became known as an active and generous citizen, and over time established a number of businesses. But once again he overextended, and lost them.

Political connections led to his being named **King's Printer in 1822.** This gave him, for the first time, two valuable tools, a steady income and a printing press. But when, in 1824, he won a controversial election for a seat in the Legislature, the seeds for failure were again sown. In 1826, due to the political positions he took, **he was fired as King's Printer.**

Rice Lake - Fothergill



“...an active and generous citizen.”