
Bacon's Laws the Typographical Monument of Colonial Maryland

In the same spirit of thankfulness in which the ancient printers appended "Laus Deo" to their colophons, it is headed by the words "Glory to God" in Greek, a doxology which, without doubt, Bacon uttered with a full heart when he had affixed his name to the attestation.

One likes to think of Parson Bacon with his six big books on a barrow in front of him proceeding from the office of the Provincial Court in the old Treasury Building, down the Duke of Gloucester Street to Jonas Green's residence and shop in Charles Street, and there plumping down his folios with that feeling of relief which comes to all editors when for the time being they have divested themselves of their burdens by laying them on the printer. It is safe to presume, while we are drawing pictures, that this particular printer on this hot day of July would not have permitted the Parson to leave his premises until he had exercised that skill in the concoction of refreshment which had gained him the title of "punchmaker-in-general" of the Annapolis Tuesday Club.

THE PRINTING OF THE BOOK

The progress of Bacon's book through the press of Jonas Green was interrupted several times before its completion in 1765 and its belated publication in 1766. After the book had been in the press some months the Board of Trade renewed its demands for the Maryland laws, and from the reply which Sharpe returned to that body through the Proprietary, one learns that the slow importation of paper was delaying the work.¹ For this contretemps, Sharpe blamed Mr. Anthony Bacon, the merchant brother of the compiler, through whose house in London the paper had been ordered by Mr. Lancelot Jacques of Annapolis. Nearly a year passed before, in March 1764, he sent to Secretary Calvert the first thirty-four sheets of the book to be drawn from the press.² In the letter which accompanied them he preferred with some diffidence what seems to have been a modest request in behalf of the printer, when he wrote the following sentences:

"As Mr. Green the Printer takes great pains to perform his part well & intimated to me that he wanted a Stamp or plate to sett off & adorn the Frontispiece or Title Page with His Ldp's or the Province Arms, I could not help telling him that I would desire you to send One well engraved on Block Tin or Letter Metal for that purpose & as it cannot I think cost much I hope you will put it in my power to gratify him. The Figure should I think be near twice as large as the Coat of Arms in the Frontispiece of the inclosed Book covered with blue paper & I apprehend the Supporters & also the Motto ought to be the same as on the Great Seal."

¹ Sharpe Correspondence, June 4, 1763, *Archives of Maryland*, 14: 97.

² Sharpe Correspondence, March 13, 1764, *Archives of Maryland*, 14: 151.