
A History of Printing in Colonial Maryland

GODDARD IN BALTIMORE

In the year 1773 Baltimore Town was a small city of about five thousand inhabitants. Its growth in size and importance had been notably rapid in the past decade, but it was not until after the conclusion of the Revolution that it became one of the great mercantile centers of America. At this time it had never had a newspaper, and since its foundation only three printers had been established within its limits. Its citizens therefore must have read with quickened interest an advertisement which was carried in the *Maryland Gazette* of Annapolis on October 20, 1772, in which William Goddard, already well known throughout the Province, writing from Baltimore Town, announced that on the invitation of many gentlemen of that city he had "engaged a suitable printing apparatus" with which he intended to prosecute the printing business there in all its branches in English and other languages, and particularly that he proposed "to publish by subscription, with all possible expedition, a weekly newspaper, under the title of the *Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser*, at the moderate price of ten shillings current money per annum . . . to be published regularly every Saturday morning."

Nearly seven months passed, however, before Goddard was ready for business. On May 12, 1773, he advertised again in the *Maryland Gazette* that printing was performed "in a neat, correct and expeditious manner, on the most reasonable terms, by William Goddard, at his printing office, at the corner of South and Market Streets,¹ nearly opposite to Mrs. Chilton's in Baltimore-Town." He begged in the same advertisement that all subscriptions to the *Maryland Journal* which had been received by his agents be sent to him, so that he might know how many papers to print, and in conclusion he promised that the paper would be published as soon as proper posts or carriers had been established.

In the first number of the *Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser*, published August 20, 1773, Goddard apologized for the delay in the appearance of the paper, and asked consideration of the many disadvantages under which it had been brought out, notably his inability, because of illness, to establish a special post between Baltimore and Philadelphia. He proclaimed his intention of publishing any contributions received by him in favor of liberty and the rights of man, provided the language were decent and compatible with good government, but he affirmed resolutely that his paper was to be without party bias. Among the advertisements in the first

¹ The corner known to the present generation of Baltimoreans as the site of the Sun Iron Building, the printing and editorial office of the *Baltimore Sun*, until its destruction in the fire of February 1904.