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*William and Mary Goddard, Printers and Public Servants*

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Franklin was held throughout the colonies served in a measure to keep critical tongues silent, Goddard, either because he did not share in the general admiration of one who was the friend of his personal enemies, or because he was bolder than other disaffected publishers, came out in an attack upon the system which caused some perturbation among the friends of the absentee Postmaster General. On March 31, 1774, a correspondent in Boston wrote to Franklin enclosing papers in which were contained one of these attacks on the Post Office, to which he added the following comment: "the attack . . . by all I can learn originated with Mr. Goddard, and he says is adopted at the Southward. I can't yet learn what encouragement it meets here, he has proposed a subscription to pay Riders to go from hence to Hartford to receive the Mails and bring them to Boston, to be deliver'd to such Post Masters as shall be chosen by the subscribers. . . ." <sup>1</sup> From another source one learns that the proposals had been kindly received in Boston, for a month after this, Governor Franklin wrote to his father, lately dismissed from his office of Postmaster General, <sup>2</sup> in the following words:

"Your Friends in Boston, as I am told, before they heard of your running any Risk of a Dismission were encouraging Goddard in his new Post Office, which if successful must have deprived you of your Salary as Postmr. Genl. even if you had not been deprived of your office."<sup>3</sup>

In view of these revelations there remains less cause for astonishment that Franklin should have passed over Goddard when, a year or so later, he was filling the higher offices of the American postal system. It should be said, however, that Goddard does not seem to have been instigated in his attacks on the Post Office by any personal feeling against Franklin. In an announcement, published in the *Maryland Journal* on July 16, 1774, he referred indignantly to the treatment which had been accorded the former Postmaster General, and asserted that the American people, "since the infamous Dismission of the worthy Dr. Franklin, and the hostile attack on the Town and Port of Boston, are unalterably determined to support a new constitutional Post Office on the ruins of one that hath for its Basis the slavery of America."

It is probable that the newspaper attack on the Post Office which has been referred to as having been transmitted to Franklin by a Boston correspondent on March 31, 1774, was the same in essentials as that which appeared in the *Maryland Journal* on July 2, 1774, wherein Goddard announced that,

<sup>1</sup> Franklin Papers, IV: 12, in American Philosophical Society: Tuthill Hubbard to B. F., March 31, 1774.

<sup>2</sup> Franklin's transmission to Massachusetts of the contents of letters to the British Ministry from certain Boston loyalists had been visited upon him by his dismissal from the office of postmaster general early in this year.

<sup>3</sup> Franklin Papers, IV: 17, American Philosophical Society: William Franklin to B. F., May 3, 1774.