

Not the least particle of evidence exists to indicate the possession of a press by the Jesuits before 1655, or by the Province in 1660. Scharf's claims in this matter were dictated by his sentiment of intense local pride, or as has been said, by his misunderstanding of the nature of Father McSherry's discoveries in the Professed House. An uncritical person, such as he was, hearing of Father White's "Catechism" having been discovered in Rome, would be likely to assume that a printed catechism was meant. Even if such an assumption in this case had been correct, there would still exist no evidence that the "Catechism" had been printed at St. Mary's in Maryland. It would seem to be a futile exertion to attempt the refutation of a story which no responsible scholar has given credence to since Scharf's first relation of it in 1879, but the frequent recurrence of the Jesuit press "legend" in newspaper articles, and elsewhere occasionally, makes it seem desirable in this narrative to present the case against its acceptance even as a legend containing the usual modicum of truth.

THE FIRST ACT ON THE MARYLAND STATUTE BOOK FOR THE  
ENCOURAGEMENT OF PRINTING

AN ACT FOR THE SPEEDY AND EFFECTUAL PUBLICATION OF THE LAWS OF THIS PROVINCE,  
AND FOR THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF WILLIAM PARKS, OF THE CITY  
OF ANNAPOLIS, PRINTER

*(Passed in October Assembly 1727, printed at large in original printed acts of the Session,  
reprinted Archives of Maryland, 36: 89)*

Whereas at a former Session of this present General Assembly, held in the Month of March, Seventeen Hundred and Twenty Six, it was Resolved, That the said William Parks should print the Publick Laws, Speeches, and Answers, at the Opening each Session, and that he should be allowed Two Thousand Pounds of Tobacco for each County, by the respective Counties, Yearly.

And whereas the said William Parks, did (pursuant to the said Resolution) print and deliver to the Parties mention'd in the said Resolution, the several Publick Laws, enacted in the said Session of Assembly held in the said Month of March, and also in the Session of Assembly held in the Month of July, in the Year of Our Lord Seventeen Hundred and Twenty Six, for which there was due to the said William Parks, Two Thousand Pounds of Tobacco from each County respectively, according to the said Resolution.

And whereas the said William Parks, upon his Application to the Justices of the several Counties, for an Allowance of the Payment of the said Quantities of Tobacco so due to him as aforesaid, hath receiv'd the same from several Counties of this Province, but the Justices of some other Counties have (thro' a misapprehension of the said Resolution) refused to allow and pay the same to the said William Parks: For the Remedying whereof, and for the Prevention thereof for the Future, as also for the Encouragement of the said William Parks, in the Service of the Country,