

established himself across the Chesapeake many miles distant from Annapolis, in which town of course was the source of the greater part of the printing business of Maryland. Chestertown was a village at this time, and a small village at that. Surrounding it was an agricultural neighborhood. If Zenger set up his press in this community, he must deliberately have chosen a position of isolation, but the description of him as of Kent County in his act of naturalization is at least a positive piece of evidence that he made such a choice; there is no evidence of any nature whatsoever that he settled in Annapolis, where one would have expected to find him.

It is to be presumed that in the months which had intervened between Zenger's order to print the session laws in April 1720, and the day of his naturalization in October of that year, he had carried out his contract with the Assembly as to the printing and binding of the April acts, for on October 27th, it was resolved by the delegates,

“. . . that the Printer be Allowed five hundred pounds of tobacco for the Printing the Laws for the Counties &ca . . . *as last Sessions*,<sup>1</sup> and that Mr. Tasker make Coppys of all the Publick Laws and the heads of all the Private Laws . . . And the said Copys to be Delivered to the Printer the latter End of the next week.”<sup>2</sup>

If Zenger had failed to print the laws of April 1720, it is not likely that in employing him to print those of October 1720, the delegates would have used the phrase “as last Sessions;” nor in the session of August 1721 would they have resolved,

“. . . that John Peter Zenger print the Body of Laws this Sessions *as usual*<sup>3</sup> and be Allowed five hundred pounds of Tobo per Body. And that John Gould Transcribe a Body of the said Laws from the Originals to be by him Sent to the said Printer; . . .”<sup>4</sup>

The phrases “as last Sessions” and “as usual” employed in these quotations must refer to a series of performances rather than to a series of failures to perform.

In the absence of later references in the Maryland records to Zenger and his work for the Province, it is impossible to assert that he carried out the task imposed upon him by the delegates in August 1721. It is probable, however, that he accepted the contract and completed it as his last important work in Maryland before his return to New York late in 1721 or early in the year 1722, after a Maryland residence of some months less than two years. In the preceding chapter it was pointed out that in the session of February 1721/22, Evan Jones had been given permission to print the only

<sup>1</sup> The omission before these words, italicized by the author, occurs in the original.

<sup>2</sup> L. H. J., October 27, 1720, *Archives of Maryland*, 34: 111.

<sup>3</sup> Italics by author.

<sup>4</sup> L. H. J., August 5, 1721, *Archives of Maryland*, 34: 255.