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## *A History of Printing in Colonial Maryland*

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like is knowne and not before.”<sup>1</sup> Three years passed after this event, during which the Province was administered under the code of 1700, but in the year 1704 the royal mandate arrived and in September the Assembly was called for the purpose of revising and reënacting the entire body of law, a task which it straightway accomplished to the royal satisfaction.

Nearly two years passed after the revision had been completed before Reading proposed, as has been related, that he be allowed to print the revised statutes, and his proposals having been accepted, another year came and went before he began to carry them out. In the March session of 1707 he appeared in the House and in response to the demand of the delegates as to why the body of laws had not been printed in accordance with his contract, he declared that he “was and is always ready to do the same when this House will advise what Laws shall be in the Body and so withdrew.”<sup>2</sup> Whereupon it was resolved, “That all the publick Laws and Reviving Acts be printed at large and all Persons who have Interest in any private Laws be at the Charge of printing them otherwise the Title of such private Acts is sufficient to be printed.”<sup>3</sup> The book as planned on this occasion, containing the entire existing body of Maryland laws, was set and printed immediately, and that it appeared in this same year, we have the word of Mr. Justice Trott, who as will be seen, made use of it in his compilation of the “Laws of the Plantations.”

It is the collection which has been described in the foregoing paragraphs that Bacon referred to incorrectly in his Preface as the first printed Maryland collection of laws. “The first edition,” he wrote, “contains the Laws from 1704 to 1707, both inclusive, to which are added several Acts of Assembly formerly made, declared to be in force, . . . The Copy in my Possession (the Only One I have ever seen) has lost its Title Page, so that I cannot ascertain when or where it was Printed.” We are indebted again to Mr. Justice Trott, who it will be remembered, wrote more than forty years before Bacon published his work, for a more definite reference to this collection of the Maryland laws. “So the Laws of Maryland being again enacted,” he wrote in the Preface to his own compilation, “were collected into one volume, under the Title of *All the Laws of Maryland now in force: And by order of the General Assembly were printed at Annapolis in Maryland in the year 1707.*”<sup>4</sup> This reference is particularly happy in that Mr. Trott has

<sup>1</sup> L. H. J., May 9, 1701, *Archives of Maryland*, 24: 163.

<sup>2</sup> L. H. J., April 14, 1707, *Archives of Maryland*, 27: 125.

<sup>3</sup> L. H. J., April 14, 1707, *Archives of Maryland*, 27: 125.

<sup>4</sup> Trott, N., *Laws of the British Plantations*. London, 1721. The collection of Maryland laws here described is not recorded in Evans or in Sabin, nor does it appear in Lee, J. W. M., *Hand-list of Maryland Laws*. Baltimore,