
A History of Printing in Colonial Maryland

work of William Parks in Maryland, and very soon after the passage of the act of admonition, having in the meantime, however, rectified his negligence by printing the acts of April 1736,¹ he removed his entire establishment to Virginia, leaving the Province of Maryland without a printer. In November 1737, at the close of a letter to a correspondent in Philadelphia, Governor Ogle wrote "as we have not a Press here at present, I have given Directions to the Bearer of this to get a good Number of Proclamations printed in Philadelphia."²

PARKS ESTABLISHES PRINTING ON A FIRM BASIS IN VIRGINIA

Closely identified as Parks is with the Province of Maryland, his name is even more intimately associated with the literary history of Virginia than with that of the sister colony. Virginia had been without a printer since the failure of Nuthead's venture at Jamestown in the year 1683,³ and when in February 1727, Parks presented to the Virginia House of Burgesses his proposals for printing a collection of its laws, and its session laws of succeeding years, his tentatives met with immediate and intelligent approval by that body. A committee composed of some of the leading men of the colony was appointed to arrange the details of the publication with the printer, and when the work finally appeared in the year 1733, Parks had been for three years an important personage in the Virginia capital, between which and Annapolis he was then dividing his time and energies. In the year 1732 he was allowed by the Virginia burgesses an annual salary of one hundred and twenty pounds, a rate of payment at which he continued to serve the colony until the year 1738, when, as the result of a petition which he presented to the Assembly, his emolument was increased to two hundred pounds. In 1742 he was allowed two hundred and thirty pounds, and again in 1744 his increasing importance in the colony was recognized by the addition of fifty pounds annually to this sum, so that in his last six years of life, his salary for public work was two hundred and eighty pounds a year. In his petition for a larger salary, addressed to the Virginia Assembly on December 5, 1738, he asserted that he had relieved the colony of the "Drawback of the Duty upon Paper." It is possible that he referred in this statement to the paper mill which he is known to have established at Williamsburg, the first paper mill, it should be said, to be built in English America south of Penn-

¹ See the bibliographical appendix under the year 1736, where this set of session laws is recorded with date of March 19, 1735.

² *Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania*. Harrisburg, 1851, 4: 253.

³ Evans, No. 1057, records a pamphlet printed by Fr. Maggot of Williamsburg in 1702, but as nothing can be discovered concerning such a person or press, he concludes the name to be an ironym.