

Biographical material about the printers of these books and newspapers was considerably more difficult to find. Only three of the forty-three individual printers who fall within the scope of this study ever achieved national prominence. Of these three, William Goddard belongs primarily to an earlier period, the Revolutionary War and the Constitutional Period of United States history; Hezekiah Niles, of Weekly Register fame, to a later period; and the third, the Reverend James Jones Wilmer was very probably not a printer at all; he appears with William Pechin as joint publisher of the Eagle of Freedom, but his connection with that newspaper was very likely confined to editing.

The newspapers published in Maryland between 1791 and 1800 were the chief - sometimes the only - resource. Besides giving titles of books published, they often contained notices or advertisements which were the only clues for fixing the dates of a printer's work in Maryland, for opening or closing a partnership, or - usually in the case of newspaper printers - for fixing small but important details about the organization of the business, the staff employed, and the success of the enterprise. These notices have often been reproduced here in the printer's own words, for in no other way can the spirit and style of the period be effectively carried into another century.