



CHAPTER ONE

William Goddard, Printer in New London, Providence, New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, Founder of the American Post Office



OF THE four leading printing establishments in Maryland during the Revolutionary period, the Green Press at Annapolis, the Hayes Press at Baltimore, the Bartgis Press at Frederick, and the Goddard Press at Baltimore, the latter was by far the most important, judged on the basis of quantity and quality of output, or by the influence it exerted in the community in which it was located. During the twenty years which elapsed between October 20, 1772, when William Goddard announced that he had "engaged a suitable printing apparatus" and August 14, 1792, when he printed his valedictory address to his fellow citizens, the Goddard Press increasingly influenced every phase of community life. Those who shared in the labor and profits of this press offer an unusual example of the high character and talents of the successors of the Colonial printers. William and his sister, Mary Katherine Goddard, occupy the foreground in any discussion of Maryland literary culture, but the three partners who successively took part in their varied activities in Baltimore, Eleazer Oswald, Edward Langworthy and James Angell, deserve recognition for their important literary and professional attainments.¹

William Goddard was born at New London, Connecticut on October 20, 1740, the son of Giles Goddard and Sarah Updike. His father held an important position in the community as a postmaster and physician. His mother came of that prominent Rhode Island family, from which has descended Daniel Berkeley Updike, who in the last generation has gained so great a degree of distinction among American printers,

¹ The author acknowledges his great indebtedness to Dr. Lawrence C. Wroth's *A History of Printing in Colonial Maryland* and to his subsequent articles on Colonial printing, particularly *William Goddard and Some of his Friends* in *Rhode Island Historical Society Collections*, Vol. XVII (1924) No. 2, for material on the lives of the Maryland printers in the eighteenth century. The present biography of William Goddard consists of a summary of Dr. Wroth's account of his career together with some additional material found in manuscript letters and newspaper notices.