

## ZENGER, NOT BRADFORD, WAS FIGHTING EDITOR OF COLONIAL DAYS

Bradford Merely a Job Printer Always Subservient to Authority of the Crown Says Iowa Journalism Professor

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Peter Zenger, also deserving.

The printing crafts may well honor Bradford because he was New York's first job printer. But he deserves little honor as a journalist. That honor belongs to John Peter Zenger and the men associated with him in the publication of the *New York Weekly Journal*.

There are two paragraphs in Miss Leland's article which are likely to make the student muse regretfully upon the fact that the good that men do is too often interred with their bones. Too often the world forgets the patriots whose lives were filled with service and self sacrifice. Often it pins roses upon the remembrance of a man who was diligent in his business and became almost rich enough to "stand before kings." The eulogy of Bradford and the slighting of Zenger is a case in point.

The two paragraphs read:

"When Bradford started his paper conditions in New York were rather quiet. At a late period however, local bickerings arose between the colonial governor and the state assembly. But as the strictures upon printed matters were very severe, Bradford, employed as he was by the Crown, had to be very careful of what he printed and found it better to let political matters alone. The times, however, were rife with the agitations caused by Governor Crosby's high-handed demands. Some organ for expressing the 'people's' views was required. John Peter Zenger, a Palatine orphan, was sponsored and literally subsidized by Crosby's opponents as printer of New York's second paper, the *New York Weekly Journal*.

"Zenger had been trained in Bradford's shop. But after first running away, then later joining in partnership with Bradford for a short period, he had finally set up an independent shop. He was very poor, but aided by such men as Rip Van Dam and James Alexander, he soon prospered in his new enterprise and in his historic fight against the tyranny of the government over so-called seditious printed matter, he became famous as one of the early champions of the freedom of the press. It must be recalled, however, that Mr. Bradford had earlier suffered arrest and had been threatened with the loss of his press when in Philadelphia. In New York however, where he was under oath and practical bondage to the Crown he was of necessity conservative and loyal.

It was more than "local bickerings" which arose between Governor Cosby (not Crosby) and the provincial (not state) assembly.

Cosby had previously been ousted as governor of the Island of Minorca for confiscation of private property which he appropriated to his own use. His record was known to the colonial leaders before he arrived. But the assembly treated him fairly.

He claimed to have been instrumental in obtaining the repeal of a sugar bill detrimental to the interests of the colonies.

For this the assembly voted him a gratuity of £750.

"Damn them," he shouted, "why didn't they add the shillings and pence?" And the gratuity was raised to £1000.

Rip Van Dam had been governor between the time of Cosby's appointment and his arrival. The salary, and emoluments of the office had been collected by him. Cosby claimed half; but he already had grabbed £6,000 more than had come into Van Dam's hands and Van Dam refused to comply with his demand unless he accounted for what he had received.

Cosby dared not bring a suit at common law, knowing that the people already hated him and that a jury would decide against him. He could not bring suit in chancery because he was a chancellor; nor in the supreme court because it had no equity jurisdiction. So he forced an ordinance through the council, erecting a court of equity in the supreme court and directed Richard Bradley, his pliant attorney general, to bring suit against Van Dam in that court.

The erection of this court was contrary to the laws of Great Britain and of the provincial assembly. The assembly passed strong resolutions against it. Chief Justice Lewis Morris refused to sit upon it and was summarily removed from his office by Cosby without even the action of the council. That left the court with two members instead of three which was also contrary to law. In an effort to get judgment against Van Dam by default, Cosby's agents made two men drunk and then obtained their signatures to a lying document saying that Van Dam could not be found.

This was something more than "local bickerings." There were many other causes for popular indignation. Cosby deliberately destroyed a deed to the corporation of Albany made by the Mohawk Indians, because he expected big fees for the execution of another. He refused to grant lands to settlers unless he was permitted to retain a third for his personal use. Often he "packed" elections with his henchmen and with soldiers. He refused to allow Quakers to vote. He summoned to his council meetings only such members as were favorable to his avaricious schemes.

Bradford knew all this. But his *New York Gazette* took the governor's side. "Employed as he was by the Crown he had to be very careful of what he printed and found it better to let political matters alone."

There was one Francis Harrison, an agent of Cosby in a murder plot, who later came to a bad end. He wrote fulsome eulogies of Cosby and carried them to Bradford who printed them in his *New York Gazette*.

It is not on record that Bradford ever printed one word against Cosby or any other tyrannical officer of the British Crown, or one word in favor of the Colonial patriots who were fighting against tyranny and robbery. He was an Englishman who never ceased to be loyal to the land of his birth, and never became able to be loyal to the cause of American liberty. And for many long years he was public printer. Perhaps he did not

"crook the pregnant hinges of the knee That thrift might follow fawning," but those effusive eulogies of Cosby printed in his paper make the reader wonder if they were not comparable to what Shakespeare had in mind.

Miss Leland follows James Melvin Lee in his statement that Zenger ran away from his apprenticeship at Bradford's shop. The source of Dr. Lee's statement would be interesting. Hudson in his *History of Journalism* does not mention it. Neither does Isaiah Thomas in his *History of Printing*, nor John Fiske who

devotes several pages of his history of the "Dutch and Quaker colonies" to Zenger. Livingston Rutherford, Zenger's best biographer, says that "at the expiration of his apprenticeship he went to Maryland." George Henry Payne in his *History of Journalism*, says that "after serving an apprenticeship of eight years with Bradford, Zenger went to Maryland."

Be that as it may, it is true that he "prospered in his new enterprise." It was because he fought on the side of the colonists, whom Cosby called "a lazy, good-for-nothing crowd, filled with the spirit of insubordination." It is true, also, as John Fiske says, that "in point of telling argument and bold sarcasm Bradford was no match for Zenger and when sundry deeds of Cosby were held up to scorn the governor writhed under the infliction." It is true that the assembly was on the side of Zenger. Unfortunately, also, it is true that Bradford's *Gazette* derided Zenger, because he was one of a company of poor Palatinates who had been brought over to America by Queen Anne; to which Zenger made a reply so spirited that Bradford, like the governor, should have "writhed" under it.

Bradford had his first trouble with the Philadelphia Quakers when he printed the name of "Lord" Penn in his almanac. When he was called before the council after printing the protest of women because the fair ground was located too far from the city he turned the tables on his accusers by bringing forward the thing that rankled him most—the unfulfilled promise made by William Penn, that he should be public printer. As soon as the offer of the public printing in New York came to him he lost no time in leaving the Quakers, renouncing their faith and becoming a member of the Church of England, as soon as he reached New York.

He was an amiable, peaceful, God-fearing man who loved peace—and the public printing. It is as a printer rather than newspaper man that his anniversary should be celebrated. He was not a journalist. He started no paper in Philadelphia—did not start one in New York until his son Andrew had made a success of the *American Mercury* in Philadelphia. Even then the elder Bradford printed his first *New York Gazette* with the types which were too rounded and battered to be of much use in the job office. And all the time he printed that *Gazette* he seems to have remembered, as Miss Leland says, that "he was under oath and practical bondage to the Crown." In his paper he plumed himself for having been for 40 years "obedient to the King and all that are put in authority under him." What he did was to hinder, rather than to help the great victory for which Zenger was at first a vicarious sacrifice, the establishment of the principle that a newspaper may criticize any dishonest and tyrannical public official so long as it is careful to tell the truth, with good motives and for the good of society. It is regrettable that William Bradford can lay claim to even the smallest part of that victory.

But he was a vestryman in Trinity church. And his tombstone was over his grave in that famous churchyard, until the *New York Historical Society* took it away for better preservation. He was kind, affable, and once did a good turn to Ben Franklin, who nevertheless later wrote of him as a "cunning old fox."

He was diligent and successful in his business. He built paper mills and printed a family bible to be used as a premium for subscriptions. Nearly 200 years after his death he is honored by a great historical society in the Nation's largest city.

Zenger, who fought for the people, died in poverty. His widow and children almost starved and his paper actually died of starvation.

As Frederic Hudson said in his history, *Ainsi va le monde!*

Wherewithal shall the young man in journalism shape his way? With the life of Bradford, bidding him take heed to his job work that he may win present riches and future honor? Or with the life of Zenger, using his newspaper to "make the bounds of freedom wider yet" but perhaps achieving for himself only

present trouble and future neglect? These are questions likely to be asked by those who read of the Bradford celebration in New York; but happily the Fates, and the public, usually treat aggressive and patriotic journalists better than they did John Peter Zenger.

Why doesn't New York get up a celebration in honor of the memory of John Peter Zenger and Harry Crosswell, genuine journalists, and of Andrew Hamilton and Alexander Hamilton, their brilliant and successful defenders?

## TEXAS AD CLUBS PLAN \$500,000 AD FUND

Committee Named to Work Out Details at Annual Meeting of 10th District in Fort Worth—Simpson District Chairman

A plan to raise a \$500,000 fund to advertise Texas was adopted at the annual meeting of the Tenth District Associated Advertising Clubs of the World in Fort Worth, Nov. 19-20.

A committee, consisting of Fred Johnston, of the Johnston Printing Company, Dallas, chairman; Dale Rogers, Houston; W. A. Garrabrant, Beaumont; Amon G. Carter, publisher of the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, and Harold Kayton, San Antonio, was appointed to work out plans of procedure and report back to the district officers. Organization of the movement followed an address by Mr. Johnston on "Advertising Texas."

As committee chairman he stated that \$100,000 should be raised immediately, to be increased in time to \$500,000. An operating fund of \$700 for use of the committee was subscribed.

James P. Simpson, of Dallas, was elected chairman of the district to succeed Amon G. Carter. O. S. Bruck, *Beaumont Enterprise and Journal*, was named first vice-president; J. H. Allison, Wichita Falls, second vice-president; Beeman Fisher, Dallas, secretary-treasurer.

C. King Woodbridge, president of the Associated Advertising Clubs of the World, was chief speaker at the meeting. He stressed the importance of advertising club work. He arrived on Friday afternoon, the second day of the meeting, and was met at the station by all the delegates, numbering more than 200.

Miss Jane Wood, advertising manager of Joske's department store, San Antonio, spoke on advertising to a family, showing the different appeals advertising must make to reach all classes. A. L. Shuman, of the Fort Worth *Star-Telegram*, attributed the frequent failure of advertising to the fact that merchants often fail to live up to their advertising. H. W. Stanley, manager of the Lumbermen's Reciprocal Association, Dallas, charged that advertising failure was often the result of mental bankruptcy on the part of the advertiser. He named mental alertness as the best advertising asset. The necessity for truth in advertising was emphasized by Milton Pandres, advertising manager of the Titche Goettinger Company, Dallas.

In the second day's business session a resolution was adopted to take steps to safeguard investors in other states from unscrupulous promoters who might be operating at present or in future in Texas.

Directors of the district elected at the meeting are: W. A. Garrabrant, Beaumont; Lowry Martin, Corsicana; Miss Cora Krauter, Dallas; Art Millican, El Paso; Fred Michael, Houston; R. G. Coulter, San Antonio; Alfonso Jonson, Dallas; Garnet Clark, Galveston; J. M. Brinkley, Sherman; Miss Edith Axtell, Houston, and Alva Wilgus, Wichita Falls.

## Advertising Handbook

"The Handbook of Advertising Club Management" was issued this week by the Club Service Department of the Associated Advertising Clubs of the World. The book was compiled under the direction of Ed Hunter, head of the department.