

319 PACE, HENRY

Publisher

Richmond

Publisher of *The Recorder or Lady's and Gentleman's Miscellany* (1801-03) at Richmond, in part with James Thomson Callender (075).

Henry Pace is a curious figure, as he started his print-trade career in America in service to Virginia's Republican political leaders, but within months he became employer, partner, and publisher of the most vocal critic of those leaders: James Thomson Callender.

Pace was an English émigré, a journeyman printer who arrived in America sometime after December 1797, according to an 1802 report, purportedly fleeing a sedition charge during the prosecutions of those writers and editors who supported the English radical movement of the 1790s. He apparently made his way to Richmond in the winter of 1800-01 and forged an association with the Republican presses of Meriwether Jones (242) and Samuel Pleasants (331). In early 1801, his small print shop aided them in the publication of the second volume of Callender's notorious *The Prospect Before Us*. Its author had also fled the prosecutions of radicals in Britain, only to be convicted of seditious libel in Virginia for publishing the first volume of that work, which issued in Richmond in January 1800; when the second volume issued there, he had just been released from the city's jail after serving a six-month term, and was awaiting a remission of his fine in that case, as well as a grant of a public position in Jefferson's newly installed administration – neither of which ever came. The meeting then of Pace and Callender would prove to be a defining moment in each man's life.

While incarcerated, Callender had shared the jail with the enslaved men arrested and later convicted in the abortive slave uprising known today as Gabriel's Rebellion. Pace recognized the controversy attending the event as a chance to establish his own identity in Virginia; he offered the use of his press to St. George Tucker, professor of law at the College of William & Mary, to publish an open letter to the Assembly advocating the colonization of Africa with Virginia's slaves, seizing the opportunity to advance an argument he first offered in 1796 in his well-known *Dissertation on Slavery*. Pace's successful publication of Tucker's reasoned argument seems to have led the printer to believe that a non-partisan journal capable of presenting similarly cogent articles was a viable idea. So in July 1801, he began publishing just such a "literary" weekly: *The Recorder, or Lady's and Gentleman's Miscellany*. However, Pace's new paper was in trouble financially by year's end, a result – as one contemporary later noted – of his being someone "who could compose types much better than he could paragraphs." Samuel Pleasants attempted to assist Pace by recruiting him for a joint venture in publishing a new volume of Virginia laws commissioned by Governor James Monroe.

Simultaneously, an indigent Callender was living on Pace's charity and under his roof, having been disappointed in his demands for patronage from Jefferson and his supporters, as well as recently losing his latest position in the office of Pleasants's *Virginia Argus*. He wanted a new journalistic outlet, and suggested that Pace make him the editor of *The Recorder*, after having argued against its literary focus from its commencement; Callender believed that in doing so the paper would become more popular and thus more profitable; Pace agreed and the Scotsman took control of the paper on February 19, 1802. Immediately, it became

evident that Callender was determined to skewer Jefferson and his allies as thoroughly as he had Adams and the Federalists before. Over the next fifteen months, his main target was the Jeffersonian leaders in Richmond, particularly public printer, Meriwether Jones, who now became the epitome of corruption in office for him. But his most memorable assault was his report in September 1802 of an illicit sexual liaison, complete with a bastard child, between Jefferson and Sally Hemings, one of the president's enslaved servants. This well-known narrative is an example of the increasing rancor that now pervaded Callender's writings and so Pace's pages; where his venom had once been disgorged against persons he did not personally know, now it was clearly aimed at those he did, especially those who had not lived up to his long-held expectations of them, as Jefferson had.

Unfortunately for Pace, he was now bound to Callender and soon found that his editor's attacks on people who were close at hand had serious consequences. In December 1802, Callender was assaulted by George Hay, the man who served as his defense attorney in the 1800 sedition trial, over the writer's repeated attacks on his friends and associates; the city's Hustings Court found that Hay was justified in assaulting Callender for his scandalous behavior, and forced Callender and Pace to post a bond guaranteeing their future good behavior – leading to erroneous reports of Pace's imprisonment in Republican newspapers outside Virginia. Then in March 1803, after a story about the drunken, belligerent behavior of a few college students in town appeared in the *Recorder*, a larger group of students sacked the Pace & Callender office; thereafter both men kept pistols close by.

Still, all was not well between the partners. It appears Callender's well-known drunkenness kept him away from the *Recorder's* office for weeks on end, and that in April and May 1803, he contributed nothing to the paper as a result of one lengthy bender. Near the end of May 1803, Callender asked Pace to settle their accounts, evidently thinking he was not receiving his due, as *The Recorder* had now become a profitable venture. Pace agreed to his request, despite his editor's recent absence, but before he could reconcile those accounts, Callender took to the pages of the *Virginia Gazette*, the Federalist journal of Augustine Davis (119), to accuse Pace of withholding monies owed him, and that he was terminating the partnership as a result. Incensed, Pace published a long defense of his business practices, one wherein he reported that Callender had never provided funding for the venture, he was embezzling funds, and voided their partnership agreement by his dereliction, before he then circulated fabricated stories about Pace's conduct; he also immediately filed suit against Callender seeking £2000 damages. So with the issue of June 18, 1803, Pace resumed sole ownership of the *Recorder*, leaving Callender to fend for himself. A month later, the Scotsman drowned in the James River, apparently while drunk. A coroner's jury found his death accidental, but Jones suggested it was a suicide, given the legal problems that Callender now faced from the only person willing to support and employ him after his release from prison.

Although Pace continued publishing his *Recorder* alone, he found that Callender's departure did not secure his future. Just days after Callender's death, he was assaulted by Jones and several friends at Richmond's summer resort on Bacon's Branch; bloodied but unbowed, he began an editorial campaign against the overly aggressive mein of the city's "democratical society." Still, his editor's absence largely eliminated demand for the paper; Pace had never printed more than 700 copies of any issue, and he had fewer than 400 regular subscribers

for it, conditions that made the journal a marginal production without the partisan subsidies that Callender brought to the venture. Indeed, *The Recorder* is remarkable for the lack of advertising in its pages, rarely consuming more than two of its sixteen columns, if that. Thus the weeks after Callender's departure were ones where Pace attempted to follow the bellicose approach his editor had always employed, while dunning delinquent subscribers, wearily reporting that "If I have made anything in this country by printing, it was made by the profits of the Revised Code, printed by Mr. Pleasants and myself, which is taken to support this paper." Hence, Pace was only able to continue his *Recorder* for another two months before he was forced to close the paper permanently in late August 1803.

That fall, Pace left Richmond in search of employment elsewhere. He seems to have found work as a journeyman in Baltimore in 1804, but did not stay there long. By June 1805, Pace had moved on to Cayuga County in upstate New York, establishing that county's newspaper of record at Aurora, then the county seat. He conducted his new *Aurora Gazette* for three years in conjunction with his brother James, who seems to have joined him in Baltimore. In 1808, the seat of Cayuga County was relocated to Auburn, some fifteen miles northwest of Aurora; a local history reports that the Pace brothers joined the exodus, but the last known number of their *Gazette* was issued after the date that history reports that their new paper first issued in Auburn; rather, it appears that they closed their *Gazette* before the move and tried to conduct a job-printing office in Aurora instead; but in the end, they were compelled to move as well, having been "starved out by the removal..." In Auburn, the brothers' new weekly, called the *Western Federalist*, remained a dicey venture. Conducted by "two ancient-looking, dumpy little Englishmen," their "little office seemed the dusky relic of a distant age," employing type that was "worn down nearly to the 'first nick'." Yet a larger problem was that their paper expressed decidedly pro-British views during the run-up to the War of 1812. By being the only journal in the county, the *Western Federalist* survived the war, but not the peace, as "its politics offended some." In January 1816, the brothers closed their paper and left Auburn, once again in search of new opportunities.

By 1819, Henry and James Pace had settled their two families in Cincinnati, Ohio. From city directories there, it seems that Henry did not again return to the print trade, though James did operate a job press there briefly. Thereafter, the aging Henry Pace is listed simply as a resident of boarding houses, evidently ones that he owned. Surviving real-estate records for Cincinnati and nearby Covington, Kentucky, show that he was involved in considerable land speculation, including ownership of a medicinal-spring resort just west of Covington. Pace was also apparently interested in transporting his patrons to those springs in comfort, as in 1835 he was granted a patent for a new carriage-spring design. So it appears that the Pace family thrived on the banks of the Ohio, with the sons of both brothers becoming significant merchants there by the 1840s.

That mercantile success, in stark contrast to the earlier woes in the printing trade, afforded Henry Pace a comfortable retirement. Contemporaries were regaled in his later years by his vivid "recollections of Washington, Jefferson, Madison, and the early company of great men in this country... [so] entertaining his friends with his reminiscences." Pace died in Cincinnati in October 1861 at the age of ninety-six.

Personal Data

Born: Mar. 26 1766 London, England.

Married before 1804 Catherine Hilton @ Richmond, Virginia.

Died: Oct. 18 1861 Cincinnati, Ohio.

Children: Catherine F.; Charlotte; Henry Jr.; James; Robert H. ; Laura Hilton.

Sources: Imprints; Brigham; Hubbard on Richmond; Printer File, AAS; Personal Name File, Morgan Library of Ohio Imprints; Durey, *James Thomson Callender*; Mordecai, *By-Gone Days*; Storke, *Cayuga County*; notices in the [Richmond] *Recorder* (1801-1803); obituary in *Baltimore Sun*, Oct. 29, 1861; genealogical data from Pace family charts posted on Ancestry.com (January 2013).