

## Pennsylvania Herald

The *Pennsylvania Herald*, founded by Mathew Carey in 1785, was printed in Philadelphia on Wednesdays and Saturdays. In February 1787 the *Herald* was purchased by William Spotswood (c. 1753–1805), who had been a partner since 1785. Spotswood, a Philadelphia bookseller, had emigrated to America after the Revolution. After assuming sole proprietorship, Spotswood appointed Alexander J. Dallas (1759–1817), a lawyer who had come to Philadelphia from the West Indies in 1783, to be editor of the *Herald*. Under Dallas, the *Herald* published both literary and political material. It also printed Dallas' lengthy accounts of the debates in the Pennsylvania General Assembly, and, in fact, a third issue was printed weekly from 11 September through 6 October 1787 in order to carry these accounts. During the meeting of the Constitutional Convention, Dallas printed brief news items that indicate he had received information about its proceedings. The *Herald* also published many short pieces stressing the need for a stronger central government, some of which were widely reprinted.

After the Convention adjourned, the *Herald* published both Federalist and Antifederalist pieces in what Spotswood later described as a policy of "studied impartiality." Dallas, however, angered Pennsylvania Federalists when he occasionally reported that Antifederalists had bested Federalists in the debates in the Pennsylvania Convention, which met from 20 November to 15 December 1787. Dallas further antagonized Federalists by printing lengthy reports of the Convention debates. After several charges that Dallas' debates were "misrepresentations," nearly one hundred people cancelled their subscriptions to the *Herald*. In early January 1788, Dallas was dismissed as editor. About a month later, finding that an "impartial line" was "impracticable," Spotswood sold the *Herald*. The last known issue was published on 14 February 1788.

Cite as: *The Documentary History of the Ratification of the Constitution Digital Edition*, ed. John P. Kaminski, Gaspare J. Saladino, Richard Leffler, Charles H. Schoenleber and Margaret A. Hogan. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2009.

Canonic URL: <http://rotunda.upress.virginia.edu/founders/RNCN-03-13-01-0011-0002> [accessed 17 Mar 2011]

Original source: Commentaries on the Constitution, Volume XIII: Commentaries on the Constitution, No. 1