

**025 BARTGIS, MATTHIAS E. – [MATTHIAS ECHTERNACH BARTGIS, JR.]**

**Publisher**

**Winchester**

Publisher of *The Philanthropist* in Winchester in partnership with Joseph A. Lingan (266) between 1806 and 1809; eldest son of publishing entrepreneur Matthias Bartgis (024).

Bartgis was born at the time of his father's early efforts to establish himself as a major newspaper publisher in the Great Valley regions of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. So it is little surprising that his first son would be bred for the trade as well. Trained in the Frederick, Maryland press office that was his father's base, Bartgis was given an early challenge in 1803. At the age of twelve, he was set up as a partner to William Underwood, a frequent associate of his father, in a printing office of his own in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania; together they produced the *Gettysburg Gazette*. After a year, the young Bartgis returned to Frederick, with considerable practical experience in hand, leaving Underwood to continue alone; he recast their *Gazette* as *The Sprig of Liberty* and published it until 1806.

That same year, Bartgis found himself again in a situation like that of his Gettysburg one in Winchester. Now age fifteen, his father set him up in partnership with Joseph A. Lingan, a practical printer trusted by the elder Bartgis; there the two produced *The Philanthropist*, an attempt at a conciliatory Republican journal. The concern of Bartgis & Lingan lasted just a year, as had been the Gettysburg arrangement; the father then supplanted his adolescent scion as Lingan's partner, and continued so until March 1809; at that time Lingan suspended publication of *The Philanthropist* in order to settle accounts with the Bartgis family; three months later, it reappeared in a new guise -- the *Democratic Lamp or Winchester Aurora*.

With his parting from Lingan in March 1707, young Bartgis moved on to an unaccompanied venture in Rockville, Maryland, just north of Washington, D.C. There he would produce that town's first newspaper: *The Maryland Register & Montgomery Advertiser*. Like many such firsts, this paper survived perhaps a year, apparently a victim of the competition embodied in the nearby District's journals. In this quick closure, it appears that the younger Bartgis had learned well from his father, how to cut his losses whenever necessary, and so not send good money after bad. Returning to Frederick, he helped produce his father's *Republican Gazette* (1810-21) and his newer *Hornet* (1810-13); he also took charge of a revitalized German-language *Der General Staatsbothe und Wahre Republicaner* (1810-13) as his own.

Yet despite the experience and capital gained in these labors, Bartgis evidently retired from the printing trade when his father did in 1821, or perhaps earlier. He does not again appear in the records of the American printing trade; rather it seems he became a gentleman farmer at the ripe old age of thirty, patriarch of a family that grew to eleven children.

**Personal Data**

Born:	Jan. 4	1791	Frederick, Maryland.
Married [1]:	April 23	1810	Barnett Dertzbaugh @ Frederick, Md.; d. 1851
Married [2]:	?	1853	Mary E. [???] @ Frederick, Maryland

Died: Aug. 5 1869 Frederick, Maryland.

Children: Catharine (b. 1812), Michael (b. 1813), Margaret (b. 1815), Geo. Washington (b. 1816), John M. (b. 1818), William (b. 1822), Hiram (b. 1825), Dewitt Clinton (b. 1828), Mary Elizabeth (b. 1830), Mathias E. Jr. (b. 1854), John A. (b. 1856).

Sources: Imprints; Brigham; Wust, "Matthais Bartgis"; Dolmetsch, *German Press of Valley*; Scharf, *Western Maryland*; Thomas, *History of Printing*; genealogical data from Bartgis family postings on USGenWeb (August 2012).