

**026 BARTOW, WILLIAM A. – [WILLIAM AUGUSTUS BARTOW]**

**Bookseller**

**Richmond**

Richmond bookseller (1815-21) and resident partner in the firm of William Bartow & Co.

A New York native, William A. Bartow arrived in Virginia as essentially a twenty-one-year-old unemployed veteran. He had enlisted at eighteen in that state's militia when the War of 1812 erupted, spending the war assigned to the defense of New York City. At war's end, he and his older brother Robert determined to build a bookselling business, drawing on family wealth accumulated in the trading of agricultural produce. Robert established a book store in Manhattan as their home base; he would purchase imprints for both of them there; then William would receive his portion via a coastal-trading vessel at Richmond and sell them there. He occupied various locations in town, with the best being a store on the corner of Main and Locust west of the Capitol. From his advertisements in Richmond's newspapers, Bartow evidently specialized in literary items, especially fiction and plays from continental Europe. His was purely a retail business; he did no job printing or book binding.

After six years in Virginia, however, he closed his shop and returned to New York. Yet, Bartow remained tied to the Virginia book trade for another year or so; shortly after Bartow returned north, William Waller Hening (213) assigned a reprinting of the first two volumes of his celebrated *Statutes at Large* to R. & W. & G. Bartow of New York City, drawing on the relationship the two had built in Richmond.

By 1826, Bartow had retired to a life as a gentleman farmer in Westchester County, where his family owned large tracts of land, living out his years there. But Virginia was evidently still in his heart; in 1840, he named his fifth and last son Moncure after a "Mr. Moncure, of Richmond, Va." – probably William Moncure of the Richmond auction house of Moncure, Robinson, & Pleasants, a firm which often sold lots of books at auction.

***Personal Data***

Born:	Jan. 8	1794	Westchester, New York.
Married:	---	1826	Jane Hasbrouck @ Westchester, New York.
Died:	Feb. 20	1869	East Fishkill, New York.
Children:	Virginia (b. 1827), Augustus (b. 1829), Tunis Hasbrouck (b. 1831), Charles Edward (b. 1833), Alexander (b. 1835), Adriance (b. 1838), Moncure (b. 1840), Glorvina, Ella Jane, DuBois.		

Sources: Richmond newspaper advertisements, 1815-22; Bartow, *Bartow Genealogy*.