

095 CLINGAN, JOSEPH**Printer, Publisher****Wheeling**

Publisher of *Virginia North-Western Gazette* (1818) in Wheeling with Thomas Tonner (416).

Clingan was a practical printer from Greensburg in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, where he was probably trained in the office of the *Farmers Register*.

In 1818, Clingan struck out for Wheeling to attempt a new paper there with Thomas Tonner. The river-port had been without a newspaper since 1808, and its growth in the intervening years now suggested that it could support such a weekly local advertiser. Their assessment proved correct, as the *Virginia North-Western Gazette* that the two initiated in April 1818 continued, under various guises, until 1844. Tonner stayed with the *Gazette* until 1820, but Clingan withdrew after just six months, indicating that their association had a pre-set limit. This *Gazette* proved to be Clingan's only Virginia-based journal.

Clingan immediately moved back to the Monongahela River valley, establishing another paper independently at Williamsport (today Monongahela City) in Washington County. His new *Village Informant* was a short-lived paper, unlike his Wheeling effort; starting in mid-February 1819, it lasted perhaps six months, apparently a victim of too close a proximity to Pittsburgh's larger journals. Chastened, Clingan set out to find an established newspaper where he could serve as the tradesman-partner to a financier-editor. In late 1819, he was invited to Wooster, Ohio, southwest of Cleveland, to print the *Ohio Spectator*, a weekly issued continuously from June 1817. Recent disruptions to its office brought a suspension and a new owner, Benjamin Bentley, who brought Clingan to Ohio to print it for him. Their partnership lasted until 1822, when Clingan took on the paper alone. He was forced to sell his interest in 1825 to settle a libel judgment against him. But he did not long stay on the sidelines. In 1826, he began publishing a new journal in support of Andrew Jackson, the *Republican Advocate*; this paper proved to be a well-timed venture, with Clingan remaining actively involved with it until illness forced a sale and his retirement in 1837.

By then, Clingan was a respected figure in Wooster. Frequently a speaker on history and politics throughout his life, he was finally elected to public office as the city's Recorder in 1833. But as he entered his fifties, he began to slow down; in 1840, he removed to more rural Knox County, to be near his daughter, Zillah, and her children, though often returning to Wooster for public events. It became his permanent residence during the Civil War, and was the place where he finally died in 1873, at age eighty-four.

Personal Data

Born: Feb. 28 1789 Greensburg, Westmoreland County, Penn.

Married: In 1824 Clarrisa Lawrence @ Wooster, Ohio.

Died: Aug. 26 1873 Knox County, Ohio.

Children: Zillah, Thomas, Jane (b. 1832), Edward (b. 1834).

Sources: Imprints; Brigham; Norona & Shetler; Rice, "West Virginia Printers;" *Centennial of Monongahela City*; Douglass, *Wayne County*.

