

**099 COLERICK, JOHN****Publisher****Wheeling**

Publisher of *The Wheeling Repository* (1807-08) with Alexander Armstrong (014).

Colerick presents a unique case in the history of Virginia's printing trade: he had been dead three years when this early Virginia newspaper was first issued. He was proprietor of the long-lived Federalist press in Washington, Pennsylvania, issuing the *Western Telegraphe* (1795-1811) there from 1797 to 1804, producing at least two dozen other imprints in that time as well. On his death in February 1804, Colerick left a household of sixteen people, ten of them under sixteen years of age. Hence, the family, using his well-recognized name, kept control of his printing business until 1811, when much of his estate was finally seized and sold at a marshal's sale to satisfy his creditors.

Between 1804 and 1811, Colerick's office was operated by his last shop foreman, Alexander Armstrong, who ran the press for the equal benefit of himself and Colerick's estate. In 1806, Armstrong set up his own office in Wheeling, though the estate evidently retained a sizable (if not equal) interest in his new situation. After two years of exceptional effort maintaining both offices, Armstrong closed his less-than-profitable Wheeling press and *Repository* paper to return to Washington and his earlier employment. Only when Colerick's estate was taken by the courts could Armstrong finally pursue a truly independent course; by late 1811, he had removed to St. Clairsville, Ohio, where he began publishing the new *Belmont Repository* in December. With that, Colerick became simply a footnote in Virginia's history.

***Personal Data***

Died: Feb. 28 1811 Washington, Pennsylvania

1800 census indicated a wife, ten children, two elderly relations,  
and three possible employees and/or apprentices in household.

Sources: Imprints; Brigham; Norona & Shetler; Crumrine, *Washington County*; Federal Decennial Census, 1800; notices in *Washington Reporter* 1804-11; obituary in *Philadelphia Evening Post*, 10 March 1804.