

## 122 DAVIS, GEORGE

Printer & Publisher                  Richmond

Printer in office of his father Augustine Davis (119) and his partner in the *Virginia Gazette and General Advertiser* (1807-09); later partner in *Visitor* (1810) with John O. Lynch (273).

The sons of Augustine Davis have left only fleeting evidence of their lives; George Davis is the most visible among them. He was noted as the patriarch's fourth son in 1821, meaning that he was the youngest as well. The bibliographic record suggests that he became a vital part of his father's shop when job-printing there increased in 1806 after a nearly decade of decline; a year later father Augustine made son George as a partner in his weekly *Virginia Gazette*, apparently as both reward for his earlier effort and incentive for the work in front of him. By then, Augustine had long since ago ceased being an active printer; as George was later characterized as the newspaper's editor in this period, it seems that his father was working his way out of the daily journalistic grind so as to reap the rewards from just printing a newspaper, and his son was the means to that end.

Such is exactly what happened when he sold the paper to investors in late 1809, with the masthead indicating that the new *Virginia Patriot* was printed by "Augustine Davis & Co. for the Proprietors." That transaction, with its dissolution of their father/son partnership, evidently gave George a sufficiency of his own. In early 1810, publisher Charles Southgate (395) withdrew from his arrangement with John O. Lynch in publishing the literary *Visitor* weekly; Davis joined Lynch in an attempt to extend that unique paper's life; but recognizing the futility of the effort – likely thanks to the business sense imparted by his father – Davis pulled out after just three months. Thereafter, he does not again appear in the bibliographic record, suggesting that he returned to his father's employ to help print the *Patriot*, and likely stayed there at least until Charles Prentiss (341) became part of the business in 1816, or until his father retired and sold the business to William Ramsay (348) in April 1821.

George Davis had little time to recoup after Augustine's retirement, however. He evidently sickened that summer and died at his father's Westham farm in August, just thirty-three. No record of a wife or children is known, indicating that he had devoted his life to his father's business and little else, hence he passed on at the same time the family press did.

### ***Personal Data***

Born:                  In 1788    Henrico County, Virginia.

Died:    Aug. 17 1821    Westham, Henrico County, Virginia

No record of wife or children yet found.

Sources: Imprints; Brigham; Cappon; Hubbard on Richmond; Federal Decennial Census, 1820; obituary in *Richmond Daily Mercantile Advertiser*, 20 Aug 1821.