

## 158 ENGLEADOW, ROBERT

**Publisher**

**Evansham (now Wytheville)**

Publisher of the *Republican Luminary* in Wythe County (1809-10) with William Dromgoole (149), his brother-in-law.

Engledow was a Wythe County merchant-planter who owned large tracts of land near the site of the modern-day village of Rural Retreat. His marriage in 1799 to Margaret (Peggy) Dromgoole of Frederick County brought him into contact with Winchester's printing offices; Peggy's brother William was apprenticing as a printer in Winchester and her sister Elizabeth would soon marry Peter Isler (235), an apprentice-colleague of their brother.

When Dromgoole completed his apprenticeship in 1808, Engledow prevailed upon him to relocate to Wythe Court House, also called Evansham, to publish a weekly in partnership with him there. He believed, it seems, that such a venture was essential for the commercial development of a county then without a newspaper; he even went so far as to purchase a press for the project, going beyond the financial commitment he made to the paper itself. Their *Republican Luminary* issued its first number in March 1809 and continued exactly one year. The dearth of surviving issues suggests short print-runs and so marginal success. Dromgoole clearly recognized that his future in the trade lay elsewhere, despite the familial connections; he left Wythe at the end of the paper's one year run, removing to Bardstown, Kentucky, to join brother-in-law Isler in his press office there.

After failing to find a printer-successor to Dromgoole, Engledow advertised the sale of his press in November 1810; he apparently found no buyers, as his press would be a part of the next Evansham newspaper. In 1820, the Abingdon publisher John G. Ustick (421) moved his fourteen-year-old *Political Prospect* to Evansham, recasting it as the *Wythe Gazette*. It may be that Engledow instigated Ustick's relocation. Although he died at about the time of the move, his estate is recorded as leasing Engledow's press to Ustick provided that the printer did not remove that press from town. That proviso suggests that Engledow had maintained a job-printing business after Dromgoole's departure, and such a service was still a necessary part of life there; it also suggests that Ustick's residence in Abingdon, despite its longevity, had not given him either a press to relocate or the wherewithal needed to buy Engledow's formant press outright. Ustick would use the old *Luminary* press for at least two more years and perhaps until his departure from Wythe in 1833.

Engledow remained a significant personage in the county right up to his 1820 death. Once married, he was frequently appointed by the county court – on which his father William had once served – to committees that viewed property boundaries and assessed estates; he also served in the county's militia until during the War of 1812. In the wake of his unexpected death, his estate's administrators were compelled to create a system of continuing income to support eight dependents: his widow, three sons under ten, and four daughters under twenty. So leasing his press was but one rental agreement among many that went on for many years, tying his name to several landscape features in the county.

***Personal Data***

Born: ca. 1777 Fincastle (later Wythe) County, Virginia.  
Married in 1799 Margaret Dromgoole @ Winchester, Virginia.  
Died: June 1820 Rural Retreat, Wythe County, Virginia.  
Children: Sons Robert O., Richard T., and Alfred S.; daughters Comiah, Kennah,  
Malvina, and another daughter whose name is unrecorded.

Sources: Imprints; Brigham; Cappon; Kegley, *Wythe County*; Woods, *Delta Plantations*; Wythe County Will Books (1820); Federal Decennial Census, 1820.