

## 291 MCKENNIE

**Publisher**

**Warrenton**

Publisher of the *Palladium of Liberty* (1818-19) at Warrenton with James Caldwell (071).

This unnamed McKennie was a partner to James Caldwell during the second year that he published the *Palladium of Liberty* at Warrenton. Caldwell came to Fauquier County from Winchester in early 1817, and began issuing his weekly in March that year. In taking on this McKennie as a partner in March 1818, it seems that Caldwell's *Palladium* was a marginally successful, one requiring a financial subsidy in some form; indeed, when their association ended, Caldwell avoided closure by obtaining one of the licenses given to three publishers in each state to print the laws passed in each congressional session in their paper at regular advertising rates – a sizeable subsidy for any paper then. Hence, the *Palladium* eventually folded when that lucrative license was withdrawn before the 17th Congress met in 1821.

Yet while this new partner was identified only by his surname, there are tantalizing clues as to his identity. In March 1818, the widow and youngest child of a recently deceased Fauquier County physician resided in Warrenton; Matthew McKennie (1757-1812) had died fairly well-off as a result of his practice; thus, his wife Mary may have invested some of his assets in Caldwell's paper as a way to provide for minor son Beverley Randolph, perhaps as an apprentice. But it is more likely that Beverly's older brother, John Harris McKennie (239), was Caldwell's new partner. In the fall of 1817, he was a nineteen-year-old apprentice in the Winchester office of the *Republican Constellation*; Caldwell had been the foreman of that press before coming to Warrenton to publish the *Palladium* independently; J. H. McKennie absconded from the employ of his master, Jonathan Foster (168), that October, but Foster only publicized that flight in print in January 1818, after he had learned that others close by were harboring his fugitive apprentice. As this unidentified McKennie became Caldwell's partner just a month after Foster ceased publishing notices of J. H. McKennie's flight, it seems that the apprentice returned to his Fauquier County home and repaid his mentor with a familial investment in the new journal. All the same, one cannot completely discount the possibility that a third son of Mary & Matthew McKennie was Caldwell's partner here. In January 1820, John H. McKennie founded Charlottesville's first weekly, *The Central Gazette*, in conjunction with younger brother Clement P. McKennie (292); as Clement was the editor of that subsequent newspaper, and John its reported financier, Clement may have been the McKennie who associated with Caldwell in March 1818 as well.

In all this, what is most interesting is that a neighbor to the farms left to the McKennie brothers was James Monroe, the president who approved the law-printing licenses like the one granted Caldwell in 1819, when this unidentified McKennie withdrew from the paper.

***No Personal Data yet discovered.***

Sources: Imprints; Brigham; *Bicentennial History of Fauquier County*; Woods, *Albemarle County*; Papers of Dept. of Sec. of State (National Archives RG 59.2); genealogical data from McKennie family charts posted on Ancestry.com (August 2012).