

312 NETHERLAND, JOHN

Publisher

Petersburg

Publisher of the *Petersburg Daily Courier* (1814) in partnership with John Wood (456).

Netherland was a part of the Virginia printing trade for just one month in 1814. Such a brief association, as well as the context of his participation, suggests that he had simply financed a transition from a dual partnership to a single proprietorship of a Petersburg newspaper.

Netherland became one of the two proprietors of the *Petersburg Daily Courier* in November 1814. The *Courier* had been founded the preceding September by editor John Wood and printer Francis G. Yancey (464). Wood was a Scottish-born mathematician and political writer who came to Petersburg from Richmond after a falling out in the summer of 1811 with teacher and journalist Louis Hue Girardin (180) over Wood's behavior while teaching at Girardin's Hallerian Academy; he was offered a similar position at the Petersburg Academy and began teaching there in early 1812. Having previously edited papers in Frankfort, Kentucky, and in Washington, Wood sought out prospective printer-partners for publishing another journal almost from his start in Petersburg. In the summer of 1814, he convinced Yancey, a journeyman in the *Petersburg Intelligencer* office of John Dickson (134) to join him in producing the town's first daily newspaper. But Yancey soon found himself torn between the two journals; he had just made known his plans to join Wood when Dickson died and his estate pursued buyers for his profitable thrice-weekly paper; local entrepreneur Thomas Whitworth (443) moved quickly to purchase the *Intelligencer*, but he faced the same need for a practical-printer partner that did Wood with the *Courier*; Yancey was evidently more confident in prospects for the proven *Intelligencer* than for the unproven *Courier*, but had committed joining to Wood; thus, Yancey became the tradesman-partner in both papers until Wood could find a new partner.

In November 1814, Netherland took on Yancey's interest in the *Courier*, evidently providing Wood with the means to hire a replacement printer, and so allowing Yancey to return to the *Intelligencer*, where he remained until his retirement in 1828. But Wood's new alliance lasted just a month before Netherland withdrew from the *Courier* as well – suggesting that their association was designed to be a short-term transitional one. But just as Wood sought out another printer-partner, he was elected president of Petersburg Academy; that would saddle him with conflicting responsibilities as of January 1, 1815. So Wood chose to sell his journal to his new printer, George A. Martin (281), and leave his journalism career behind.

Netherland does not again appear in the record of the American print trade. Thus, it seems that he was a local figure with the wherewithal needed to assist another local personality. If so, then he was probably John Netherland III of nearby Powhatan County. By 1814, this scion of a wealthy Virginia family had inherited a considerable estate from his father, John II (d. 1803), and lacked familial obligations – a result of his wife, Mary Thurston, abandoning him for another, younger man a decade before, taking their children with her to Kentucky. This situation would have allowed John Netherland III to finance Wood's transition from one printer-partner to another, so offering the likeliest identification absent other information.

Personal Data

Born: in 1761 Cumberland County, Virginia

Died: after 1814 unknown

Wife went to Kentucky with children in 1796; no other record found.

Sources: Imprints; Brigham; Cumberland County Will & Order Books; Buckley, *Great Catastrophe*; genealogical data from Netherland family charts posted on Ancestry.com and Genealogy.com (December 2012).