

346 PURDIE, ALEXANDER JR.

Printer

Richmond

Printer in the Richmond office (1785-96) of Thomas Nicolson (315), both as apprentice and journeyman; son of Alexander Purdie, Sr. (345).

Purdie was the son of the Revolutionary-era printer Alexander Purdie of Williamsburg. But on his father's death in 1779, the surviving children – as brother Hugh later related – were "reduced ... to service employments for their subsistence," despite their father's prestige, largely a consequence of his impoverished estate. Young Alexander was bound out by the Henrico County Court in August 1785 as an apprentice printer in the new Richmond office of Thomas Nicolson, himself a Williamsburg-trained printer who had learned his craft in the printing office of his father's former partner, John Dixon Sr. (140). The junior Purdie was still in Nicolson's employ when he died in 1796, never having forged an independent identity that approached that of both his father and his master.

Personal Data

Born: in 1768 Williamsburg, Virginia.

Died: in 1796 Richmond, Virginia.

No record of wife and/or children found; likely died childless.

Sources: Gill, Apprentices; Williamsburg People files and York County Project files, CW Research Dept.; Goodwin. *Bruton Church*, account of Hugh Purdie's impressment detailed in editorial note in *Papers of Thomas Jefferson* accompanying relevant documents (summer 1790).