

**399 STANARD, EDWARD C. – [EDWARD CARTER STANARD]**

**Publisher**

**Richmond**

Publisher of the *Spirit of 'Seventy-Six* (1808-10) at Richmond and Washington with John M. Carter (084), his brother-in-law.

Stanard was an Albemarle County attorney who became a part of the Virginia print trade when he agreed to edit a campaign newspaper in Richmond that supported James Monroe over James Madison in the 1808 presidential election. He continued that paper there for a year following Madison's election, before moving it to Washington in an overt attempt to influence national policy. However, he died before those efforts bore any fruit.

Born at Roxbury in Spotsylvania County, Stanard was the son of William Stanard (1751-1807) and Elizabeth Carter (1762-1818), the fifth of their twelve children. He attended the College of William & Mary, apparently graduating in 1798, alongside his younger brother Robert, who was later a justice of the state's Supreme Court of Appeals. He then studied the law in Albemarle County, near his mother's childhood home of Blenheim Plantation, and was admitted to the bar in Charlottesville in 1800. His practice evidently brought Stanard to Richmond frequently, as he was married a Carter cousin there in 1806, and was called (and rejected) as a juror in the 1807 treason trial of Aaron Burr in the capital.

In 1808, the leadership of Virginia's Democratic-Republican party split over the choice of a successor to Thomas Jefferson as president; the majority followed Jefferson's lead and backed James Madison; but a sizable minority backed James Monroe, including the young Stanard. In the response to the split, Thomas Ritchie (360), editor of the *Richmond Enquirer* and a member of the central committee of the state party – commonly called the Richmond Junto – opened his paper to both sides in the contest in advance of the county caucuses that spring; but the state's other Republican journals refused the Monroe faction access to their pages, assuring that the Madisonians won the caucuses. This defeat did not silence the Monroviens; rather that campaign's corresponding committee decided to launch a paper of their own, choosing committee member Stanard to head up the effort.

Stanard was uniquely qualified for the task, as he had trained print tradesmen close at hand in the persons of his two brothers-in-law, John M. and James B. Carter. With their technical assistance, and with contributions from committee colleagues like George Hay, a Richmond attorney who had helped defend Burr, and John Brockenbrough, a judge who later served as president of the Bank of Virginia – both also members of the Junto – Stanard issued the first number of the new *Spirit of Seventy-Six* on September 13th. Yet even before the twice-weekly journal appeared, Stanard was attacked by Gerard Banks (019), editor and publisher of *The Virginian*. Banks started that paper in January 1808 as a campaign vehicle supporting Monroe, but after he had demurred competing with Madison in April, Banks reluctantly supported the choice of the party caucus; hence, Banks now took Stanard to task for being neither in tune with Virginians or with the principles of the Revolution, as his title implied. Still Stanard hued to an editorial line throughout the fall that evinced the paper's "frequent recurrence to fundamental principles is essential to the liberties of a Republic." In essence, his journal was the voice of the Republican faction personified in John Taylor of Caroline,

often called the *Tertium Quids*.

Unfortunately for the Monroviaans, a two-month-long newspaper campaign was not enough to carry Virginia for their candidate, never mind instigating the nationwide revolt against Madison that the paper's backers had hoped would emerge. But Stanard did not give up once Madison won the general election. Instead he found new financing for the *Spirit* and turned his campaign paper into an ongoing partisan one, albeit an anti-administration one with Republican credentials.

After a year of trying to pressure the Madison administration through appeals to Virginia Republicans from Richmond, Stanard decided to make his case from Washington itself. In November 1809, he relocated his office and paper to the national capital, retaining both the paper's name and perspective – as well as the services of John and James Carter, though losing his enslaved pressman, Solomon (522), who fled during the move. Indirect evidence suggests that the relocation may have been assisted by George Tucker and John Taylor of Caroline, both noteworthy Quids. While his paper now reached beyond Virginia to a national audience, Stanard did not have much influence over events there as he and his supporters expected, and the journal struggled as a result.

In early December 1810, barely a year after the move from Richmond, disaster struck the *Spirit of 'Seventy-Six*. Stanard had retired to nearby Leesburg to recover from a "pulmonary complaint," but died unexpectedly there instead, at approximately thirty-years of age. He left behind "a young and disconsolate widow and two infant children" for whom the Carter brothers now held some responsibility; indeed, their sister was pregnant at the time, and she gave birth to Stanard's only son four months later. In the *Spirit's* next issue, the brothers announced that "a capable successor will be sought," so keeping alive an "independent paper at the seat of general government." Yet there was no transfer of power, editorial or otherwise, until May 1813; in the meantime John M. Carter became the editorial side of a partnership with his brother James and his sister Rebecca; together the family moved their press office to Georgetown in February 1811 and soldiered on without their leader.

The family's association with John Taylor of Caroline meant that the Carters became the publishers of his collected "Arator" essays when they were first issued (anonymously) in 1813. The *Spirit* carried Taylor's first essay just three weeks after Stanard's untimely death and by February 1812, the Carter brothers were soliciting subscriptions for publishing a collection of fifty of Taylor's essays, all previously published in their *Spirit*, a project that became the 1813 Georgetown edition. But the popular work proved a short-term savior for an otherwise troubled paper. In the end, the trio abandoned the *Spirit of Seventy-Six* to pursue other ventures, defeated by the onslaught of "Mr. Madison's War." They closed their paper in March 1814 and sold their printing office in late 1815, once the capital city began to recover from its devastation at the hands of the British in August 1814.

***Personal Data***

Born: ca. 1780 Spotsylvania County, Virginia.  
Married: Nov. 27 1806 Rebecca Carter @ Henrico County, Virginia.  
Died: Dec. 8 1810 Leesburg, Virginia.  
Children: Two infant daughters at death: Anne and Elizabeth Jane; a son, James Monroe, was born after his death (April 1811).

Sources: Imprints; Brigham; Ammon, *James Monroe*; notices in the *Spirit of Seventy-Six* (1808-15), the *Petersburg Intelligencer* (1808-10) and the *National Intelligencer* (1812-15); genealogical data from Carter and Stanard family histories in *Tyler's Quarterly*.