

Today in Columbus History:

On February 3, 1859, an article appeared in the *Daily Columbus Daily Times* entitled "The Wanderer," that told how Captain Corrie claimed the ship *Wanderer* as his own. The story of the *Wanderer* takes place over a good swath of the globe from New York to Charleston to the Congo River of Africa and Jekyll Island, Georgia. However, it has several ties to people and events in Columbus.

Corrie bought the *Wanderer* when it stopped in Charleston on its way from New York to New Orleans in 1858. The boat was a racing yacht, which the new owner converted for use in the transatlantic slave trade, fifty years after that trade was abolished. It was one of the last ships to do so. After picking several hundred Africans from the mouth of the Congo River in late 1858, the *Wanderer* offloaded them at Jekyll Island, Georgia. News of their arrival circulated quickly and sightings of them began appearing in the press.

Members of the press theorized that Charles Augustus Lafayette Lamar, was the money behind the venture and the actual owner of the *Wanderer*. Lamar was a fervent believer in the resumption of the African slave trade. He was the son of Gazaway Bugg Lamar, one of the wealthiest men in the South who differed with his son on the resumption of the slave trade.

Columbus businessman Randolph L. Mott was indicted along with Lamar, Corrie and others in Savannah in 1859. Federal authorities charged Mott with "holding an African negro boy" and others in the enterprise with piracy and other offenses. They had their cases dropped in May 1860. Mott's "African negro boy" was likely Frank Bambush a twelve-year-old captive brought to America aboard the *Wanderer*. Bambush was Mott's slave and remained with him for almost a decade after the Civil War's end.

According to a note in his book, *The Last Battle of the Civil War*, Charles J. Swift thought that Frank probably witnessed the death of Lamar at the end of the Battle of Columbus. A Federal trooper killed Lamar a few yards from Mott's house at the end of the Franklin (14th) Street bridge. Supposedly, Lamar tried to rally the Confederate forces as they streamed out of the Georgia side of the bridge. The attempt failed when Lamar was shot from his horse.

While many do not believe that the Battle of Columbus was the last battle of the Civil War, it certainly was the last major military engagement of that conflict. And, according to the *North American Review* magazine of December 1886, Union General William Tecumseh Sherman believed that Lamar was the last Confederate killed in the war.

After the battle, they buried Lamar in Linwood Cemetery. The next year, his family moved his remains to Laurel Grove cemetery in Savannah. Mott and Bambush meet unnatural ends, as well. Bambush drowned in the Chattahoochee in a boating accident in 1874. His body did not surface for several weeks. Mott died after stepping in front of a moving train in an Atlanta railyard in 1881. Bambush is buried somewhere in Porterdale Cemetery and Mott is in an unmarked grave in Linwood.

Compiled by Daniel A. Bellware, Muscogee Genealogical Society

Clipping from Georgia Historic Newspapers (GALILEO).

Our weekly snippets of Columbus history are usually based on a few days-worth of searching through the most popular sources for Muscogee County history. Meant to inspire readers to explore more about Columbus history, they are not exhaustive dissertations on the topic and may contain mistakes. If you have corrections or additional information, feel free to share them with the group.

The Wanderer.

Capt. Corrie filed his answer to the libel of the WANDERER, on Saturday, at Savannah, claiming her as his own, and resisting the ground of the libel. The United States district Attorney moved that the claim be dismissed, and a day is to be appointed for the argument, says the *Republican*.

Article on "The Wanderer" from the *Columbus Daily Times*, February 3, 1859, <https://gahistoricnewspapers.galileo.usg.edu/>.



From the front page of Harper's Weekly January 15, 1859, at <https://babel.hathitrust.org>

The Africans.

Some thirty or forty of the young Africans, supposed to have been brought by the *Wanderer* to the coast of Georgia, passed through Montgomery some days since. We have read various accounts of them—their docility and obedience to instructions. Those that passed through Montgomery are minutely described by correspondents of the *Tuskegee Republican* and *Marion Commonwealth*, both of which favor the re-opening of the slave trade. Ignorant as yet, of the true meaning of the language, which they utter with great distinctness, they are directed principally by signs and gestures. They are said to be remarkably “pert and lively.” A correspondent of the *Marion Commonwealth*, (Ala.) alludes to the manner of getting them on board the steamer at Montgomery. He says :

“For some time the Africans could not be induced to go on board the boat, and seemed much frightened at the smoke, &c. Doubtless they had a perfect horror of traveling on water again, after having so recently endured a long and crowd-

Article from *Columbus Daily Times*, January 3, 1859, <https://gahistoricnewspapers.galileo.usg.edu/>.



Charles Augustus Lafayette Lamar from FindAGrave.com



Randolph Lawler Mott from the *Last Battle of the Civil War* by Charles J. Swift (1915).

U. S. Circuit Court.

True bills were found by the Grand Jury, yesterday in the following cases :

United States vs. C A L Lamar—Holding an African negro called Corrie.

U. S. vs. C A L Lamar—Holding two African negroes, called Cuffie and Gumbo.

U. S. vs. C A L Lamar and Richard F Aken—Holding thirty-six African negroes in Telfair county.

U. S. vs. John F Tucker—Holding African negroes.

U. S. vs. Randolph L Mott—Holding an African negro boy.

After disposing of a number of civil suits, the Court adjourned until Friday next.

Notice of charges brought by Savannah grand jury in *Columbus Daily Times*, April 18, 1859, <https://gahistoricnewspapers.galileo.usg.edu/>.

The Wanderer Trials.

SAVANNAH, May 28.—In the U. States District Court to-day, the District Attorney entered a *nol. pros.* in the case against C. A. L. Lamar, R. F. Aken, R. L. Mott and John F. Tucker, and in the piracy case against Nicholas Brown. All these cases are known as connected with the slave yacht Wanderer. Prosecutions still exist against Captains Farnham and Corrie, for piracy, and against Messrs. Trowbridge and Brown for holding Africans.

Trial article from the Athens *Southern Watchman*, May 31, 1860,
<https://gahistoricnewspapers.galileo.usg.edu/>.