

Today in Columbus History:

On October 21, 1857, a story appeared in the *Daily Sun* entitled "A Serious Affair" reporting on an incident between James L. Garrard and Cicero McBryde wherein McBryde was on the receiving end of some very serious knife wounds. The reason for the difficulty is never explained, but several possibilities come to mind. Was it honor, money or possibly a girl? As the story goes, Garrard tracked down McBryde at his room at the corner of Broad and Bryan (Broadway and 13th), threatened to kill him and then did his best to follow through.

Garrard retreated to his own room and threatened to shoot anyone who tried to arrest him. The original story ends there but Garrard's does not. He surrendered to Sheriff Brooks the next day and was booked on charges, to be tried in the next session of the Superior court. It is not clear if he posted bond or was let out for some other reason. On the same day that the Superior Court next met, Garrard was involved in another, more violent confrontation on the streets of Columbus. On November 2, 1857, Garrard and a woman were found bleeding on the sidewalk. The woman was dead, with a stab wound to the heart. Garrard had multiple stab wounds from a bowie knife, apparently self-inflicted. He was alive when found but not expected to survive. Garrard succumbed to his wounds shortly thereafter.

Garrard's mother lived in Chattahoochee County, but he lived in Columbus with and his brother Alfred. Alfred died of consumption less than two years after his brother. The family had both Alfred and James buried in Linwood Cemetery.

The Columbus Enquirer of November 10, 1857, described Garrard's female victim, Susan Brown, as a "Cyprian" by profession. If the meaning of term escapes you, another article in the Daily Sun describing her as "a woman of easy virtue" should clear that up. The term was popular in England prior to 1820, during the Regency Period. At that time, it referred to a high-class prostitute. It may have been popularized by Harriett Wilson, a famous courtesan who threw a "Cyprian's Ball" in London where fellow courtesans could find benefactors. The meaning may have loosened up a bit in the intervening years and was rarely used in Columbus. Why Cyprian? Cyprus was the homeland of Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love.

Although seriously injured, Cicero McBryde survived the attack and went on to marry Doratha Feagan in Russell County, Alabama in 1870. Cicero and D.A., as she was known, show up in the 1880 census in Seale, Alabama. However, Cicero died two years later of meningitis and is buried in the McBryde Cemetery in Talbot County, Georgia. Clipping from Georgia Historic Newspapers (GALILEO).

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.

A Serious Affair.

On Monday night last about eight o'clock, a serious difficulty occurred in this city between Mr. James Garrard and Mr. Cicero McBride, in which the latter was very seriously cut about the face and neck, with a knife in the hands of Garrard. The particulars, as we understand them, are substantially these: About 8 o'clock that evening Garrard went to McBride's room, at Hull & Bussey's corner, where he was a clerk, and called him, and told him he intended to kill him, and forthwith commenced cutting him, and doubtless would have killed him on the spot if he had not been prevented. We do not know that McBride is very dangerously, but he is very seriously cut.

On yesterday our city was the scene of considerable excitement, in consequence of the refusal of Garrard to be arrested by the civil authorities. He took refuge in his room, and defied the officers, threatening to shoot any person who entered his room for the purpose of arresting him, and the persuasion of his friends had no effect in altering this determination. The officers not wishing to resort to extreme measures if it could possibly be avoided, after consultation, resolved to wait awhile until his excitement cooled a little, to see if he would adopt a more rational course, but up to a late hour yesterday evening he had not been arrested, and we learn showed no disposition to relent.

The majesty of the law should be maintained at all hazards and at whatever cost. The safety of the people demands it, and the officers of the law must do their duty let who may be the victim.

Article from the *Columbus Daily Sun* October 21, 1879, <https://gahistoricnewspapers.galileo.usg.edu/>

Arrested.

James Garrard, whom we mentioned yesterday as holding himself in defiance of the officers of the law and refusing to be arrested for cutting Cicero McBride on Monday night last, peaceably gave himself up to Deputy Sheriff Brooks, yesterday morning, and waiving an examination, he was bound over by Justices Laws and Hutchins, in a bond of \$5000, to answer at the next term of our Superior Court.

Article from the *Columbus Daily Sun*, October 22, 1857, <https://gahistoricnewspapers.galileo.usg.edu/>

Murder and Attempted Suicide.
The suburbs of our city on Monday night, the 2d inst., was the scene of a most terrible tragedy. James L. Garrard and Susan Brown (a Cyprian by profession) were found on the sidewalk, Garrard cut and stabbed with a bowie-knife and the young woman dead at his feet—stabbed to the heart! Garrard has since died.

Article from the *Columbus Enquirer*, November 10, 1857, <https://gahistoricnewspapers.galileo.usg.edu/>



The Cyprian's Ball at the Argyle Rooms by Robert Cruikshank, <http://www.regencylookingglass.com/2018/07/beau-brummell-and-famous-snubs.html>