

## Today in Columbus History:

On November 29, 1864, the *Columbus Daily Times* ran a story entitled "Our Difficulties" to apologize to its readers for the lack of interesting news. The story mentions the interruption of telegraph communications east of Macon. Sherman's March to the Sea was well underway, having started two weeks earlier in Atlanta and moving south and east towards Savannah. Communications throughout the region were in disarray. To make matters worse, the editor of the paper, James Whitfield Warren was away, at the front.

Warren was the owner and editor of the paper. He and Peyton Colquitt purchased the *Columbus Daily Times* from Tennent Lomax in 1858. Colquitt died in September 1863 from wounds received at Chickamauga, leaving the paper in Warren's hands.

Warren was born in 1826 in Eatonton, Putnam County. The Warren family moved to Columbus in its earliest days. The family plot in Linwood Cemetery contains the graves of three of Warren's siblings who died in the 1830's - Martha (1831), Missouriia (1833) and John (1835). Their mother Sophia joined them in 1838. The year before her death, the City Council announced that it created a diagonal street between Broad and Oglethorpe (1<sup>st</sup> Ave.) and named for his father, John Warren, a member of that body.

Warren graduated from what would become the University of Georgia in 1846 and studied at Harvard in 1847. He practiced law in Columbus starting in 1848 and married Sarah Vivian Howard here in 1850. She died in 1852 (see the Today in Columbus History post by Callie McGinnis on March 23, 2021). Warren was active in the Southern Rights Party in the 1850's and the Muscogee Railroad, as well. He remarried to Laura Wimberly of Twiggs County in 1859, with whom he had three sons and a daughter.

Warren left the newspaper business in October 1865 when he sold the *Times* to the *Daily Sun*. The first issue of the combined papers included a notice from Warren announcing the transaction. Afterward, he took up farming in Calhoun County, at least according to the 1870 census. His life took a dramatic turn at the age of 45. He was appointed secretary to Governor James M. Smith January 12, 1872 and remained in that post until his death in 1903. He was secretary to ten governors – James M. Smith, Alfred Colquitt, Alexander Stephens, James S. Boynton, Henry Dickerson McDaniel, John B. Gordon, William J. Northern, William Y. Atkinson, Allen D. Candler, and Joseph M. Terrell.

Warren was an effective secretary and his value in that position increased with each administration. It helped that each governor was from the same party (Democratic). Warren remained in that job until the day he died. He was returning to his Kirkwood home just outside of Atlanta, crossing the tracks of the Georgia Railroad when a train ran him over. His injuries were horrific and the newspaper descriptions quite graphic. After its account, the *Savannah Morning News*, summarized saying, "the body was gathered up in fragments, brought into the city and turned over to the undertakers to be prepared for burial."

Warren lived next to the tracks and his daughter Hattie was on the porch when she witnessed the accident. She fainted at the sight and required medical attention herself. Governor Terrell ordered the state flag flown at half-mast for ten days and the state capital closed during Warren's funeral in recognition of his long service.

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.

OUR DIFFICULTIES.—Owing to the absence of the editor, Mr. Warren, at the Georgia front, and the non-reception of our eastern exchanges, as well as the interruption of telegraphic communication east of Macon, we shall doubtless be seriously embarrassed in the way of keeping up an interesting paper, but promise to do the best we can, which is all that can be required of anybody. Under the circumstances we shall have to crave the indulgence of our readers, and live in the hope that our present troubles may soon be obviated by the annihilation of Sherman's army. This we shall confidently expect to hear in a few days, unless by masterly strategy, he manages to elude the snares being laid for him.

Article on "Our Difficulties" from the *Columbus Daily Times*, November 29, 1864, <https://gahistoricnewspapers.galileo.usg.edu/>.

**COLUMBUS:**  
TUESDAY MORNING, OCT. 3, 1865.  
Reading Matter on Every Page.  
**Consolidation of The Sun and The Times.**  
The undersigned having sold out THE TIMES newspaper to Wm. L. Scruggs, editor of THE DAILY SUN, have transferred to him the material, files, books, library, and good will of the office, and he having united his interest with Messrs. Thomas Gilbert & Co., proprietors of THE DAILY SUN, we commend him and his co-partners to our patrons and friends as worthy of their confidence and support.  
THE TIMES having been thus united with THE SUN, we take pleasure in recommending "THE SUN AND TIMES" to our former patrons.  
J. W. WARREN & CO.

Note from James Warren in the *Columbus Daily Sun and Times*, October 3, 1865, explaining the combination of the *Sun* and *Times* newspapers, <https://gahistoricnewspapers.galileo.usg.edu/>.

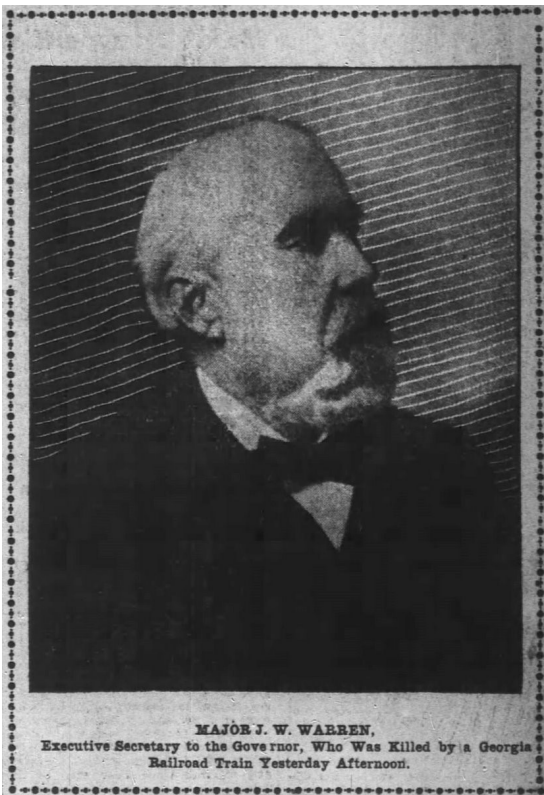
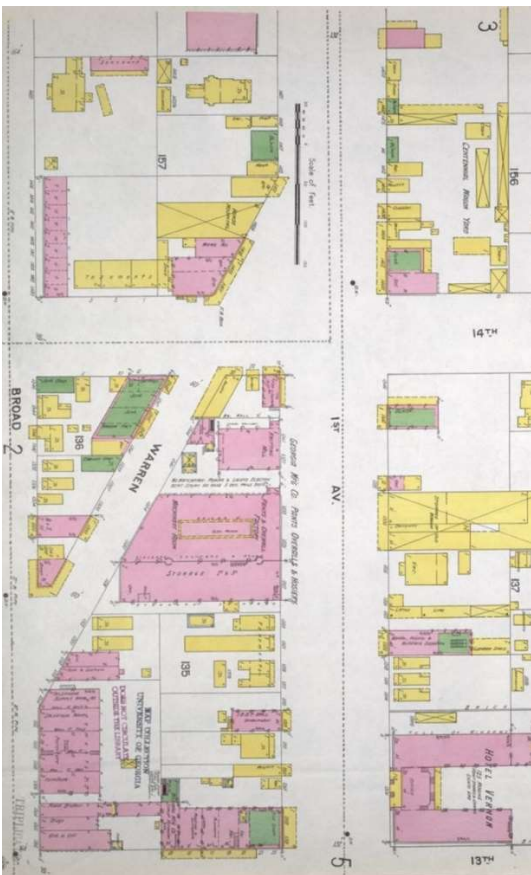


Photo of the James W. Warren, as it appeared in the May 5, 1903, edition of the *Atlanta Constitution*, courtesy of FindAGrave.com.



Sanborn map of Columbus from 1900 showing Warren Street between Broad and 1<sup>st</sup> Ave, south of 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Digital Library of Georgia, [https://dlg.usg.edu/record/dlg\\_sanb\\_columbus-1900?canvas=3&x=2340&y=4115&w=9818](https://dlg.usg.edu/record/dlg_sanb_columbus-1900?canvas=3&x=2340&y=4115&w=9818)

# 'NEATH CAR WHEELS

MAJ. JAMES W. WARREN WAS  
GROUND TO DEATH.

STRUCK BY GEORGIA TRAIN

AS HE SOUGHT TO CROSS THE  
RAILROAD TRACK.

Accident Occurred at Kirkwood,  
Near Atlanta—Maj. Warren, who  
was the Veteran Secretary of the  
State Executive Committee, was  
on his way home—his daughter  
saw the accident and fainted.  
His career—had served the State  
since 1872—News from Atlanta.

Headline from the article on Warren's death from the *Savannah Morning News*, May 5, 1903,  
<https://gahistoricnewspapers.galileo.usg.edu/>.