

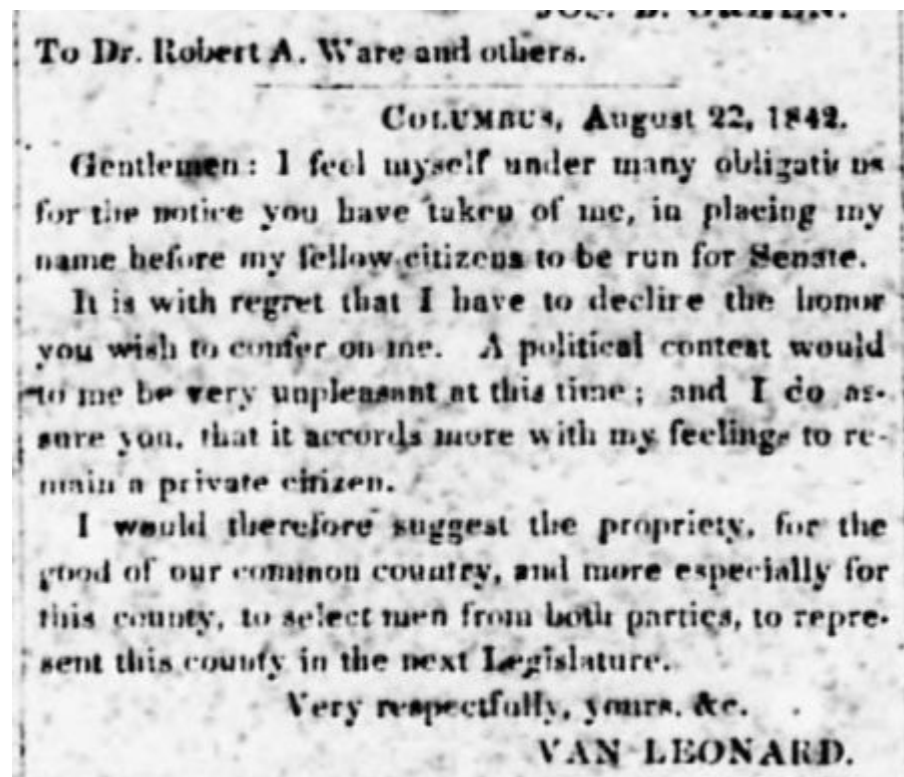
Today in Columbus History: On August 24, 1842, in the *Columbus Enquirer*, Mr. Van de Van Leonard wrote an open letter declining his nomination as a candidate for senator – saying he would prefer to remain a private citizen. Van Leonard was a very prominent citizen of Columbus. Coming here in 1836, he settled at Wildwood, a beautiful home built in 1831 by Matthew Evans (whose daughter novelist Augusta Jane was born there). Leonard was born in 1790 in Virginia; he died here in 1861 of consumption and is buried in Linwood. He was a cotton farmer and an industrialist – being one of the directors of the Howard Manufacturing Co., in 1847. Along the way, Leonard was married three times and had 15 children (according to one Ancestry.com source). His youngest was Annie Leonard, who married Louis F. Garrard and became the owner of Wildwood. Sadly, the house was destroyed in the last quarter of the 20th century during an attempt to move it to another location.

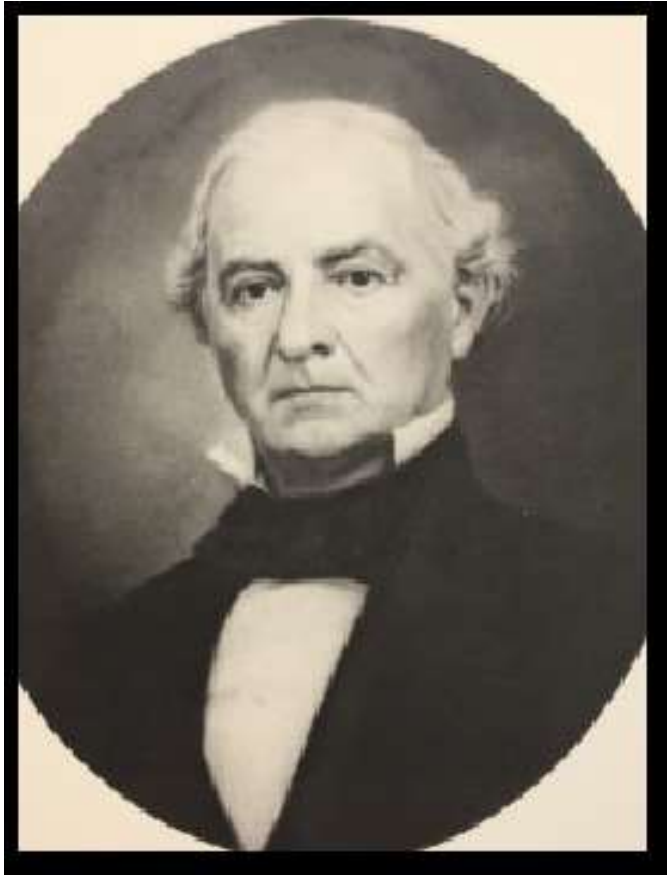
Compiled by Callie McGinnis, Muscogee Genealogical Society

Our 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.

Clipping from Georgia Historic Newspapers (GALILEO).

<https://gahistoricnewspapers.galileo.usg.edu>





Portrait from Findagrave.com

At his residence near Columbus, on the 2d inst., **Col. VAN LEONARD**, in the 72d year of his age. He was formerly a Representative in the Legislature from Morgan county, whence he removed in 1836 to Columbus. He also represented Muscogee co.; and in all the relations of life, public and private, was just and honorable, enjoying the entire confidence of the people. He had been many years a professor of religion, and died a pious member of the Methodist E. Church.

Obituary for Leonard in the Southern Recorder (Milledgeville), Aug. 13, 1861.



"Wildwood", the home of Van Leonard, and of his descendants, the Garrards. Augusta J. Evans, the author, was born in this house. Built 1831.

For many years the springs at Wildwood furnished water for the city of Columbus, flowing through hollow logs. Photo from Columbus on the Chattahoochee by Etta Worsley.