





# PART ONE: The Events



## The Sinking of the *Pulaski*

**B**uilt by the Savannah and Charleston Steam Packet Company, the steamship *Pulaski* was the pride of both cities. She was a sleek, wooden vessel measuring 206 feet in length with a 25-foot beam, a depth of 13 feet, 7 inches, and displaced 687 tons.

Boasting of the *Pulaski*, an April 1838 advertisement in the *Georgian* proclaimed:

No expense has been spared to have a vessel to answer the purpose she is intended to accomplish. Her engine—one of the best ever made in this country, of 225 horsepower: her boilers are of the best copper, and great strength. Her qualities as a sea vessel for ease, safety, and speed are superior to any steamer that ever floated on the American waters.

An elaborate claim, yet not unfounded. The *Pulaski* was a marvel and many, particularly Savannah's elite, were thrilled with the new vessel and her eloquent accommodations. The *Pulaski*, a side-wheeler steam packet, was slated for the Savannah-to-Baltimore run with brief stops in Charleston, South Carolina.

### SAVANNAH DEPARTURE

Wednesday morning, June 13, 1838, dawned bright and clear. Scheduled to make her fourth voyage, the *Pulaski* waited patiently in the Savannah River. As the early morning sun gave way to the Savannah humidity, ninety-five passengers boarded, looking forward to a pleasant and enjoyable trip. Among them was Gazaway Lamar, principal owner of the vessel, and his wife, five daughters and his fourteen-year-old son, Charles. Thirty-seven deck hands were at their service, along with Captain Dubois, an experienced and able-bodied seaman.

Arriving at Charleston that evening, the *Pulaski* picked up sixty-five additional passengers and began her run up the Carolina coast. Around ten o'clock that night she began to pitch in rough seas and several passengers began vomiting over her side. Others, with stronger stomachs, bedded down for the night. Though seas were rough, the night sky glistened with summer stars. North Carolina's outer banks should be in sight by morning. But around 11 P.M. an event took place that would alter the destiny of 197 souls.

### A NIGHT OF HELL

Without warning, the *Pulaski*'s starboard boiler blew up, sending concussions throughout the ship, shattering the starboard side of her mid-section and sweeping some passengers into the sea. The less fortunate were scalded to death. The bulkhead between the boilers and forward cabins also gave way. As the ship heeled to her starboard side, the Atlantic began to rush in.

First Mate Hibbert, who had taken over the watch at the fore-castle around ten o'clock, searched for Captain Dubois, but in vain. Dubois was never seen again, probably blown off the ship. Minutes passed like hours as panicked passengers clad in bed-clothes tried to remain alive. After forty minutes, survivors climbed to the promenade deck and huddled, wondering what to do. But the ship began to rip in two as both the bow and the stern rose out of the water, then came crashing down.

Dozens of passengers sought refuge on the extreme part of the bow. Others clung to furniture and wreckage. As the vessel sank, four lifeboats were lowered. Two of the boats capsized, while the other two took on passengers. Only forty-five minutes after the boiler explosion nearly half of the *Pulaski*'s passengers were dead—drowned, scalded, or crushed by falling masts. Others had panicked and jumped overboard.

After searching for survivors for most of the night, passengers in the two lifeboats reluctantly rowed away and set course for the North Carolina shore. But before they made landfall, five unlucky souls drowned when one of the boats capsized within sight of land. The second boat, making way against strong breakers, landed safely.

But there were other survivors still splashing aimlessly in the

Atlantic. Major Heath and Second Captain Pearson lashed together floating wreckage with ropes and fashioned a crude raft, taking twenty-two people on board.

As they tossed about in the open sea, Thursday turned to Friday and Friday to Saturday as they clung to life and any glimmer of hope. Thirst became unbearable, and Heath and Pearson had to forcibly keep others from drinking seawater. Most, with blistered faces, lips, and necks, collapsed. Others, without shirts, baked by day and shivered in the cold at night. On Saturday morning, four more survivors, clinging to wreckage, were plucked from the ocean and climbed aboard the raft.

The first ray of hope appeared when a small dot on the horizon turned out to be the Carolina coastline. Hopes were shattered, however, when strong winds swept the raft out to sea again. Adding insult to injury, a driving rain stung exposed bodies as brisk seas turned into a gale.

Monday morning broke calm and cloudless. By mid-afternoon, four vessels had been spotted, each bringing a measure of optimism, each passing by without notice. Some forlorn survivors, caught in the throws of despair, gave up and prepared for death.

Tuesday morning broke as one weary survivor thought he spotted sails on the horizon. The *Henry Camerdon*, a Wilmington-bound schooner, was making a beeline toward the raft. Finally, the castaways' nightmare drew to an end. The survivors were hauled in, fed, clothed, and nursed back to health.

Meanwhile, another small portion of wreckage was found with four survivors, two of them Savannahians: Gazaway Lamar's son Charles—years later killed in battle during the Civil War—and Robert Hutchinson. Gazaway also survived, but he paid a heavy price in the disaster. Except for his son, he lost his entire family, including his wife, five children and a niece.

## AFTERMATH

News of the *Pulaski's* fate reached Savannah on Thursday, a week after the disaster. Gloom hung over the city for days as friends and relatives waited for casualty reports.

Two days later, news broke that another steam packet, the *New*

*York*, on her way to Virginia, spotted the tiny raft. But its captain, intent on maintaining his schedule, failed to stop.

By year's end, an inquiry concluded that the explosion was caused by neglect. The *Pulaski's* second engineer permitted water to boil off in the ship's starboard boiler, then let in a fresh supply of water on heated copper, with deadly results.

With steamship fatalities mounting yearly, Congress finally bowed to public pressure and passed regulations governing the inspections of steamers. But for 100 *Pulaski* victims it had come too late.



## Winged Death: Savannah's Yellow Fever Epidemics

“**T**O COME IS DEATH!! DEATH!! NOTHING BUT DEATH!” read the headlines in the October 11, 1854, edition of the *Savannah Morning News*. That year Savannah was in the throes of another yellow fever epidemic, also known as the “black vomit.” It was the second of three major yellow fever epidemics that the city would suffer in the 19th century. In 1820, 1854, and again in 1876, the fever ravaged the city, bringing suffering, misery, and death to thousands.

Due to its geographic location, with an abundance of surrounding water—marshes, rivers, and streams—Savannah was the perfect breeding ground for the *aedes aegypti*, commonly called the mosquito. And the relatively level topography that surrounds the city's center meant that stagnant water was common. Add the fact that 19th century Savannah was largely dependent on international shipping, which left it vulnerable to disease brought by sailors from foreign ports, and the all the ingredients were in place for major health catastrophes.

### A KILLER

The first major yellow fever outbreak occurred in 1820. Earlier that year a fire had devastated much of the city, razing 500 buildings



Plaque in Colonial Cemetery honoring Savannah's 1820 yellow fever victims. (Photo courtesy Henderson Studios, Savannah)

and homes. Destroyed, burned-out buildings coupled with heavy rains created ripe conditions for mosquito breeding.

The first outbreak of yellow fever that year began in August and lasted through mid-October. At the beginning of the fever's outbreak, Savannah's population numbered around 15,000. Within two months all but 6,000 had evacuated.

Other sources cite a smaller population, but still indicate that the majority of Savannahians fled harm's way. As cold weather approached, the fever finally subsided. But it claimed nearly 700 lives.

## SYMPTOMS

Contracting a serious disease, particularly yellow fever, in those days almost always meant a certain painful and particularly hideous death. The first symptom noticed would be a fever. Soon, chills began and you would become bedridden. As high fevers

zapped your strength, severe back pain ensued and you would develop jaundice—a yellowing of the skin and whites of the eyes, hence the name yellow fever.

Uncontrollable hemorrhaging from your nose, gums, and stomach followed. Then vomiting began, usually a dark black color. In the terminal/final stage, delirium and convulsions plagued many. Finally, you would lapse into a coma. And if you didn't die from the disease, you still weren't off the hook. Numerous cases were reported of people in comas being mistaken for dead and being quickly buried—alive! Approximately 60 percent of yellow fever victims died.

The second major yellow fever epidemic in Savannah broke out in 1854. Like the 1820 epidemic, it, too, began in August and lasted until the autumn chill killed the mosquitoes.

Prominent citizens who could afford it fled the city at the first mention of the dreaded disease. Left behind were the less fortunate: Irish immigrants, sailors, blacks, and visitors. Just the mention of the name—yellow fever—would send a city into panic. That year yellow fever claimed over 1,000 Savannahians, ushering in a national call to find a cure.

### SEARCHING FOR ANSWERS

A handful of dedicated Savannah physicians usually stayed behind to take care of the sick and dying during outbreaks. But some of them also contracted the disease and died.

Dr. Richard Arnold, named the hero of the 1854 epidemic, worked virtually around the clock caring for those in need. At the time he wrote: “For six weeks my average sleep is four and a half hours in the 24. I am in the buggy, except for meals, from 6 A.M. to midnight.”

Not only was Dr. Arnold deemed the hero of the 1854 epidemic, but he later became head of the American Medical Association, trying desperately to find a solution to the problem. But medical research was still in the dark ages. While many worked tirelessly for an answer, their efforts proved fruitless.

One theory claimed that vapors from nearby swamps and marshes carried the sickness. All thought that the condition was contagious, adding to widespread panic. Only years later did they learn it was not communicable.

Ignorant of the disease's origins, physicians prescribed remedies that were little more than ridiculous. Some advocated the application of rags dipped in vinegar, while others thought that sniffing pieces of camphor would help. A few mixed lemon juice, salt, soapsuds, molasses, quinine, and soda. Some used snuff, others stuffed garlic in their shoes. A number of physicians prescribed opium and marijuana. Citizens were known to fire muskets into the air to try to ward off the disease. And, at least on one occasion, the local militia rolled out its cannon and fired several volleys down the streets in an effort to render the air "pure."

Within a few years, the medical community narrowed the list of the disease's possible culprits. Dr. Josiah Nott of Mobile, Alabama, developed a theory of infection by insect transmission. Dr. Arnold substantiated his claims. But it would be years, and at least for Savannah, one more major epidemic before real answers provided relief.

### **FINAL PLAGUE**

The 1876 plague followed the same pattern as earlier epidemics. This one started in the heat of August and subsided when fall temperatures brought in cold air. By September 4, Savannah resembled a ghost town. Businesses were closed and even city government virtually ceased to exist. Entire blocks of homes became vacant as more and more fled the city. By the end of the epidemic, 1,066 Savannahians had perished.

### **A SOLUTION**

In the 1880s, Cuban physician Carlos Finlay proposed the mosquito as the cause of the disease. People contract yellow fever from the bite of the infected female mosquito, Finlay claimed.

By 1900, the U.S. Yellow Fever Commission verified his findings. Since then, mosquito control and immunization have eliminated the disease in North America. But the scourge still thrives in Africa and South America, inflicting misery, heartache, and death.



## Sherman in Savannah

**T**he *Savannah Republican* called them “desperately jaded men and animals.” The southern populace wasn’t so kind. But they were coming and nothing could stop them. Atlanta had already fallen, and now Savannah stood in their path. Sixty thousand battle-hardened veterans were marching this way.

As Sherman’s army completed its destructive March to the Sea, Savannah prepared the best she could. Yet all she could muster to greet the coming Blue hosts was a ragtag force of men, mostly boys too young for conscription, old men, the walking wounded, and small groups of army regulars.

And the commander of Savannah’s defenses, Gen. William J. Hardee, determined to make a stand, or at least to pretend to do so.

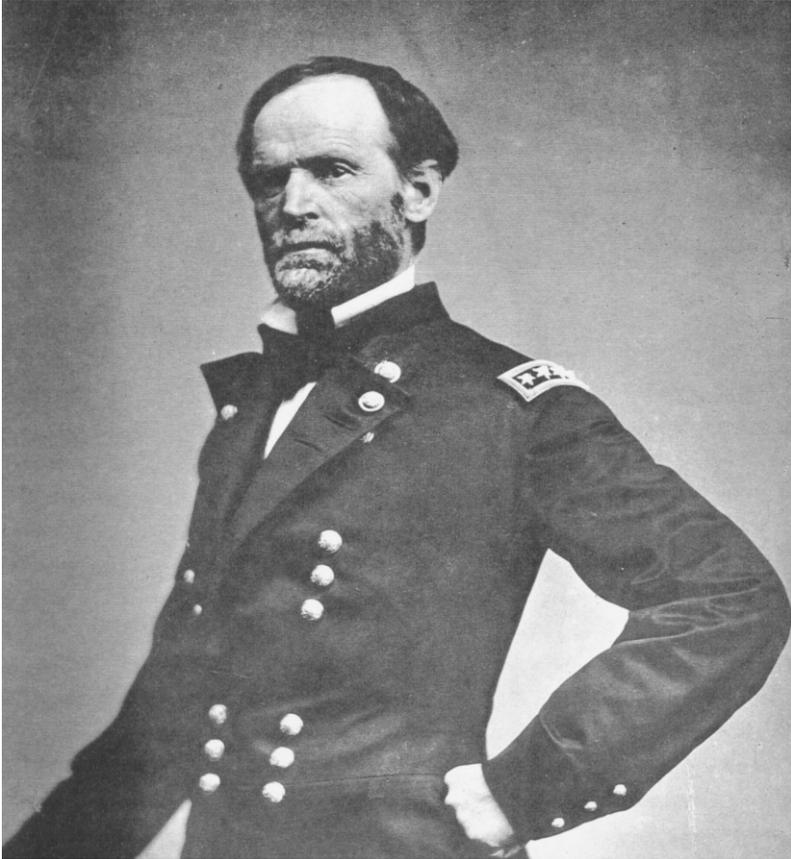
On December 8, 1864, Sherman reached Pooler, 8 miles from Savannah. On the 9th, the first Union troops reached Savannah’s defenses. The next day Sherman’s entire force invaded the area. Facing them were roughly 10,000 Rebel troops spread thinly across a 15-mile defensive perimeter.

### STANDING THEIR GROUND

After a visit to Savannah, Gen. P.G.T. Beauregard—Hardee’s commander—instructs Hardee to preserve his command at all costs, including the evacuation of the city. The much-needed troops will be called on again if Sherman is to meet any resistance as he swings into Carolina. The troops are deemed more valuable than the city. With the city invested and flanked on every side but the north, the Savannah River and the Plank Road on the South Carolina shore is the only escape route.

On the 11th the pop of musket fire and the crack of small arms is heard as Confederate and Union troops skirmish along the defensive arch. As the Union command holds a council of war, its troops dig in and wait for orders.

To establish communication with the Union fleet anchored in Wassau Sound and open the path to the sea, Union forces make quick work of Fort McAllister’s defenders, seizing the fort in just fifteen minutes.



Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman. (Photo courtesy Library of Congress)

On the 17th formal communication between generals Sherman and Hardee begin. Through a flag of truce sent to the Rebel lines, Sherman demands surrender, stating: “[We] shall wait for a reasonable time for your answer before opening with heavy ordnance.”

Yet Hardee plays the fox, buying precious time. “Your statement that you have, for some days, held every avenue by which the people and garrison can be supplied, is incorrect,” he replies. “I am in constant communication with my department.”

Though Hardee refuses to capitulate, Sherman postpones the siege. For the first time since the beginning of his destructive march from Atlanta, he hesitates. Later in his memoirs he justifies his actions, claiming that the “ground was difficult” and that similar assaults had all “proved so bloody” that he “concluded to make one more effort to completely surround Savannah on all sides.”

But not all of Sherman’s generals had the jitters. Corps commander Gen. Henry W. Slocum is adamant to his commander: “Damn it, let us take this plank road and shut the fellows in!” Slocum wanted to land troops across the Savannah to prevent Hardee’s escape.

Sherman considers the situation, but waffles. He inflates Confederate numbers, placing them at 15,000, along with what he described as “good artilleryists.” Adding to Sherman’s hesitation, two Confederate ironclads, the *CSS Savannah* and the *CSS Georgia*, as well as two gunboats lie waiting in the Savannah River.

In a letter to General Grant, updating him on the situation, Sherman writes that he intends to bomb the city, but “not risk the lives of our men by assaults across the narrow causeways.”

Finally, on December 19, Sherman agrees to send troops across the Savannah River, but the force is small and quickly contained by Gen. “Fightin’ Joe” Wheeler’s Confederate cavalry. Slocum presses for more troops, but Sherman vacillates. He eventually withdraws the 1,500 he has already dispatched, saying that he wanted his army to remain intact in case they were called to Virginia to join forces with Grant.

Capitalizing on Sherman’s indecision, Hardee has already begun construction of pontoon bridges to span the Savannah River. The first stretches from the foot of West Broad (now Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard) and reaches 1,000 feet across to Hutchinson Island. A second bridge spans the distance from Hutchinson Island to Pennyworth Island, and the third stretches across the Back River to South Carolina.

## THE EVACUATION

On the night of December 20, the first of Hardee’s troops begin to cross the river. Straw is put down to muffle the sound of horses

and wagons and a heavy barrage of Confederate artillery booms in the distance to cover the withdrawal and to keep Federal troops pinned down. Cannon that couldn't be taken are spiked and ammunition is dumped into the river.

As the last of the Southern troops cross into Carolina, a reluctant crew scuttles the *Georgia* near Fort Jackson. The *Savannah* decides to fight her way out of the harbor and make it to sea, but she, too, would have to be scuttled. And a skeleton force of Rebel soldiers keeps the campfires on the defensive lines alive to make the Federals believe that the trenches are still occupied.

It is a ruse, a gamble—but it works. The next morning a few Federal infantrymen cautiously raise their heads to look out over the trenches. They are joined by more curious soldiers. When they muster the courage to climb out of the trenches and walk to the Rebel lines, they are in for a shock. Nothing remains but smoldering campfires. The Rebel army has vanished.

General Sherman is making his way back from Hilton Head and a conference with General Foster about the Savannah situation when informed of the evacuation. Stranded on a mud bar, he transfers boats and finally returns to camp. He voices his disappointment in several letters, and later in his memoirs.

If Sherman was disappointed, Secretary of War Edwin Stanton was furious. He stated: "It is a sore disappointment that Hardee was able to get off his fifteen thousand from Sherman's sixty thousand. It looks like protracting the war while the armies continue to escape."

Stanton was right. Sherman would meet Hardee and his men again in Bentonville, North Carolina, on March 19, 1865, and fight the last major battle of the Civil War. Though he would be victorious and help bring the war to a close, he would suffer over 1,600 casualties from a foe that he had let escape.



## Politics and Corruption

If politics today are distasteful, with public mistrust, a recently impeached president, and lack of voter confidence, they hardly compare with the politics of our Founding Fathers, where corruption cast an ugly shadow on the national landscape. Contrary to what most of us learned in school, the cradle of our democracy was born out of a den of political iniquity.

And Georgia's political heritage didn't escape unscathed, either. It is rife with tales of political corruption, vote tampering, intimidation, Congressional hearings, impeachments, and intrigue.

From 1789 to 1790, shortly after the end of the Revolution, the nation's first Congress resided in New York City. Comprising Georgia's 1st Congressional District, often called the lower or eastern district, were five counties: Chatham, Liberty, Effingham, Glynn, and Camden. The district's first representative was Gen. James Jackson.

Already known in the area as a Revolutionary War hero, general of the Georgia state militia, and successful antagonist of the Yazoo land scandal, Jackson was a striking figure. A fiery orator, he had a reputation for taking no political captives. Even his friends and supporters admitted that he always dared to speak his mind and was wholly intolerant of his opponents. Adding to the fray was his reputation as Savannah's most noted duelist. Described as "fearless in politics as in battle," Jackson was a force to be reckoned with.

Jackson was first elected as an anti-Federalist, an opponent of the Federalist Party—the party led by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay who favored a strong federal government. Because Jackson opposed Hamilton's plan for financing the government with debt as well as other Federalist policies, his political antagonists grew.

Consequently, it was no surprise when opposition sprang up in his bid for reelection in 1791. The forces against Jackson, both shrewd and unscrupulous, chose another, even more popular war hero, Gen. "Mad Anthony" Wayne, to oppose him. Named "Mad Anthony" for his daring on the battlefield, Wayne had served in the Pennsylvania state assembly. He fought the entire seven years of

the war all the way from Quebec to Savannah, most of the time leading Georgia troops. For his services to the nation, Congress awarded Wayne a plantation near Savannah. A friend of George Washington and Gen. Nathanael Greene, Wayne was also Jackson's former commander.

Despite Wayne's fame, with an honest election Jackson was the probable winner. This fact didn't escape the attention of Wayne's campaign, led by Henry Osborne, judge of the Superior Court of the 8th Circuit, and Thomas Gibbons, a shrewd politician and soon-to-be Savannah mayor. Both men were proponents of Hamilton's policies and personally benefited from them. Both realized that Jackson could only be defeated by dishonest means.

Both sides squared off on election day. But Jackson, either ignorant of his intended political demise or not taking it seriously, was away on an extended trip. In Chatham and Liberty counties, honest elections were held—but not so in the district's other counties. In Camden County, voting was held at Saint Patrick, a small outpost, not much more than a clearing in the forest, on the Santilla River. Only seventy votes were up for grabs in the entire county and the small, scattered population was mostly indifferent because they thought Jackson would easily win.

### UNSCRUPULOUS MEN

The election managers in Camden were idle men known for swapping stories, shooting all day, and drinking liquor. When polls opened that day, someone suggested that all the votes be cast for Wayne. But Camden's sheriff was on hand to maintain order. By sunset, however, with only forty of seventy voters polled, Sheriff Smith left for home. Coming down river with a delegation of eight men, two presumed to be soldiers, Judge Osborne appeared. He quickly ordered the polls to re-open, and the group cast votes for Wayne, stuffed the ballot box, and voted for those who had failed to vote.

After Osborne's tampering, a tally was taken: 79 votes for Wayne and 10 for Jackson. Osborne certified the ballots to Governor Telfair as the official return. But upon closer examination, the Camden returns showed pencil erasures and recast votes in Osborne's own handwriting.

Over in Effingham County, Gibbons was more discreet. While he didn't use outright coercion, his manipulation was just as effective. Plenty of liquor flowed at the polls that day. And reports came in that most voters were drunk by eleven o'clock that morning.

Gibbons pressured Nathaniel Hudson, who had been named election magistrate but not approved by the legislature, to preside over the election. And Thomas Lane, Effingham's sheriff, was paid to transport the returns to Augusta, where Governor Telfair waited to make the official count.

In Glynn County, where Jackson was favored, no manipulation was reported, but somehow Osborne obtained the ballots and they failed to reach Augusta in time to be counted. With votes from four counties, two of them fraudulent, Governor Telfair tallied the votes. On January 27, 1791, Wayne was declared the winner. At first, Jackson accepted the defeat, stating: "[I have] retired from public life with a pleasant satisfaction of having done my duty."

But his supporters were not so docile. They began combing the counties looking for evidence of wrongdoing. Not only was there evidence, but there was enough corruption to impeach a superior court judge, bring national attention, and incriminate the highest public officials.

As Jackson's supporters combed Camden and Effingham counties for evidence of voter manipulation, President George Washington was due to visit Savannah on the Georgia leg of his historic southern tour.

Unbelievably, both sides agreed to set aside the growing political war until Washington left. After the president returned to Virginia, Jackson's supporters fired the first shot. They gathered affidavits of fraud and presented them to grand juries in all of the district's five counties. The juries, controlled by the Jackson faction, made quick action of denouncing the election and demanding legal action.

In Savannah, Gibbons was named the city's second mayor by the City Council only ninety days after the election. One of his first public statements was to congratulate General Jackson "on his return to Georgia and domestic enjoyment" and "thanks for his patriotic exertion."

## POLITICAL WAR

Jackson continued to hold his peace but finally on July 28 came out swinging. On that day the *Georgia Gazette* ran Jackson's entire story on its front page. His supporters were relieved that the general had finally decided to fight, but most voters, who had no idea of what happened, were shocked.

Claiming to be the winner with 273 votes to Wayne's 214, Jackson implicated Wayne's campaign managers, drawing national attention. A majority of Camden voters signed a petition protesting the count in their county as having five times more votes as registered voters. In Liberty County, a grand jury denounced the Camden and Effingham elections as illegal. Cries for impeachment, even imprisonment, came from all corners of the district.

Jackson, in a bitter correspondence in the *Augusta Chronicle*, pressed the attack. Finally, in November, ten months after the election, Jackson presented his evidence to the Georgia General Assembly and demanded Osborne's impeachment. With Jackson's political allies in power in the state house, articles of impeachment were soon drawn up and delivered to the state senate. The articles of impeachment claimed that Osborne had destroyed the original returns and created new and false returns and forwarded the returns to the governor, thus corrupting "the very foundation of government."

## POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES

Acting on the advice of Thomas P. Carnes, state attorney general, and John Neal, solicitor general, and bowing to public pressure, Governor Telfair suspended Osborne from office. Osborne's defenders claimed that only Congress could try Osborne and only a federal court could find him guilty. But their words fell on deaf ears. Osborne was impeached.

Not only was Osborne removed from office, but he was fined and prohibited from holding public office again in Georgia for thirty years. Meanwhile, Gibbons was starting to have problems of his own.

Having secured Osborne's conviction and a note of thanks from a partisan legislature, Jackson turned his energies toward the federal

government, now residing in Philadelphia. Yet, by a vote of 41 to 20, Congress refused to admit the proceedings from the Georgia legislature.

Jackson continued to press, but at no time did he attack Wayne, who by most accounts was an unwilling pawn in a game of political chess.

In a public denouncement, Jackson wrote that Gibbons' soul was a faction whose life was a source of political corruption. At the request of the state assembly, Jackson apologized for his remarks but quickly added that Gibbons' proofs of guilt grew out of an "abominable corruption."

Outraged, Gibbons demanded satisfaction and requested a duel. On the morning of March 19, on the Carolina side of the Savannah River, both men slowly marched thirty paces. Turning, they fired their black powder pistols.

Neither was hit.

But Jackson exclaimed: "Damn it, Gibbons, you're a brave man and a good marksman, for I believe your ball hit my pistol."

Gibbons responded: "You are a brave man General Jackson."

This was the first of two duels in as many weeks for Gibbons. Confronted on all sides and bloodied by allegations, he would soon resign as Savannah's mayor.

Congress finally voted on a resolution to restore Jackson to Congress, but the vote split, 29 to 29. Casting the deciding vote was speaker of the house and member of the Federalist Party Jonathan Trumbull. Voting in the negative, Trumbull denied Jackson his congressional seat. Another resolution was passed declaring vacant the seat of Anthony Wayne.

But the seat remained unoccupied, neither Jackson nor Wayne having the stomach to run again. It was finally filled by John Milledge, Jackson's friend. Milledge would rise through the political ranks, becoming Georgia's governor from 1802 to 1806.

## AFTERMATH

For Wayne's part, he always had a difficult time believing that his supporters were capable of such dishonesty and breach of public trust. In 1792, he was named major general and commander in

chief of the Western Army by President Washington. He died three years later, broken by the whole affair.

The Federalist Party, once the epitome of power in American politics and the nation's first political party, dwindled rapidly. By the mid-1820s, it ceased to exist.

Osborne was ruined, at least politically, and no mention is made of him again in the public records. But General Jackson's political star continued to shine; he retained his enormous popularity—as well as his enemies—becoming Georgia's governor in 1798 and serving until 1802.



## The Mighty 8th Air Force

**W**ith only three experienced flyers, the 8th Army Air Force was born in Savannah on January 28, 1942, in the National Guard Armory on Bull Street, near Forsyth Park. The unit consisted of seventy-four officers and eighty-one enlisted men, a tiny force for the task that lay ahead, but their numbers would soon grow to unprecedented proportion.

The officers and crew trained at Hunter Army Airfield, Savannah's new air base named in honor of World War I flying ace and Savannah native Frank O'Driscoll Hunter. In just two months, however, the 8th headquarters were relocated to England to prepare to battle the Nazi war machine.

### OPERATIONS

From Savannah and other American bases, B-17s and B-24 heavy bombers began arriving in England, first as a trickle, then in droves. Finally combat ready, the 8th would soon taste battle.

On August 8, 1942, a squadron of its fighters launched offensive sweeps against Nazi-held positions along the French coastline. Nine days later, 12 four-engine B-17 Flying Fortresses carried out the first all-American bombing mission against occupied Europe. Beefing up their numbers by 1943, the 8th launched thousands of

B-17s and B-24 sorties, dropping tons of bombs in an all-out aerial blitz.

But with the short-range P-47 escort fighters providing air cover for only half the journey before having to turn back to their bases in England, the bombers took a beating. Swarms of eager Messerschmitt-109 fighters swarmed like bees, picking off stragglers and sending countless bombers and young crewmen to a fiery death.

But by 1944, the tide of the air war finally shifted. The P-51 Mustang, a long-range fighter capable of escorting the bombers to Berlin and back, emerged. Soon, the 8th Air Force owned the skies, out-flying and out-dog-fighting Hitler's once proud and defiant Luftwaffe. With the P-51 and the twin-engine P-38 Lightning providing an umbrella of aerial protection, American bombers pounded German industrial sites by day while British bombers reduced her cities to rubble by night.

The same year, the 8th Air Force—numbering nearly 200,000 airmen—had already dropped 46,840 tons of bombs on Nazi-occupied Europe and downed or destroyed 4,446 German planes. But the wages of war are death, and the 8th continued to suffer horrific casualties. By mid-1944 it had lost a staggering 1,130 heavy bombers and 185 fighter planes.

There was more to come. The last year of the war also proved the cruelest as Hitler's legions, still numbering four million men in arms, dug in their heels. It would take the obliteration of the German homeland before they would capitulate.

Walter Cronkite, a young United Press International reporter, covered much of the 8th's action in Europe and flew on several missions. On the 8th Air Force's second birthday, he wrote, "The kid [the 8th] who is two years old today has raised more hell than ever its parents believed possible."

During the height of the war, an average of 1,200 8th Air Force aircraft took to the skies on daily bombing raids. The 8th could put 2,000 bombers in the air and scramble 1,000 fighters on any given day, earning the nickname "the Mighty 8th."

Not only did the 8th fight in the European Theater, but also saw action in North Africa, the Mediterranean, and the Pacific.

It was the 17th Bombardment Group of the 8th that furnished the planes and crews that flew from the carrier *Hornet* on Gen. Jimmy Doolittle's famous Tokyo bombing raid, bringing the war to the Japanese mainland.

### THE COST OF VICTORY

By war's end the 8th had lost close to 9,000 bombers and suffered 47,000 casualties. Twenty-six thousand airmen were killed in action and another 28,000 served time in Nazi prisoner-of-war camps. The planes of the 8th Air Force dropped a total of 701,330 tons of bombs on occupied Europe, including 531,771 tons on targets in Germany. They downed, or destroyed on the ground, 15,439 enemy aircraft, more than all other American air forces in Europe and North Africa combined.

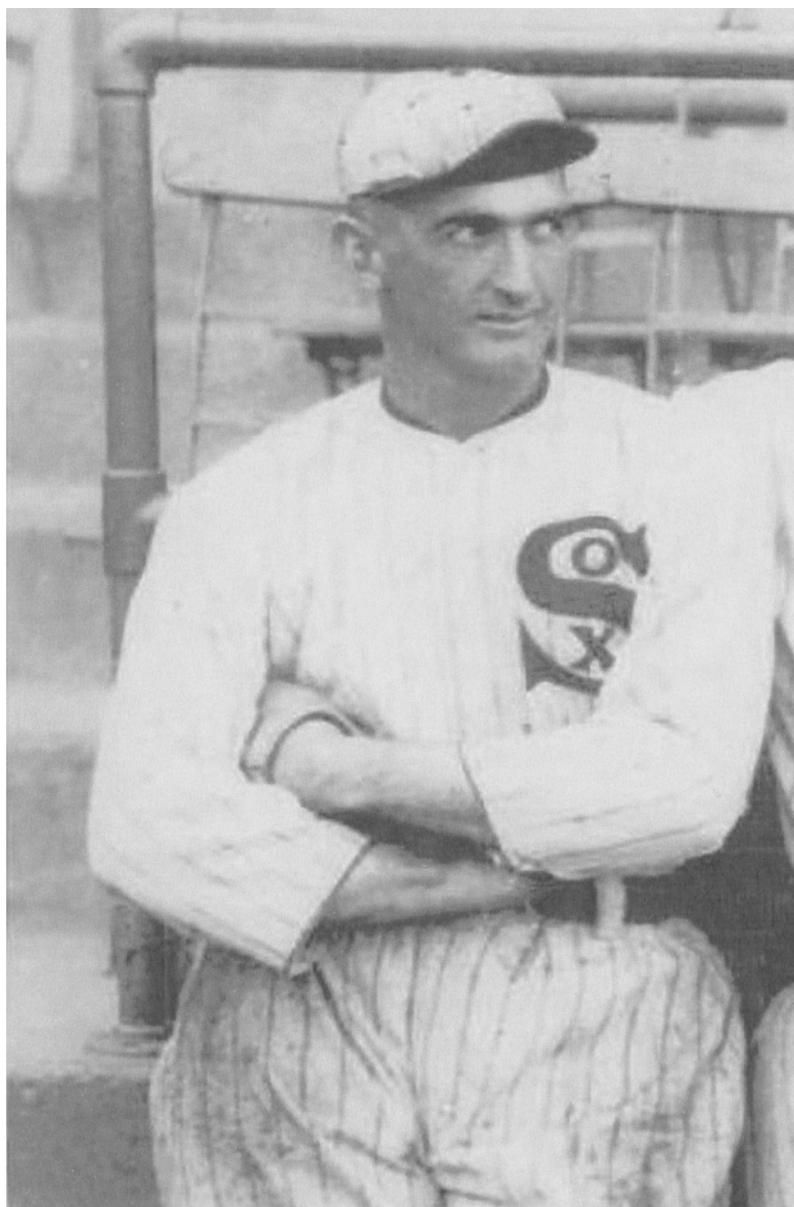
Seventeen members of the 8th won the nation's highest military award, the Congressional Medal of Honor. Two hundred twenty members won the Distinguished Service Cross, and 850 Silver Stars were awarded, along with 7000 Purple Hearts and 46,000 Distinguished Flying Crosses. The unit produced 261 aces, with 31 having 15 or more direct kills each. In the greatest air armada in history, 350,000 personnel served with the 8th in the European Theater by 1945.



## “Shoeless” Joe Jackson’s Savannah Days and the Black Sox Scandal

“**A**ll I know is Joe was exonerated in the trial. It irks and irritates me when people rant and rave about Pete Rose not being in the Hall of Fame—not until Joe gets there first,” says Maggi Hall of Savannah, the eighty-seven-year-old niece of baseball legend “Shoeless” Joe Jackson.

Few stories are as bittersweet as Jackson's rise to baseball stardom and his subsequent banishment from the game he played so well.



“Shoeless” Joe Jackson as a member of the Chicago White Sox. (Photo courtesy Maggi Hall)

Jackson was a baseball enigma from an early age. Born into relative poverty just outside Greenville, South Carolina, he was working twelve-hour days in the local textile mill by age thirteen. With no other opportunities, Joe took to the field. He started playing for the mill team as a boy, then played semi-professional ball, and by age nineteen got his first break. A Greenville sportswriter spotted the gangly 6-foot-1-inch Jackson in a game, noticed his talent, and wrote a story about him for the Greenville newspaper.

Jackson signed with the Class D Greenville Spinners of the Carolina Association for \$75 a month in 1908. By the end of the season, he led the league in hitting with a .354 average, drawing the attention of Connie Mack, owner and manager of the Philadelphia Athletics. Mack bought Jackson's contract for \$325 at the end of the 1908 season and called him up to play for the A's. In his big-league debut, Jackson smashed three hits.

### PLAYING FOR SAVANNAH

In 1909, Jackson traveled south to play for the Savannah Indians, a Class C minor-league club in the Sally League. (Professional baseball in Savannah was initially played at Bolton Park on Henry Street, then Municipal Stadium, from 1927 to 1940; it has been played at Grayson Stadium since 1941.)

The Indians opened the season in Jacksonville, but lost their first game. Fans in Savannah, however, anticipated the return of their team and heralded Jackson. For his part, Joe didn't let Savannah down.

In his first 80 plate appearances, he blasted 36 hits for a .450 batting average. He even pitched in a game against the Macon Peaches, going three innings, giving up only one hit and striking out three batters.

Not only did Joe become a Savannah favorite, but made the Sally League all-star team, a unanimous pick for centerfield. One local sportswriter wrote: "Joe is a sensation in all departments of the great American game—and that's saying a whole lot."

The right-handed centerfielder batted .358 in 118 games, leading the Sally League in hitting and endearing himself to a generation of Savannah baseball fans.

After playing a handful of games for the A's during the last part of the 1909 season, Jackson spent the next year in the Southern League with the New Orleans Pelicans. In July, however, Connie Mack traded Jackson to Cleveland, where the Carolina native hit .387 in 20 games, drawing national attention.

### JOE COMES OF AGE

In 1911, Jackson came of age, posting a blistering .408 batting average in his rookie season—second only to Ty Cobb's .420 average.

Called a natural phenomenon with a swing that Babe Ruth admittedly emulated, Joe played three more seasons for the Indians, hitting .395, .373, and .338, before being traded midway through the 1915 season to the Chicago White Sox.

Jackson led the White Sox to the World Series in 1917, capturing the Series four games to two over the New York Giants. He hit .307 in the six Series games, with seven hits, two runs batted in, and spectacular play in the field. Savannah, where Joe and wife Katie bought a house on the waterfront a year before, honored Joe's heroics with spontaneous celebrations.

With America entrenched in the war in Europe in 1918, Joe opted for the "work or fight" order and secured a job at a shipbuilding company in Wilmington, Delaware. By 1919, with the armistice in effect, Joe was back on the baseball field. But unbeknown to him his troubles were just starting.

### PRELUDE TO DISASTER

Professional baseball in 1919 was problematic. Because of the war, attendance had been poor in 1918, resulting in reduced salaries the next year. And baseball—already America's favorite past time—was becoming intertwined with professional gambling.

President and owner of the Chicago White Sox Charles Comiskey was a hard-hitting, tight-fisted miser who slashed his players' salaries even lower. The White Sox, arguably the best team in baseball, earned 30 percent less than the average baseball salary, ripe picking for professional gamblers. Still, they won the American League pennant with an 88-52 record.

The Sox entered the 1919 World Series heavily favored over

their National League counterparts, the Cincinnati Reds. A group of gamblers, however, had other ideas.

They approached several White Sox players with propositions to throw the Series. For each lost game, \$20,000 would be divided among the eight conspiring players. But the gamblers lost most of the cash on other bets and failed to come through when the Sox entered game six trailing the Reds four games to one.

The Sox retaliated, winning games six and seven. The gamblers persisted, resorting to death threats if the players refused to stay in line. Lefty Williams, starting pitcher for game eight, was told that his wife would die if he didn't lose the game. He complied. The White Sox lost the Series five games to three. It was a black day in baseball.

The White Sox opened the 1920 season with a bang, and by late summer were in a three-way pennant race with the Indians and New York Yankees. But as the team jockeyed for the pennant, rumors persisted. In September, a Chicago grand jury convened to investigate. They indicted eight White Sox players—ace pitcher Eddie Cicotte, hurler Lefty Williams, third baseman Buck Weaver, second-stringer Fred McMullin, first baseman Chick Gandil, shortstop Swede Risberg, and outfielders Happy Felsch and Joe Jackson—for conspiracy. The event was deemed the Black Sox Scandal and the name has stuck.

On hearing of the indictment, Jackson and Eddie Cicotte were persuaded to sign statements granting them immunity from prosecution. But it was a ruse. The two players didn't know they were signing confession statements. Neither was represented by counsel.

Sketchy, unconfirmed details of the so-called grand jury confessions made the newspapers and to this day add to the confusion surrounding the case.

In 1921, the eight were charged with conspiracy and brought to trial. On August 8, a jury acquitted them of any wrongdoing. But newly appointed baseball commissioner Kenesaw Mountain Landis, setting a no-tolerance policy on gambling in professional baseball, suspended the eight from the game, then banned them for life.

“Regardless of the verdict of juries,” he said,

no player that throws a ball game; no player that undertakes or

promises to throw a ball game; no player that sits in a conference with a bunch of crooked players and gamblers where the ways and means of throwing games are planned and discussed and does not promptly tell his club about it, will ever play professional baseball.

Since that time, enough contradictory material has been compiled to offer support for varying theories, many using the leaked and unconfirmed grand jury reports as evidence.

Several concrete facts remain, however. Except for Jackson's signed "confession," which he was led to believe would grant him immunity from prosecution, nowhere did Joe indicate what he had done, if anything, to help throw the Series. His play certainly proved his point. He hit the only home run of the Series, batted .375, and played flawlessly in the field.

Other players also testified on his behalf. They confirmed that Joe had not attended any meetings between the players and professional gamblers. Though Joe knew of the fix, he refused to accept cash on two separate occasions: \$10,000 prior to game one, and \$20,000 during the Series.

Not only did Joe refuse the payoff, but he asked to be benched to avoid any suspicion that he was involved in the scheme; his request was denied.

After the Series, pitcher Lefty Williams offered Joe an envelope containing \$5,000 cash; Joe refused it. After arguing, Williams threw the money at Joe's feet and left. Joe took the money and tried to turn it in to White Sox owner Comiskey, but was turned away. Later that night Joe left for Georgia to spend the winter.

### **RETURNING TO SAVANNAH**

After the Black Sox Scandal, Jackson returned to Savannah with his wife and lived in an apartment at 143 Abercorn Street. He then moved to a new bungalow on 1411 East 39th Street that Hall's father had built.

Jackson opened and ran a dry cleaning business at 119 Drayton Street. It wasn't long, however, before Joe was offered money to play ball again. He first played semi-professional ball in New Jersey in 1922 under an alias, but his identity was quickly discovered after brilliant performances at the plate. The next year he

played for an Americus, Georgia, team in the South Georgia League, a semi-professional league not under Landis' jurisdiction.

### **UNCLE JOE**

Maggi Hall's memory of Joe Jackson, whom she still affectionately calls "Uncle Joe," has little to do with baseball, other than a firm belief that he was unjustly banned from the game. Instead, she remembers a kind, gentle man.

"I would go to his store on Drayton Street after school," Hall said, "and he'd give me a quarter to clean up for him."

Jackson also spent considerable time at the Hall residence at 409 East 49th Street, just across the street from where Hall currently lives.

According to Hall, East 49th Street in the 1920s sat at the edge of town. Her family had a yard full of chickens, a chicken coop on one side of the yard, and a duck yard on the other.

"One Saturday, Joe was supposed to clean the duck yard and me the chicken yard," Hall said, "but we always fought about who would clean which part of the yard."

In 1929, Joe and Katie returned to Greenville, South Carolina, where Joe continued to play semi-pro baseball. In 1932, he signed with the Greenville Spinners, earning \$100 a game during the throes of the Great Depression. He also ran a barbecue restaurant and a liquor store. He suffered his fourth heart attack in 1951 and died at age sixty-two.

### **FINAL VERDICT**

Joe hit over .300 in eleven out of thirteen major league seasons and batted .382 his last year in the big leagues. His .356 lifetime batting average ranks third on the all-time list, but he remains ineligible for induction into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York.

A push to reinstate Jackson surfaced in the late 1990s. The South Carolina General Assembly passed a resolution in 1998 requesting that Joe Jackson be restored as a member in good standing in professional baseball, thereby qualifying him for induction into Cooperstown.

In 1999, U.S. Sen. Strom Thurmond petitioned baseball com-

missioner Bud Selig to reinstate Joe. And a growing number of web sites have been recently posted, arguing on Joe's behalf.

After all is said and done, it appears that Joe's worst sin was knowing of the fix and not reporting it. Perhaps baseball's grand old man, Connie Mack, had it right when years after the scandal he said: "Jackson's fall from grace is one of the real tragedies of baseball. I always thought he was more sinned against than sinning."



## Nixon Visits Savannah

**G**eorgia Gov. Lester Maddox was furious. The outspoken, fiery, and often controversial little governor had been left out in the cold. The president of the United States had already accepted an invitation to visit the Peach State, and preparations had been made, before word reached Maddox.

In the fall of 1970, the Georgia Republican Party invited then-President Richard Milhous Nixon to Savannah for an October 8 visit, stating that the presidential visit would coincide with the dedication of the new marine research facilities on Skidaway Island. Maddox strongly disagreed. He contended that the trip, coming less than a month before Georgia's November 3, 1970, gubernatorial election, was purely political, an obvious attempt to boost support for Republican gubernatorial candidate Hal Suit. Running against Suit was the soft-spoken peanut farmer from Plains, Georgia, democratic candidate James Earl "Jimmy" Carter.

### NIXON'S VISIT

With Air Force One still about an hour away, an eager White House press corps, local media, and dignitaries gathered near the runway at Hunter Army Airfield to wait for the president's arrival. And Maddox, on hand for the event, seized the day, giving both national and local media an ear full. One reporter asked the governor if Nixon's visit was political.

"You know it is man," Maddox responded. "Why sure a feller'd have to be stupid not to see this."

“The president had to have some excuse to come,” he continued. “He’s here for purely political reasons. When national politicians come in, we should do our best to defeat whoever they come in to help.”

Complaining that the trip cost the taxpayers \$250,000, Maddox said that the money would have been better used on the marine research facilities. He also questioned the timing of the visit, since construction on the island’s facilities had not yet started.

An hour later, at noon, Air Force One touched down and Nixon emerged, well tanned and relaxed, accompanied by wife Pat, daughter Julie Nixon Eisenhower, and son-in-law David Eisenhower.

Gen. James C. Smith, commander of Hunter Army Airfield and Fort Stewart, was the first to shake hands with the president. Maddox, next in line, greeted Nixon cordially, holding his peace, at least for the time being. On Maddox’s heels followed an eager Hal Suit, overjoyed to have the president make a political visit on his behalf.

Peppered with questions from reporters about the political nature of his visit, Nixon remained silent. But when asked about his latest peace proposal to end the fighting in Vietnam, he responded eagerly.

After greeting a group of Vietnamese student helicopter pilots and praising the joint American-Vietnamese training program at Hunter, Nixon climbed into the presidential limousine and was whisked away. Exiting the base, the motorcade sped down Lynes Parkway toward downtown Savannah and an estimated 100,000 people waiting for him on Broughton Street.

As the presidential motorcade turned onto Broughton, eager crowds spilled into the streets. Police on motorcycles nearby rushed in to maintain control.

As the crowd thickened, the motorcade slowed, and Nixon reached out and began shaking hands. In the limousine immediately behind the president sat a frustrated Maddox and a jubilant Hal Suit, followed by a continuous line of limousines, motorcycle cops, and state patrol cars.

But the main action was yet to come. Thousands ran after the motorcade as it approached the corner of Bull and Broughton.

Hundreds more closed in from both sides. Alarmed, Secret Service agents struggled to maintain order. As the motorcade crawled to a near halt, Nixon jumped out and stood on the hood of his car, raising both hands triumphantly in the air and making peace signs to the enthusiastic crowd.

Not to be outdone, Maddox bolted from his vehicle and began walking down Broughton Street, unescorted. He, too, reached into the crowd, shaking hands, holding children, and smiling for cameras, before finally being corralled by state patrolmen and escorted back to his car.

From Broughton Street, the motorcade headed to East Broad Street, down Islands Expressway, and finally stopped at the Savannah Yacht Club.

After a brief address at the Yacht Club, Nixon boarded the Royal Eagle for the short trip to Skidaway Island. Trailing behind was a small flotilla of media, security agents, and well-wishers.

On Skidaway Island, Nixon addressed 800 carefully chosen politicians and GOP supporters. In a twenty-seven-minute oration, the president praised the oceanographic center, denounced the evils of pollution, spoke of the promise of ocean exploration, and refuted allegations about the political nature of his visit.

After his speech, Nixon unveiled a dedication plaque, worked the crowds, and boarded the presidential helicopter for the brief flight back to Hunter. Soon, he and his family were on their way to Florida for a vacation.

Among the crowd at Skidaway Island that day stood Savannah's newly elected mayor, John P. Rousakis, sworn in just three days earlier. Speaking to reporters after the event, Rousakis said he was proud of Savannah and the support shown to the president regardless of any political differences that might have existed.

### **POLITICAL FATE**

As Nixon left the area, few could have guessed how fate would forever forge the destiny of the politicians connected with that day.

Hal Suit, despite Nixon's endorsement, suffered a crushing defeat by Jimmy Carter in the November 3 gubernatorial election. Four years later, Nixon became the first president in U.S. history

to resign from office, doing so under a growing cloud of controversy over his alleged involvement in the Watergate burglary.

Before resigning, however, Nixon struck a deal for clemency with his soon-to-be successor, Vice President Gerald R. Ford. After less than a month in office, Ford made good on the deal, granting Nixon a presidential pardon, thus protecting him from all future criminal indictments associated with the Watergate scandal.

But the unpopular pardon cost Ford his own presidency. In two years he would be narrowly defeated by the soft-spoken peanut farmer from Georgia, the very man Nixon tried to keep out of the Georgia governor's mansion in 1970.



## The Controversial Story of the Slave Ship *Wanderer*

**I**n 1858, on the South Georgia coast, a group of four men defied the U.S. government and its laws by illegally landing slaves in the only large-scale slaving expedition after the slave trade was outlawed in 1818. Although the landing took place 60 miles south of Savannah near Brunswick, the center of the ensuing controversy was Savannah.

Earlier that year four men—Richard Dickerson of Richmond, Virginia, Benjamin Davis of Charleston, South Carolina, A.C. McGehee of Columbus, Georgia, and Charles Lamar of Savannah—had bought the luxury yacht *Wanderer*. Though she was built for sailing and racing, the new owners had other intentions.

After the *Wanderer* sailed from her New York berth, she made port in Brunswick, Georgia, under a cloud of suspicion. Lamar, a known advocate of restarting the slave trade, had already tried to outfit a slaver, the *E.A. Rawling*, the previous year. The ship was seized, however, by Federal authorities on the suspicion of being a slaver. Not to be deterred, Lamar persisted in spite of pressure and disapproval from family and friends.

In Brunswick, the *Wanderer* was quickly outfitted for its illegal

mission with special cargo binds for holding human captives. Next, a captain and crew were chosen. Under cover of night, she slipped out to sea. Her destination: the West Coast of Africa.

After anchoring at the mouth of the Congo River—laden with merchandise to be traded for slaves—Lamar sent a small shore party to meet with tribal chief King Dahominey.

Negotiations were quick and a deal was made: 750 males between the ages of thirteen and eighteen were to be delivered at the price of \$1 to \$3 per head. The captives, naked and bloody from a forced march through the jungle, soon arrived. Most of them had been kidnapped by competing tribes.

On her return voyage, the *Wanderer* eluded both American and English navies patrolling the African coast in search of slavers. Within a few weeks she was back in American waters. While the *Wanderer* slipped past the U.S. fort guarding the approaches to Brunswick, Lamar threw a party for the fort's officers and men, keeping them occupied.

About 100 slaves were loaded on boats and sent up the Savannah River while the balance went ashore and were handed over to two old field hands, also originally from Africa. From the field hands the captives soon learned their sad fate.

On the open market, most of the slaves brought anywhere from \$500 to \$700 apiece, an amazing profit for their captors.

### FATEFUL VOYAGE

That same year the *Wanderer* again set sail for the African coast. Again, a deal was made with tribal chiefs and again unfortunate captives were brought to America, this time landing on Jekyll Island. Lamar, true to form, was found dining and wining the officers and men in the coastal fort as his ship slipped by unseen.

But unlike the earlier voyage, word spread quickly and newspapers in Washington, D.C., Boston, and New York carried reports of the ship's actions.

On December 8, U.S. Attorney Joseph Ganahl of Savannah was officially notified of the *Wanderer's* actions. A week before Christmas about forty witnesses were called to give depositions, and the revenue cutter *James C. Dobbins* steamed to Brunswick to

seize Lamar's ship. Law enforcement officials also tried to secure some of the slaves brought over on the ship but without success. They had all been either hidden or transported out of the area.

The *Wanderer's* books, charts, and logs were confiscated. Finally, a young boy who had been taken captive and brought over on the slaver was taken into custody. But within a few days he mysteriously disappeared. He was not seen again.

Depositions proved that the *Wanderer* did, in fact, illegally engage in the slave trade. The ship's title was transferred to the federal government and put for sale at public auction at the U.S. Customs House on Bay Street in Savannah. After a long and intense period of bidding, the ship went to the highest bidder—Charles Lamar.

A number of trials were convened against the ship's owners and crew. But justice would not have her day. Through legal maneuvering, most of the cases were held over until the April 1860 court session.

When the court did convene, three members facing piracy charges in connection with the *Wanderer* were acquitted. In a separate trial the same jury also acquitted another member of the crew.

The case became so controversial, heightening the slavery debate, that many believed it hastened the start of the Civil War. And it was the threat of war between North and South that placed the other *Wanderer* cases on hold.

By 1861, the *Wanderer* was forgotten and relegated to the annals of American history.

After hostilities began, the *Wanderer* was briefly used by the Confederate government. But she was captured by Union forces at Key West in 1861 and converted to a revenue cutter.

After the war, the ship was used in the coconut trade, sailing between the islands off the Honduran coast and the United States. She ran aground on January 27, 1871, at Cape Muisi on the east coast of Cuba. Her hull and remains were visible for years until wind, weather, and breaking waves finally pounded her into oblivion, ending an ugly chapter in American history.

