

Paley, Gay 1735, 21-22
 Barclay, Ray 1806, 23-24
 Elberhart, G. 1873, 29-42
 Jesse Williams (1882), 47

The Georgia Historical Quarterly

VOLUME LVII

SPRING, 1973

NUMBER 1

CONTENTS

GEORGIA INFLUENCE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF LIBERIA.....	William Allen Poe	1
HANGING AS A SOCIO-PENAL INSTITUTION IN GEORGIA AND ELSEWHERE.....	E. Merton Coulter	17
TIMBER PRODUCTS OF COLONIAL GEORGIA.....	Melvin Herndon	50
THE KU KLUX KLAN, ANTI-CATHOLICISM, AND ATLANTA'S BOARD OF EDUCATION, 1916-1927.....	Philip N. Racine	63
WALTER B. HILL, A NEW CHANCELLOR FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA.....	Roy Mathis	76
COLLECTIONS OF THE GEORGIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, OTHER DOCUMENTS, AND NOTES:		
The Mackenzie Papers, Part II.....	<i>Edited by Albert S. Britt, Jr. and Lilla M. Hawes</i>	
The Tomb of Sir James Wright.....	Robert G. Mitchell	85
A Plea for Nathanael Greene Papers.....		145
Georgia Archive.....		146
.....		147
BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTES:		
Boles, <i>The Great Revival, 1787-1805</i>		148
Mullin, <i>Flight and Rebellion: Slave Resistance in Eighteenth-Century Virginia</i>		149
Coulter, <i>Daniel Lee, Agriculturist. His Life North and South</i>		149
Potter, <i>The South and the Concurrent Majority</i>		150
Brooke, <i>King George III</i>		151
Gruber, <i>The Howe Brothers and the American Revolution</i>		151
Harlan, <i>Booker T. Washington. The Making of a Black Leader, 1856-1901</i>		152
Clayton, <i>The Savage Ideal</i>		153
James, <i>Anne Royal's U.S.A.</i>		154
King, <i>The Great South</i>		155
Boney, ed., <i>Slave Life in Georgia</i>		156
Scarborough, ed., <i>The Diary of Edmund Ruffin, I</i>		157
Edgar, ed., <i>The Letterbook of Robert Pringle, 1742-1745</i>		158
Rogers, <i>A Cruising Voyage around the World</i>		159
Atlanta Resurgens.....		160
Williams, <i>By the Bulls that Redamed Me</i>		160
Bernstein, <i>The Truth about "The Protocols of Zion"</i>		161
Gillon, Jr., <i>Victorian Cemetery Art</i>		161
Hemperley, comp., <i>English Crown Grants for St. Philip Parish</i>		161
Sonneck, <i>Report on "The Star-Spangled Banner, etc.</i>		162
Forman, <i>The Making of Black Revolutionaries</i>		162
Woods, ed., <i>The Reuben King Journal, 1800-1806</i>		162
Reprint Books on Georgia by The Reprint Company, Spartanburg, S. C.		162
Sloan, <i>The Little Red Schoolhouse</i>		162
And Others.....		164
.....		165

narrative.
 judges sentencing
 crimes, but very
 being suicide in
 plead innocence
 or almost so.
 or their relatives
 pardon or reprieve
 the Lord and
 allows into the
 earth a good
 to Negroes);
 cases where the

who was not
 secure it. And
 and that some
 lawyers were
 of a fee. It
 the night, for
 guilty, to ask
 Supreme Court,
 and finally to

can best be
 But it should
 ces, orgies of
 it of a circus
 to appall the
 ns. There was
 a method of
 but could not
 ings private?—
 d New Jersey,
 next year.
 gs had gained

sufficient momentum to lead the legislature in 1859 to enact a law for that purpose. Recited in the preamble was the motive: "The public execution of Criminals condemned to death by the laws of this State, is believed by many to be demoralizing in its tendency and disgraceful to the character of our people for refinement and good taste, and not so well calculated to accomplish the object for which it was instituted, to-wit: the prevention of crime, as would private executions." Therefore, hereafter "no one shall witness such executions, except the executing officer, a sufficient guard, and such clergymen as the criminal may desire to be present on the occasion. together with the relatives of the Criminal." If there were no room in the jail for the execution, it should be the duty of the Inferior Court to have a gallows screened by a high wall, constructed in the jail yard, and if necessary to order a special tax to pay for the work. But the judges of this court (later the judge of the Superior Court trying the case) should have it "in their discretion" to order a public execution.¹¹ Another reason sometimes suggested for opposition to public hangings after freedom had come to the slaves, was to keep them from abandoning farm work on the plantations to attend en masse these spectacles. But for years after the Civil War it became a common practice for judges to order public hangings. However for a quarter century and more after 1865, there were only three hangings in Fulton County (Atlanta), and all were private.¹²

For those who did not attend public hangings, either because they were repelled by such horrors or were ashamed to be seen there, the newspaper reporters were always at hand to write up a long lurid story of what happened. These were features that newspapers reveled in publishing, and only on such occasions as the Spanish-American War did bigger news take their places.

Public hangings were no respectors of age, color or sex. The first hangings in Georgia were in Savannah, less than two years after the colony had been settled and the victim was a woman. William Wise was an Irishman of shady character whom the

Georgia Trustees had been induced to send over, but before he reached Savannah his career on the ship bringing him over was so immoral that the Trustees ordered him to be returned, but without success. He settled on Hutchinson Island, in the river opposite Savannah, and soon becoming incapacitated, he was allowed two Irish servants, Alice Riley and Richard White. Wise had long hair and enjoyed having White comb it, often reclining in bed and leaning his head over the rail for the operation. One morning in combing Wise's hair, White gave the handkerchief around his victim's neck a twist to choke him, when at the same time the Riley girl brought in a bucket of water for bathing his face and suddenly plunged his head down into the water and drowned him, already half-choked. Both were tried for murder and sentenced to hang, but as Riley was pregnant by White, her execution was put off until her child was born. On January 19, 1735, Alice Riley was hanged, and on the following day Richard White followed her on the same scaffold. Both declared their innocence.¹³

To search out, record, and describe all the hangings that took place in Georgia would be an endless task, and could result only in a compilation of a dictionary or encyclopedia of Georgia hangings. Only samplings from now on to the end of this method of capital punishment will be given here. As will appear, the heyday of hangings in Georgia came after the Civil War. But two other colonial hangings will be noted, which took place at Savannah in 1739. Bixby (Bryxy, Bixie) was master of a sloop anchored in Savannah harbor, and with him on board were Cozens, Levett, and the victim, whose body was found washed ashore. Indications were that he had been murdered on the sloop and thrown overboard. The three living men were convicted of murder and sentenced to be hanged on a gallows to be constructed on the bluff above the river where the crime had been committed. Bixby "went up the Ladder more nimbly than the Hangman, and fastened the Rope to the beam himself." Both Bixby and Cozens denied their guilt. When Levett, who had strenuously denied that he had had any part in the murder,

reached the fo
reprieved for s
he ceased to b
thorpe, as the
He wavered in
the execution
when he finally

So few wor
elapsed betwee
time a woman
woman had be
years, in men
sometimes into
her husband li
County. He w
a trip to Aug
called out aft
person. Hesit
reaching the
accessory, chi
murder. Jealo
of her action
Mitchum. A
governor, ind
later a Unite
for Alabama.
the next day
roth to be ha
have mercy
be found fo
in the town
dressed in he
a figment of
(Petersburg
county, on
concerned in

Alice Riley (Ryker) + Richard White
Ga, 1735

Georgia Journeys

*Being an Account of the Lives of Georgia's
Original Settlers and Many Other Early
Settlers from the Founding of the Colony
in 1732 until the Institution of
Royal Government in 1754*

By
SARAH B. GOBER TEMPLE
and
KENNETH COLEMAN



Published in Athens, Georgia, by
THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA PRESS
MCMLXI

MRS. MARK TEMPLE, nee SARAH BLACKWELL GOBER

OB County pioneers were trail breakers imbued with love of the land, and they early developed characteristics of leadership and ideals which later generations have built. Mrs. Temple shared this fine inheritance. A special legacy from her talented father was her zeal for learning and for accurate research. Through the pages of this work shines her love of Georgia, and on every page is evidence of her monumental research. Her pen was stilled before the manuscript took final form. As a long-time personal friend of Mrs. Temple, I feel that this publication serves as an appropriate and useful memorial.

B. C. YATES

*Chickasaw Mountain Battlefield Park
Marietta, Georgia*

Copyright © 1961 by
University of Georgia Press

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 61-18514

Printed in the United States of America by
Foote & Davies, Inc., Atlanta

Contents

<i>Preface</i>	vii
<i>Introduction</i>	x
<i>Maps of Georgia Area</i>	xix
I Atlantic Crossing	1
II Birth Pains of a Colony	10
III Other Worthy Poor	28
IV Impregnable Bastion and Rock of Help	41
V The "Unfortunate Poor" As Rulers	63
VI Scandals, Savages, and Tangled Clerical Love Affairs	76
VII Expenses, Extravagance, and Official Removals	95
VIII Botanists, Trustees' Garden, and Gardeners	115
IX Thomas Christie, Recorder	145
X "Rejoicing Days" and Trade	161

remain in Georgia, and no further mention of any misbehavior on his part has been found. Having arrived on December 16, 1733, Wise settled on Hutchinson's Island, which lay directly in front of Savannah and was described by Oglethorpe as one of the most delightful spots he ever saw. Most of it was a natural meadow, which he planned to use for cattle; the remainder was covered with trees, many of which were bays more than eighty feet tall. In 1733 Oglethorpe ordered that a walk, the breadth of the town of Savannah, be cut through the woods on the island. Later a similar clearing, known as the vista, was ordered at Savannah. Joseph Fitzwalter remarked, "The Vistoe from the Town to the other Side of the Island is Cutt Through and Lookds Extream Pleasant." By the end of 1733 Oglethorpe had an overseer and four servants on the island to work there and to guard against enemies and thieves passing on the Savannah River.⁷

Wise could perhaps have had a contented life on Hutchinson's land. Here were cattle to be tended, land to be dressed, and the love of learning to be indulged in his spare time. Perhaps he thought that his new life now might be better than his previous years of misfortune. Two of the Irish transport servants on the island, Richard White and Alice Ryley or Riley, gave Wise some personal care after he became incapacitated soon after his arrival. From his bed he would call in the morning for water in which to bathe as best he could; White would come in to answer the call and later would help Wise in combing his hair. Wise took care of his own hair, in which he took considerable pride because of its length. He would lean over the side of the bed so that it might be combed more easily. On the morning of March 1, Alice Ryley brought the bucket of water. White came in also and under the pretense of assisting Wise, now leaning over the side of the bed preparatory to the combing, gave a quick twist to Wise's neck to strangle him. Alice Riley seized his head, plunged it into the water "& he being very weak it Soon Dispatched him. . . ."⁸ Alice Riley was sentenced to death on May 11, 1734.⁹ However, because she was pregnant her hanging was delayed until the birth of her child. A son, James, was born on December 21 and died in February. The birth of the child determined the date of hanging. Alice Riley, the first woman to be hanged in Georgia, died on the gallows on January 19, 1735, denying to the last that she had murdered Wise.

At an undetermined date White broke out of jail. The knowl-

edge that a murderer, who was reported to have defied ten men to take him, was loose created uneasiness among the people of Savannah and its vicinity. But he was taken with no real difficulty. Edward Jenkins described the capture in somewhat breathless fashion: "Mr Henery Parker and his Brother William was at work at my Lot to pay me for what work I had doon for him, as we was working one of my men sd yonder Goes a man very fast, I looked & saw ye man & said I believe its White that Brook out of Prison If it is Let us Go & take him, the two Parkers agreed not knowing where it was he or no Left ye men at work All the weapons we had was two hooks & an ax we was at work with, I desired one of them to be about 10 yards at my right hand & the other at my Left keeping the distance without speaking a word—And as Soon as Came to him I woud Cease him & if he offered to reble they shoud kill him immediatly—So we persued him till we came into about twenty yards of him, At first sight of us was much Surprised, I told him your Name is White its in vain to Attempt & immediatly I Ceased him, he fell on his nees & with many Blows on his Breast baged his Life, so I took him by one side of Coller & Mr. Henery Parker by ye other & William walked behind, we heald him very fast for we had often heard that the sarvant bid defiance two ten men to take him As we was Leding him to Town, we asked him where he had been & where he was Going He said he had been looking for some house out of Town to Get some Provisions. . . . As we was Leding him along he woud often beat his breast & bage his Life, we told him if we Let him Go he must perish In ye woods he said he would [be] Joyfull to perish in ye woods rather than dye on the Gallows[.]" Jenkins tried to elicit information concerning "any other vilony that ye Irish Sarvants . . . was inventing" but the most he could learn from White was that the Irish transports had a plan for breaking into the store. White was hanged on January 20 for, as Edward Jenkins continued, after they caught White they "Carried him into Town he was had immediatly to ye Gallows & Declared to ye last he was not Guilty of ye Murder. . . ." The unfortunate Wise was avenged, while Jenkins and the Parker brothers were rewarded with £50 by the Trustees for capturing White.¹⁰

Another troublesome affair in which the Irish transports played a part was one which gave the colony even more alarm than the death of Wise. This came to be known as the Red String Plot and

RILEY, Alice

An Irish immigrant transport servant, convicted with fellow servant, Richard White, of murder of master, William Wise. Execution delayed because of pregnancy. Finally hanged, Savannah, Ga., January 19, 1735, becoming first woman hanged in Georgia. See excerpt from GEORGIA JOURNALS by Temple and Coleman, Georgia - not written up.

See excerpt from "Hanging...in Georgia," by Coulter;
GEORGIA HISTORICAL QUARTERLY, Vol. 57, pp 21-22 bound
in red binder.

WHITE, Richard

Irish transport servant, convicted with fellow servant, Alice Riley, of murder of master, William Wise. Escaped from custody but recaptured and hanged on Jan. 20, 1735. See excerpt from GEORGIA JOURNEYS by Temple and Coleman, Georgia - not written up.

See excerpt from "Hanging...in Georgia," by Coulter; GEORGIA HISTORICAL QUARTERLY, Vol. 57, pp 21-22-bound in red binder.