

LAMAR, Gazaway Bugg President, Bank of Commerce Savannah, GA

Three hundred and one documents are found in a file for G. B. Lamar in the National Archives files for Citizens. The endorsements on the Treasury notes are signed only with the initials "G. B. L." Marvin Ashmore has written:

"The initials are likely that of G. B. Lamar which you may compare with the signatures on bank notes. He was president of the Bank of Commerce at Savannah, Georgia. He was also the agent in New York City who supplied numerous plates with vignettes to the Confederate Treasury, vignettes which were copied on Treasury Notes. Perhaps the Hoer and Train vignettes came from this source. He also worked to have the first Montgomery notes and bonds first ordered from the ABNC and later produced by the National Bank Note Company. I think most Bank of Commerce notes available are with his signature and make a neat companion with any Confederate collection.

He was arrested and held in prison for months but eventually released in connection with the investigation of the Lincoln assassination. There seems to be no limit on things to learn about bank notes!"



Gazaway Bugg Lamar

Source: By Gazaway B. Lamar,
(Life time: October 5, 1874) –
Original publication: printed on
bank notes, Immediate source:
NA

A short but very informative biography of Lamar can be found at:
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gazaway_Bugg_Lamar.

Although we do not have proof that these initials represent G. B. Lamar, we have evidence that it is likely. The Interest Paid stamp on the Treasury note endorsed by Avirett is from Savannah, Georgia, the location of Lamar's Bank of Commerce. Avirett was a supplier of bacon at

the same location.

As Ashmore has pointed out, the initials are a reasonable match to Lamar's signature on the notes issued by the Bank of Commerce; see the illustrated example. The wealth of documents in the National Archives contain mostly

letters to and from Lamar in his business and banking dealings, many of which concern cotton sales with Liverpool, England. Communications were sometimes cyphered for security, and an illustrated letter explains how these alphabetic cyphers worked. As Ashmore noted, Lamar corresponded with bankers in New York, and many such letters are found in his files along with references for business transacted with blockade runners. In a telegraph of February 8th, 1861, at Savannah, Georgia, to Lamar in New York, Charles Green writes: "Seizures of New York ships will be made this day by Gov. Brown in retaliation. Put our collections out of reach of attachment."

Many letters to Lamar from Charles Green describe his dealings with the Confederate government in an effort to sell cotton to England and procure arms. In a letter of June 28th, 1861, at Richmond, Green writes:

I have been greatly gratified by my intercourse with President Davis, Mr. Toombes, Mr. Memminger and Mr. Brown [probably Georgia Governor Joseph E. Brown], the simplicity and economy of the Government machinery, the accessibility of the chiefs, the absence of circumlocution and red-tape, are all calculated to impress. The quiet composure, the "a-plomb" of the President is striking. I had never before seen Mr. Toombes, certainly a remarkable man, strong, direct, original.

When Gen'l Sherman approached Savannah, Georgia, in December of 1864 he accepted the surrender of the city without bloodshed. Lamar signed a loyalty oath to uphold the U. S. Constitution and in return was spared the confiscation of his personal property. As the record here shows, the loyalty of bankers is most often to their assets.

McNeil

Post Script:

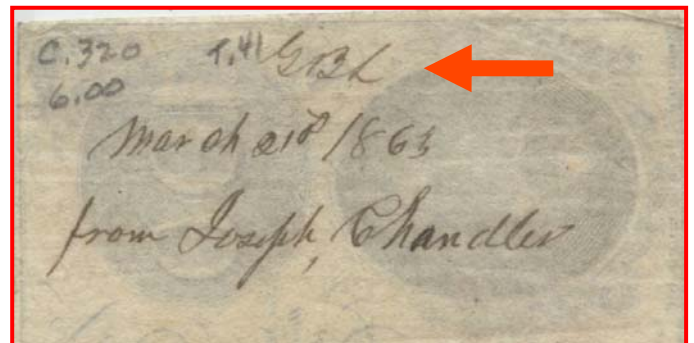
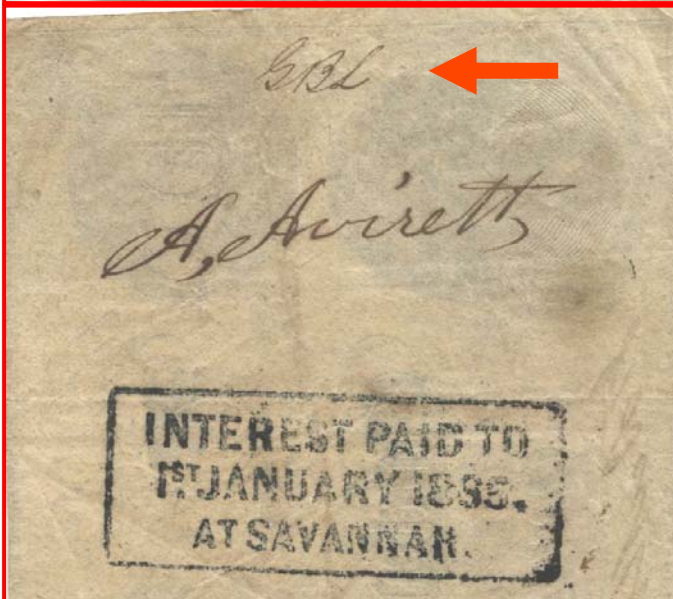
Marvin Ashmore pointed me in the direction of Lamar's obituary at the website:

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/26542376/gazaway-bugg-lamar>

I took the liberty of adding an illustration of this obituary which sheds a kinder light on Lamar's feelings about his black fellow citizens.



Dickson_Lyon
18620 W
25 Sep 1862
image: Sheheen



Dickson_Lyon
18696 W
25 Sep 1862
image: Sheheen

A Statement of Advance to G. B. Lamar for 1600 bales of cotton shipped from Savannah, Georgia, to Liverpool, England, dated June 12th, 1861, in New York, well after the founding of the Confederate government.

*Statement of Advances, to J. B. Lamar Esq
on 1600 B Cotton & A Jouillard - Savannah
to Liverpool to G B Lamar, Chas L Lamar
James H Phinizy*

1861

April 16 To note @ 30 ^d	due May 18	30000 . 01
May 8 To 33 ^d disc' on note \$20000	4 ^d note to May 18	23 . 58
" " To note @ 30 ^d	due June 10	20000 . -
10 To 33 ^d disc' on note \$7438.86		47 . 08
" " To note @ 30 ^d	due June 12	7438 . 86
14 To note @ 15 ^d	due June 1	25000 . x
15 To 17 ^d disc' on \$25000		81 . 51
		\$ 82717 . 04

Reimbursement by bond bills on Union Vt

May 22 6481. 5. 11	53 ^d up to date	30354.07	30278. 18
June 1. 5345. 2. 4	@ 37 ^d "	2506.66	25000 . x
June 8. 4286. 5. 0	@ 34 ^d "	20050.13	20000 . x
12 1594. 4. 10	@ 54 ^d -	7457.50	7438. 86
		18.84	
\$ 17906. 18. 1			\$ 82717. 04

New York June 12th 1861
Williams & Scion

G. B. Lamar.

[Atlanta Constitution.

The New York Times has this characteristic notice of Mr. Lamar's death :

"Gazaway B. Lamar, the venerable rebel, who died in this city on Monday, the 5th inst., was a characteristic specimen of the fire-eating school, of which William L. Yancey and "Bob" Toombs were members. At the time of the secession of South Carolina, in November, 1860, he held the office of President of the Bank of the Republic, in Wall street, and occupied the time between that event and the bombardment of Fort Sumpter in shipping arms and ammunition to his fellow-traitors in the South. He also negotiated the printing of the rebel bonds and currency by certain New York houses, and other ways aided the rising Confederacy to the extent of his means. During the rebellion he resided in Savannah, where he was largely engaged in cotton speculations and blockade running. At the close of the war he was arrested, fined and sentenced to several years' imprisonment, the latter part of which sentence was afterward remitted by President Johnson. Lamar, in a recent suit against the Government, in which he employed Gen. Butler as his counsel, recovered over \$600,000 for cotton illegally destroyed during the war. He was at one time owner of the yacht Wanderer, and largely interested in the African slave trade. His son, Col. Charles A. Lamar, was killed in the military service of the rebellion. Mr. Lamar, Sr., at the time of his death, was in his 77th year."

It is related that Socrates, when praised by a great scamp, exclaimed : "What infamy have I committed that this fellow should eulogize me?" The great philosopher doubtless intended to express, by this remark, that the abuse of some people is preferable to their praise. Upon this principle, the sneering obituary of the Times—the mortal enemy of everything Confederate—may pass as a compliment to Mr. Lamar, with all of his fellow "traitors." Mr. Lamar had his faults, like all mortals ; but he had great and shining virtues, especially some which are not characteristic of the Puritan school. His bequest of \$100,000 to found an asylum for indigent negroes in Savannah, is in striking contrast to Mr. Sumner, who had an infinite amount of fine words for the black people during life, but took precious good care to leave them not a single cent at his death. It may be, too, that Mr. Lamar's heart was touched by the great distress brought upon many aged negroes in Savannah, by that pious Radical fraud, the Freedman's bank. His legacy comes in good time to succor destitute blacks, whose little all was swallowed up by the swindle of Christian statesmen and bankers, at Washington, of the Radical persuasion. While he lived, the old "traitor" was high-toned, honorable, generous and honest in his convictions. In his death, he has rather shamed the philanthropy of the Jay Cooke-Sumner school of men, who place the negro on the road to extermination and bankruptcy—forgetting, at the last, to remember him substantially in their wills.

The Morning Star and Catholic Messenger. (New Orleans [La.]), 25 Oct. 1874, P.6, Col. 2.

Obituary for G. B. Lamar in The Morning Star and Catholic Messenger, New Orleans, LA, 25 October 1874.

image courtesy
www.findagrave.com/memorial/26542376/gazaway-bugg-lamar

Notes upon the Alphabetic cipher.

A letter in Lamar's file describing the use of an alphabetic cipher to encrypt messages. The encryption table appears on the following page. Note that it was written by a Lt. Colonel in the 127th New York Volunteers.

images courtesy
Fold3.com

The letters of the Alphabet are written under each other as in the "Alphabet table" accompanying, marking the upper horizontal and left hand vertical rows complete from A to Z.

To use this table a word or sentence is agreed upon between the correspondents before hand, as the "key" which is of course arbitrary, and may be changed as often as circumstances require.

The key is to be written, letter for letter under the message which is to be sent, and the cipher letters (forming the secret message) which are to be sent to your correspondent, will be found at the intersection of the vertical column of the table (commencing with the different letters of the message) and the horizontal column commencing with the letters of the key-sentence which fall under them respectively, as prescribed above.

The correspondent receiving the cipher-message writes the key either under or over it as suits his convenience and taking the table just reversed the process as is shown in the accompanying example.

The letters of the message are all taken in (in forming) and found in (in deciphering) the upper horizontal row.

The letters of the key-sentence are always

taken in the left hand vertical column, and the letters of the cipher message are then found in the table at the intersection of the columns.

ev ilc om m u n i c a t i o n s c o r r u p t
az icg q x a m r t a w t l g u m f r a p i d g
me a n e c l o s e l y w a t c h e d d a y t o n

good man never ilc om m u n i c a t i o n
ut t h a s e r a n j h m w t w z r i e n c t b n b
offere rewards for inf o r m a t i o n

n p c o r r u p t t o o d m a n n e r s e r v i
b l g a f l h s l p h o m a t s s i w e r p
ohle pound sterling for each

l o o m m u n i c a t i o n s c o r r u p t g o
x w g w g n f p k p i m n a g o r e a r h u n
m a s k e t s h i p p e d n o t h i n g g o o d

o d m a n n e r s e v i l c o m m u n i c a t
h n m e s t y e n r z i o a a m p a n s o e n
to be found ready a m d b e a r m e d

i c o r r u p t g o o d m a n n e r s e r v i
l b i n e y f n z f a l g m z w t i f s e l l
a n f o r s o n f l g h f l e w h t o s o b m n g

i l c o m m u n i c a t i o n s c o r r u p t g o
r g e j q a z z r l g r t b s n j o g k y c h b y
j f c r e o f m j j g g y a n f v h a p t e h o r k

o d m a n n e
d f l h a f r
p c j h n s n

A true copy.

Benj. W. Thompson

Major 32nd U.S.C. I.
Lieut. Col. 107th Regt. & Prov. Mar. Co. 1st S.