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A Biography of
Algernon Sydney Hartridge

Mary G. Speir
History 300
July 30, 1975

Algernon Sydney Hartridge

Algernon Sydney Hartridge was one of three sons born of Charles and Mary Hartridge. Algernon set up his business at 92 Bay Street as a cotton factor and commercial merchant. Sometime in 1855, Algernon married Susan E. Knight of Richmond County. The Hartridges had five children and their names were Ada, Charles, Gazaway, Algernon, Jr., and an infant who was still born.

During the Civil War, Algernon served as a first lieutenant in the Confederate Army. He was responsible for many army commands that were made in the interest of the people of the city of Savannah.

In the years to follow the Civil War Algernon S. Hartridge became a member of the Chamber of Commerce and of the Board of Directors for the Oglethorpe Insurance Company (1864), the Savannah National Bank (1865-1868), the Tyler Cotton Press Company (1871), and the Central Railroad and Banking Company of Georgia (1871-1876).

In 1871 the homes built by Mr. Hartridge were completed and his family moved into 105 Bull Street. The Hartridge family were all members of Christ Church and Algernon made contributions to the church.

It was Tuesday, April the fourth, 1876 at 11 o'clock when Algernon Sydney Hartridge passed away after several weeks of being seriously ill of hepatitis. The funeral took place at 4:30 April 7, from Christ Church. He was buried in Laurel Grove Cemetery in lot 1239.

Two years after his death, Susan Hartridge was judged insane and incompetent to manage her estate. Her son Charles became her guardian and Thomas M. Cunningham was appointed the administrator of Mr. Hartridge's estate. Most of the property belonging to the estate was sold in order to pay the debts. On March 1, 1885, the estate was finalized. After the death of Susan E. Hartridge, Gazaway Hartridge and Ada McGehee of Mississippi became the heirs of their father's estate.

Algernon Sydney Hartridge

Charles Hartridge was married to Mary Davidson on April 3, 1823 by Rev. William D. Snodgrass.¹ Charles and Mary Hartridge had three sons, Julian, Algernon, and Alfred. Algernon Sydney was born in September of 1832. On December 15, 1853, Algernon's father, Charles Hartridge died.² Between the years of 1850 and 1860 Algernon was setting up his business at 92 Bay Street as a cotton factor and commercial merchant,³ and establishing himself as an important figure in civic affairs. Sometime before 1855, Algernon married Susan E. Knight of Richmond County, probably in Richmond County. In 1855 the Hartridges had their first child, Ada K. She was born in Madison County. In 1857 a second child was born to the Hartridges. This child was born in Savannah and named Charles after his grandfather. A third child was born to the Hartridges in 1859 and his name was Gazaway.⁴ Algernon's namesake was born in 1862 but died seven months later of water on the brain.⁵ The Hartridges last child was still born in June of 1863.⁶

A meeting was held June 4, 1861 for the election of officers for Company A of the DeKalb Riflemen. Algernon was elected first lieutenant and his brother Alfred was elected a captain.⁷ During the Civil War, I believe that Algernon remained in the city for the purpose of defense. In 1862 by the orders of A.S. Hartridge, the importation of "all spiritous and intoxicating liquors" by railroads or otherwise was strictly prohibited. In January of 1863, General Mercer and A.S. Hartridge interposed to prevent soldiers from being dispossessed

of houses they occupy. This protection was necessary because their rights had been abused by certain unworthy characters. In July the mayor of Savannah, Thomas Holcombe issued a proclamation to all citizens that appointed Algernon to a committee for the purpose of effecting a proper organization for the city's defense. After the war in 1867 A.S. Hartridge was appointed to a committee whose purpose was to prepare a memorial to the Secretary of the Treasury to raise sunken vessels from the Savannah River.⁸

Most of Algernon's wealth was established in property. In 1860 his real estate was valued at \$13,400 and his personal estate valued at \$147,000.⁹ During this time of financial prosperity, Mr. Hartridge began work on his homes on 12 - 14 West Taylor and 105 - 107 West Jones. Up until 1870 the Hartridges lived at 135 Jones Street, two houses west of Bull Street. Their new home was completed in 1871 and they then lived at 105 Bull Street, Monterrey Ward until Algernon's wife's death in 1885.¹⁰ The entire family were members of Christ Church and in April 1869, Susan Hartridge became the manager of the church.¹¹ Algernon made contributions to Christ Church and also to other worthwhile organizations such as the Soldiers Relief Fund during the Civil War and also to an Orphans Home in Savannah.¹²

In the years to follow the Civil War, Algernon S. Hartridge was to become a member of the Board of Directors for the Oglethorpe Insurance Company (1864), the Savannah National Bank (1865-1868), the Tyler Cotton Press Company (1871) and the Central Railroad and Banking Company of Georgia (1871-1876). Algernon was a very civic minded person. He was a member of the Chamber of Commerce and promoter of a city law that prohibited

smoking around the cotton warehouses. He also put a resolution before the Chamber of Commerce to offer premiums to the best cotton bales and bushels of rice in order to promote higher quality products.¹³

In 1874, the Hartridges took a trip to New York. I believe that the family went to visit Charles Hartridge who was a student at Princeton College. The following year Charles returned from New York. I believe that he had obtained his degree and was returning home to set up business.

During Algernon's life, he was connected with two major court cases. The first one was with the city of Savannah. The city opened a street through Mr. Hartridge's land and paid what Algernon considered a small fee. He said that the Constitution of the State of Georgia says that the city should pay the money value of the land. There was no other reference to the case in the newspapers so I assume that the case was dismissed. The other case was against Mrs. Jane Bryan and was a case of equity. This case was brought up in 1874 and 1875 and I believe that both cases were dismissed.¹⁴

It was Tuesday, April the fourth, 1876 at 11 o'clock when Algernon Sydney Hartridge died.¹⁵ He had been seriously ill for several weeks of hepatitis.¹⁶ The funeral took place at 4:30 from Christ Church on April 7. Algernon was 44 years and 8 months old when he died. He was buried in Laurel Grove Cemetery in lot 1239.¹⁷ The following prominent men served as pallbearers for his funeral : General J. E. Johnston, General H. R. Jackson, Colonel William M. Wadley, Judge W. S. Chisholm, C. M. Holst, J. W. Lathrop, Hugh F. Grant and Charles H. Dorsett.¹⁸ A month after his death, the Hall Savannah Cadets drafted a resolution to

to make Algernon Sydney Hartridge an honorary member of their society.¹⁹

On February 7, 1877 Ada K. Hartridge married J. L. McGehee of Mississippi. The couple were married by Rev. W. B. Crawford, Junior in Madison, Georgia and they moved to Mississippi to live.²⁰ Later that year Ada's brother, Charles was elected a member of the Georgia Historical Society.²¹

In the late afternoon of March 20, 1878 a woman dressed in black with a light veil and parasol was walking along the railroad tracks. About 100 yards behind the woman followed a colored woman. The black woman stopped the man named E. J. Calvin and told him that the woman was Susan E. Hartridge who was claiming that she wanted to kill herself. Calvin asked Mrs. Hartridge where she was going and she said that she was going to the Charleston Steamer. Calvin told her that she was going in the wrong direction and she told him that it made no difference if she went to hell. Calvin then told Susan that he was sent by her daughter to bring her home. Susan claimed that she had no daughter or a home. Mr. Calvin then escorted Susan to the Charleston Steamer where she insisted on boarding for New York. Mr. Gibbons (the clerk on the wharf) who was told of her condition said that the Charleston Steamer did not sail until Saturday. Susan then claimed that she would drown herself if she could not get on board. Mr. Calvin then convinced her to go home. She agreed to go home but refused to get in the wagon. Mr. Calvin put her in the wagon and got her all the way home but then she refused to get out of the wagon and insisted on going back to the depot. When they arrived back at the depot the

the Steamer was gone. Susan flew into a rage when she found out about its departure. Then Mr. Haynes (Superintendent of the Railroad) arrived and told her that there was a train leaving at 9:30 the next morning and she could wait in his office until then. She said that she would rather go to jail and then insisted that Mr. Calvin should take her to jail. The deputy jailer, Mr. McIntech told her that the cells were filled. Coming out of the police station Susan told Mr. Calvin that the jail reminded her of heaven. Susan told Mr. Calvin that she wanted to go to the graveyard to stay the remainder of the night. Mr. Calvin talked her out of this idea and then brought her home.²²

Needless to say, in September of 1878, Alfred L. Hartridge, Algernon's brother, filed petitions with the Superior Court to appoint a guardian for Susan E. Hartridge. This petition was also signed and approved by Susan's brother Dr. G. B. Knight and her sister, Mrs. Mary Crawford, both of Morgan County. On September 11, a jury was selected to judge the alledged insanity of Susan E. Hartridge. Five days later the jury judged Susan a lunatic according to the laws of Georgia and incompetent to manage her estate. On July 15, 1879 Charles Hartridge paid a \$2,000 bond and became temporary guardian of Susan E. Hartridge and in August he became the permanent guardian.²³

On September 30, Thomas M. Cunningham was appointed administrator of Algernon S. Hartridge's estate. During the year 1879, Cunningham arranged for the property from Algernon Hartridge's estate to be sold in order to pay debts owed by the Hartridge's estate.²⁴ It is my belief that Susan ran up the bills after the death of her husband causing the need for the sale of his property.

In the years to follow, more of the property of the estate was sold in order to pay debts. During the course of this year there were several court cases against the estate of Algernon S. Hartridge. Two of the cases rendered verdicts for Mr. Hartridge's estate but in the third case the jury found for the plaintiffs in the sum of \$1,375.69 plus interest.²⁵ By August of 1879, most of the property had been sold. A diagram of some of the property follows on the next page. The sale of his property came from Wilkinson County as well as property in Savannah (eg. Calhoun Ward, Crawford Ward, Monterey Ward, Pulaski Ward, Percival Ward, Reynolds Ward, and Marshall Ward).²⁶ From the sale of the property, the estate received \$97,075 but the majority of it went towards the paying of debts and Thomas Cunningham received \$2,843.75 for his services.²⁷

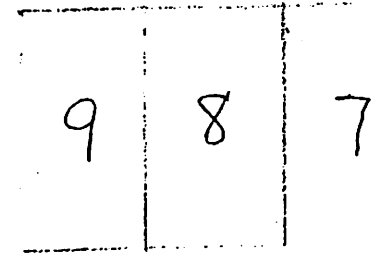
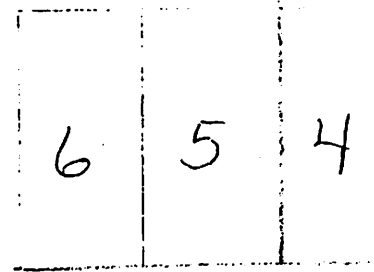
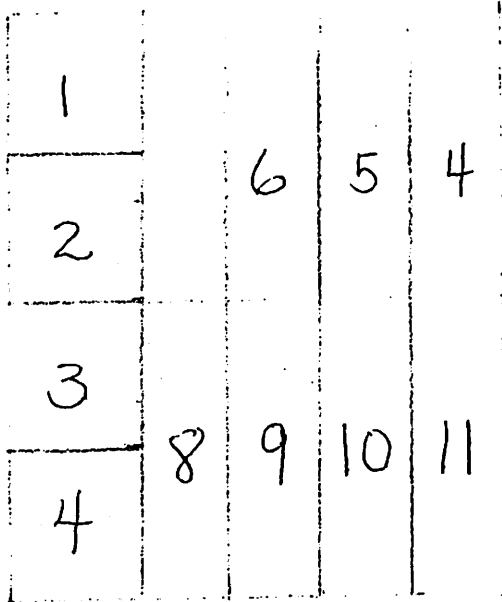
In 1879 Gazaway Hartridge graduated from Princeton College, and then in January 1881, Gazaway applied for admission to the bar. After he passed a very creditable exam, he was admitted to the bar. Then in July of 1882, Gazaway was elected a resident member of the Georgia Historical Society.²⁸

Later that year, on November 22, Charles Hartridge died of congestion on the brain. His funeral was held at Bull Street, Monterey Ward.²⁹ With the death of Charles Hartridge, there was needed a new guardian for Susan Hartridge. In August of the following year Gazaway Hartridge became the guardian of his mother without bond.³⁰

In the years to follow his brother's death, Gazaway Hartridge was to become a prominent member of the city of Savannah. He began delivering lectures in various areas in Savannah and in

GWINETT STREET

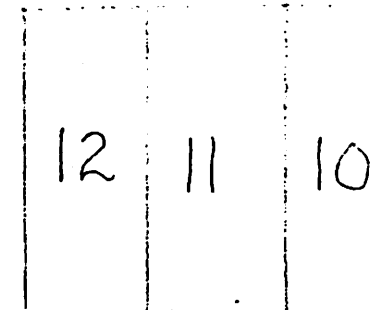
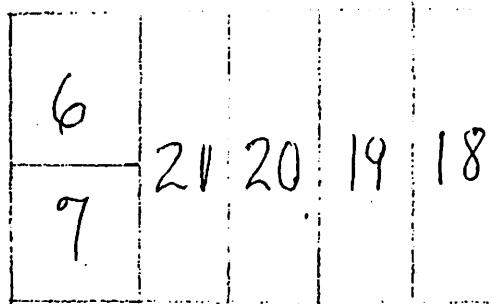
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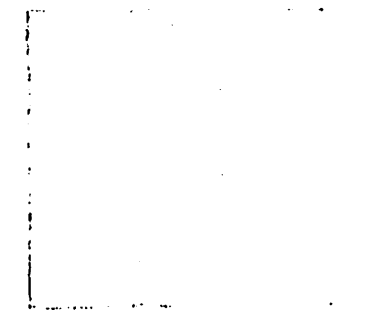
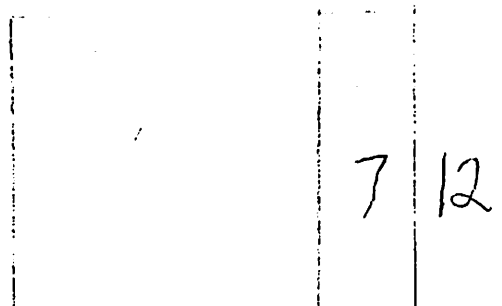
BOLTON
STREET



Bolton
Lane

Bolton
Lane

S
T
R
E
E
T



North

East

South

E
X
T
E
N
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O
N

WALDBURG STREET

*The numbered lots belonged to Algernon S. Hartridge.

October of 1884, Gazaway Hartridge was elected a State Representative. With his election he became the junior member of the delegation and the youngest member in the Georgia House of Representatives. Another honor occurred for the Hartridge family in 1884. A street running east and west from Bower to Price and south of Davis Street was named Hartridge Street.³¹

On March 1, 1885 the estate of Algernon Sydney Hartridge was finalized.³² On September 5, 1885 Susan E. Hartridge died of congestion on the brain at the age of fifty. Her funeral was held at Taylor and Bull and she was buried in Laurel Grove Cemetery with her husband and family.³³ With the death of Susan Hartridge, Gazaway Hartridge and Ada McGehee of Paula County, Mississippi became the heirs of their father's estate in October, 1885.³⁴

After his mother's death, Gazaway Hartridge moved from 105 Bull Street to 120 Bryan Street in 1886.³⁵ I believe that Gazaway got married sometime in 1886. There is no indication as to who he married except that there is an Ida Hartridge buried in the same lot in the cemetery with Gazaway. Also in 1886, Gazaway's grandmother, Mary Hartridge died at the age of eighty-two and her funeral was held at Christ Church.³⁶

Gazaway became the editor of the Savannah Times in 1887 and during that year, Mr. and Mrs. Gazaway Hartridge appeared in the prominent circles in the city such as the Governor's Ball, the Hibernian Society at St. Patrick's Day and the St. Andrew's Society.³⁷ Savannah Hartridge was born in 1887. I believe that this was Gazaway Hartridge's daughter but this is purely an assumption.

In 1890, Gazaway became a member of the Executive Committee of the Democratic party of the county and later that year he was put on the Democratic state ticket as a Representative.³⁸

During the year 1891, Gazaway Hartridge was circulating in the prominent circles in Savannah and delivering lectures. On July 10, 1891 Gazaway sold out his interest in the Savannah Times. He told everyone that he would give his attention more to the lecture field in the future. Gazaway's reputation as a humorous lecturer was national and during the following summer he delivered his lecture "On Women" in Atlanta.³⁹

In 1892 both Ida May Hartridge and Savannah Hartridge died within a month of each other.⁴⁰ I have been told that there was an epidemic of yellow fever in Savannah in the 1890's, so this could possibly be the cause of their death. At their death both lived at 82 Gaston Street.⁴¹ According to the 1892 City Directory, Gazaway lived at the Desoto.

In 1893, Gazaway still had his office at 116 Bryan but the City Directory for 1896 does not have him listed in Savannah. The next time that Gazaway Hartridge was mentioned in Savannah was at his death in 1900. Gazaway died in July of 1900 in New York at the age of thirty-nine. His body was brought back and buried with his family in Laurel Grove Cemetery, lot number 1239.⁴² As far as I know there are descendents of Algernon Hartridge except for his daughter's possible children in Mississippi.

*** I reserve the right to change my opinion about any of the material as I have stated it.

Footnotes

- 1 Chatham County Marriages, 1805 - 1877
- 2 Newspaper Digest, 1853
- 3 1867 City Directory
- 4 Federal Population Census for 1860
- 5 Laurel Grove Cemetery Records and Newspaper Digest for June, 1863
- 6 Newspaper Digest for June, 1863
- 7 Newspaper Digest for June, 1861
- 8 Newspaper Digest from July, 1862 to July 1863
- 9 Federal Population Census for 1860
- 10 1871 City Directory
- 11 Christ Church Records
- 12 Christ Church Records and Newspaper Digest for October 1862
- 13 Newspaper Digests from July 1864 to January 1876
- 14 Newspaper Digests from August 1867 to April 1875
- 15 Newspaper Digest for April 1876
- 16 Chatham County Department of Vital Statistics
- 17 Newspaper Digest for April 1876 and Laurel Grove Cemetery Records
- 18 Newspaper Digest for April 1876
- 19 Newspaper Digest for May 1876
- 20 Newspaper Digest for February 1877
- 21 Newspaper Digest for April 1877
- 22 The file on the Guardianship of Susan E. Hartridge found in the Office of the Ordinary at the Chatham County Courthouse
- 23 The file on the guardianship of Susan E. Hartridge
- 24 Newspaper Digest for September, 1878
- 25 Newspaper Digest from January to February, 1880
- 26 Newspaper Digest for October 1880

- 27 The file on the Administration of the estate of Algernon S. Hartridge found in the Office of the Ordinary
- 28 Newspaper Digests for January 1881, July 1882 and September, 1886
- 29 Newspaper Digest for November 1882
- 30 The file on the Guardianship of Susan E. Hartridge
- 31 Newspaper Digest for May, October and December 1884
- 32 Newspaper Digest for March 1885
- 33 Chatham County Department of Vital Statistics and the Laurel Grove Cemetery Records
- 34 The file on the Administration of the A. S. Hartridge estate
- 35 1886 City Directory
- 36 Newspaper Digest for December 1886
- 37 Newspaper Digest for February, March and December of 1887
- 38 Newspaper Digest for July 1890
- 39 Newspaper Digest for July 1891
- 40 Laurel Grove Cemetery Records
- 41 Laurel Grove Cemetery Records
- 42 Laurel Grove Cemetery Records

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City Directories 1867-1900
Church Records (Christ Church)
Laurel Grove Cemetery Records (1853- present)
Chatham County Marriages (1805- 1877)
Federal Population Census (1860)

Savannah Public Library

Newspaper Digests 1856-1869 ; 1876- 1891

Chatham County Courthouse

Office of the Ordinary

- 1) Marriages
- 2) Wills, Administrations and Guardianships

Public Health Center

Department of Vital Statistics