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Ambrosio Jose Gonzales

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Birth: Oct. 3, 1818
Matanzas Province, Cuba

Death: Jul. 31, 1893
Bronx
Bronx County
New York, USA

Civil War Confederate Army Officer, Cuban Revolutionary. He was revolutionary who figured prominently in both his native country's struggle against Spain and the Confederacy's fight for secession. He served as the second-in-command of the filibuster invasion of Cardenas, Cuba, on May 19, 1850, led by General Narciso Lopez. immortalized as the first Cuban to shed blood in the effort to oust the Spanish, he managed to place himself in the center of hostilities in both his homeland and in the United States. He authored a manifesto on Cuban annexation to the United States in 1852. With the failure of the 1854 filibuster attempts, he settled in the United States and married into South Carolina's prominent Elliott family. Appointed a Colonel in the Confederate Army during the Civil War, he was chief of artillery for the Department of South Carolina, Georgia and Florida from 1862 to 1865. He had a significant role in Confederate coastal defenses and his finest hour as a Confederate as an artillery commander at the Battle of Honey Hill. Following the war, he pursued a variety of vocations, all of which were marginally successful, but like many others he never provided the security he sought for his extended family. His sons, Narciso and Ambrose, founded "The State" newspaper in Columbia, South Carolina. (bio by: [Antonio de la Cova](#))

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Burial: [Woodlawn Cemetery](#)
Bronx
Bronx County
New York, USA
Plot: Lot A, Range 131, Grave 20

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Ambrosio José Gonzales

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Colonel **Ambrosio José Gonzales** (October 3, 1818 – July 31, 1893) was a Cuban revolutionary who became a Colonel in the Confederate States Army during the American Civil War. Gonzales, as a revolutionary, wanted the United States to annex Cuba. During the American Civil War he served as the Chief of artillery in the Department of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida.

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Early years

Gonzales was born in the town of Matanzas, Cuba, in 1818. His father was a schoolmaster and founder of the first daily newspaper in Matanzas. His mother was a member of a prominent local family.^{[1][2]} After the death of his mother,^[2] his father sent the nine-year-old Ambrosio to Europe and New York City, where he received his primary and secondary education. He returned to Cuba and attended the University of Havana where he earned degrees in arts and sciences and later in law, graduating in 1839. He returned to Matanzas and became a teacher^[3] and later a professor for the University of Havana, where he taught languages (he claimed fluency in English, French, Spanish, and Italian), mathematics, and geography.^{[1][2][4]} In 1845, following the death of his father, he began two years traveling in Europe and the United States, returning to Cuba to resume his post at the university.^[4]

Ambrosio José Gonzales



Born	October 3, 1818 Matanzas, Cuba
Died	July 31, 1893 (aged 74) Bronx, New York
Place of burial	Woodlawn Cemetery, Bronx, New York *Plot: Lot A, Range 131, Grave 20
Allegiance	United States of America Confederate States of America
Service/branch	Confederate States Army
Years of service	1862–1865
Rank	☆☆☆ Colonel (CSA)
Commands held	Artillery Commander at the Battle of Honey Hill.
Battles/wars	American Civil War *Battle of Honey Hill
Other work	Gonzales' son's Ambrose Elliott and Narciso Gener Gonzales became notable journalists. In 1891, they founded " <i>The State</i> " a newspaper in South Carolina.

Cuban revolutionary

In 1848, Gonzales joined with a secret organization named the Havana Club that sought to have Cuba annexed by the United States in order to liberate the island from Spanish rule. The movement found encouragement from a surge of expansionism in the United States, particularly in the South, following the U.S. annexation of Texas in 1845.^{[2][4]}

The Havana Club group pursued its goal of annexation to the U.S. through a combination of financial, diplomatic and military means.^{[2][4]} His association and influence with prominent U.S. southerners led him to author a manifesto encouraging U.S. annexation of Cuba. By 1849, Gonzales became interested in the revolutionary plans of General Narciso López, who ultimately led several military expeditions, known as filibusters, to try to liberate Cuba from Spain. Between 1849 and 1851, Gonzales accompanied López in several of his filibuster expeditions. The Spanish authorities set up a trap to capture López, but López was able to escape and sought asylum in the United States.^[3]

In 1849 Gonzales became a naturalized United States citizen under a law that offered citizenship to free whites who had lived in the country for at least three years before the age of 21.^[2] Thereafter, he was commissioned by the Junta of Havana seek help from General William J. Worth, a United States veteran of the Mexican-American War. Together with Worth, Gonzales was to prepare an expedition of five thousand North-American veterans, who would disembark in Cuba and aid the Cuban patriots headed by López who would rise in arms. The plan did not materialize because of Worth's untimely death.^[3]

Gonzales and López then organized the *Creole* expedition with forty thousand dollars that they acquired after selling Cuban bonds. Among those in the expedition was John A. Quitman, a former General in the United States Army who also participated in the Mexican-American War. Gonzales led the expedition as Chief of Staff. On the night of May 19, 1850, López gave the order to advance and Gonzales and his men attacked the Governor's palace. The expedition failed because it lacked the support from the people in the island who did not respond to the call of the filibusters and because they were no match for the Spanish military reinforcements. Gonzales, López and their men returned to the *Creole*. Once the *Creole* was back at sea, it was chased by the Spanish warship *Pizarro* and changed its course. The *Creole* then headed for Key West, Florida, where Gonzales spent three weeks recovering from wounds received in the incident.^[4] On December 16, 1850 Lopez, Gonzales, Quitman and the members of the failed expedition were tried in New Orleans for having violated the laws of neutrality; after three attempts to convict them the prosecution was abandoned.^[3]

Gonzales settled in Beaufort, South Carolina, after the failure of filibuster efforts in 1851. In the United States, he continued to seek assistance for Cuban independence, meeting with political leaders including U.S. President Franklin Pierce and Secretary of War Jefferson Davis.^[4]

In 1856, he married Harriet Rutledge Elliot, the 16-year-old daughter of William Elliott (1788–1863), a prominent South Carolina State Senator, planter and writer.^[4] Ambrosio and Harriet Elliott Gonzales were to become the parents of six children; Ambrose E. Gonzales (1857–1926), Narciso Gener Gonzales (1858–1903), Alfonso Beauregard Gonzales (1861–1908), Gertrude Ruffini Gonzales (1864–1900), Benigno Gonzales (1866–1937), and Anita Gonzales (1869–?).

American Civil War

Main article: Hispanics in the American Civil War

As civil war approached in the late 1850s, Gonzales went into business as a sales agent for firearms manufacturers, demonstrating and selling the LeMat revolver and Maynard Arms Company rifles to state legislatures in the South.^[4]

Upon the outbreak of the American Civil War, Gonzales joined the Confederate Army and was commissioned a Colonel. He was assigned to the Department of South Carolina, Georgia and Florida under the command of General Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard, who had been his schoolmate in New York City.^[1] Gonzales was active during the bombardment of Fort Sumter and because of his actions was appointed Colonel of artillery and assigned to duty as Chief of Artillery. Gonzales, who served as a special aide to the governor of South Carolina, submitted plans for the defense of the coastal areas of his homeland state. According to Major D. Leadbetter in a letter to the Secretary of War:

"The project of auxiliary coast defense herewith, as submitted by Col. A. J. Gonzales, though not thought to be everywhere applicable, is believed to be of great value under special circumstances. In the example assumed at Edisto Island, where the movable batteries rest on defensive works and are themselves scarcely exposed to surprise and capture, a rifled 24-pounder, with two small guns, rallying and reconnoitering from each of the fixed batteries, would prove invaluable. A lighter gun than the 24-pounder, and quite as efficient, might be devised for such service, but this is probably the best now available. Colonel Gonzales' proposed arrangements for re-enforcing certain exposed and threatened maritime Posts seem to be judicious and to merit attention."

Gonzales was able to fend off Union gunboat attempts to destroy railroads and other important points on the Carolina coast by placing his heavy artillery on special carriages for increased mobility. On November 30, 1864, Gonzales served as Artillery Commander at the Battle of Honey Hill. The Battle of Honey Hill was the third battle of Sherman's March to the Sea fought in Savannah, Georgia.^[5] Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederate States, declined Gonzales's request for promotion to general six times. The reasons behind Davis' decision were that he (Davis) disliked General P. G. T. Beauregard and Gonzales was one of the men who had served under him. Also, Davis did not consider that Gonzales was command material because of his experience with the failed Cuban filibusters and because of his contentious relationships with Confederate officers in Richmond, Virginia.^[2]

Later years

After the war Gonzales pursued a variety of vocations, all of which were marginally successful, but like many others he never provided the security he sought for his extended family. His efforts were similar to those of other formerly wealthy Southerners who sought to recover their estates and social status.^[1]

In 1869, Gonzales and his family moved to Cuba, where his wife Harriet Elliott Gonzales died of yellow fever. Gonzales returned to South Carolina with four of his children, leaving two children, Narciso and Alfonso, in Cuba with friends for a year. By 1870, all the Gonzales children were back in the United States, where they were raised by their grandmother, Ann Hutchinson Smith Elliott, and their aunts, Ann and Emily Elliott.^[6] Gonzales faced not only financial loss but also sorrows over the death of his wife and his sister-in-law's successful efforts to poison the relationships between Gonzales and his children.^[2]

Gonzales' sons, Ambrose and Narciso, became notable journalists. In 1891, they founded *The State*, a newspaper in Columbia, South Carolina. Narciso waged a crusade against Benjamin "Pitchfork Ben" Tillman, a U.S. Senator and former Governor of South Carolina, and his nephew and heir apparent, Lt. Governor James H. Tillman, in his newspaper, helping ensure the younger Tillman's defeat in the 1902

South Carolina governor's race. On January 15, 1903, Narciso was shot by James H. Tillman (nephew of Benjamin) and died four days later. A memorial cenotaph for Narciso was later erected on Senate Street across from the State House in Columbia, purportedly on the route Tillman regularly walked home.^[7]

Ambrose Gonzales is recognized and remembered in South Carolina as a pioneering journalist and the writer of black dialect sketches on the Gullah people of the South Carolina and Georgia low country. In 1986 he was inducted into the South Carolina Business Hall of Fame.^[8]

Final years

Gonzales became ill as he became older and his sons sent him to Key West, where Gonzales attended meetings of the Chiefs of the War of 68 and the Delegate of the Cuban Revolutionary Party. He was later interned in a hospital in Long Island, New York. Gonzales died on July 31, 1893 and is buried at Woodlawn Cemetery, Plot: Lot A, Range 131, Grave 20 in the Bronx, New York.^[3]

See also

- Hispanics in the American Civil War
- List of Cuban-Americans

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2. [^]^a^b^c^d^e^f^g^h Antonio Rafael de la Cova (2003), *Cuban Confederate Colonel: The Life of Ambrosio José Gonzales* (<http://books.google.com/books?id=hZFY19gtROkC>) , The University of South Carolina Press; ISBN 1-57003-496-6.
3. [^]^a^b^c^d^e "Patria (New York)" (translated); December 31, 1892, pages 2–3.; Ambrosio José Gonzalez. (<http://www.latinamericanstudies.org/gonzalesdoc11.htm>)
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8. [^] Ambrose E. Gonzales (1857–1926) (<http://www.knowitall.org/legacy/laureates/Ambrose%20E.%20Gonzales.html>) , South Carolina Business Hall of Fame website, accessed May 30, 2011

Notes

- Manuscripts Department Library of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill "SOUTHERN HISTORICAL COLLECTION : #1009 ELLIOTT AND GONZALES FAMILY PAPERS" http://www.lib.unc.edu/mss/inv/e/Elliott_and_Gonzales_Family.html

External links

- Biography of Colonel Gonzales (<http://www.latinamericanstudies.org/gonzales.htm>)
- Works by Ambrosio José Gonzales (<http://www.archive.org/search.php?query=%28Jose%20OR%20Jos%C3%A9%29%20Ambrosio%20Gonzales>) at Internet Archive (scanned books original editions)

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Categories: 1818 births | 1893 deaths | People from Matanzas

| People of South Carolina in the American Civil War | Naturalized citizens of the United States

| Cuban military personnel | Confederate States Army officers | Cuban emigrants to the United States

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State Filed: **Pennsylvania**

Relative: **Mother Mary A. Christman**

Source Information:

National Archives and Records Administration. *Civil War Pension Index: General Index to Pension Files, 1861-1934* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2000.

Original data: *General Index to Pension Files, 1861-1934*. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration. T288, 546 rolls.

Description:

This database is an index to and images of pension cards of Civil War veterans in the United States. Each record includes the veteran's name and state in which he, or his dependents, filed the application. The digitized image of the index card itself, contains additional information on the individual, such as unit of service, date of filing, and application and certificate numbers for the pension case file housed at the National Archives and Records Administration in Washington D.C.

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Ambrosio José Gonzales

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Ambrosio José Gonzales (October 3, 1818 – July 31, 1893) was a native of Matanzas, Cuba who served as a Colonel chief of artillery in the Department of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida, in the Confederate States Army during the American Civil War.

Biography

Ambrosio José Gonzales was a Cuban revolutionary who sought political separation of Cuba from Spain. His association and influence with prominent U.S. southerners led him to author a manifesto encouraging U.S. annexation of Cuba. Gonzales became active in the Cuban "Filibuster Movement," which sought to annex Cuba through a combination of financial, diplomatic, and military means. He accompanied Narciso Lopez in several of his expeditions (1849–1851) to liberate Cuba from Spain. He worked as an adviser to the Americans and made plans to organize an invasion force.



Gonzales settled in the United States after the failure of filibuster efforts in 1851. He married Harriett Rutledge Elliot, the daughter of William Elliott (1788–1863), a prominent South Carolina State Senator, planter and writer. They had six children; Ambrose E. Gonzales (1857–1926), Narciso Gener Gonzales (1858–1903), Alfonso Beauregard Gonzales (1861–1908), Gertrude Ruffini Gonzales (1864–1900), Benigno Gonzales (1866–1937), Anita Gonzales (1869-?). He eventually became well known in Southern society.

During the Civil War he was commissioned a Colonel and played a prominent role in coastal defense for the Confederacy. He later served as an artillery commander at the Battle of Honey Hill.

Notes

Manuscripts Department Library of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill SOUTHERN HISTORICAL COLLECTION : #1009 ELLIOTT AND GONZALES FAMILY PAPERS
http://www.lib.unc.edu/mss/inv/e/Elliott_and_Gonzales_Family.html

External links

- Biography of Colonel Gonzales (<http://www.sc.edu/uscpres/2003/3496.html>)

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Ambrose E. Gonzales (1857–1926)

Ambrose E. Gonzales was not only an illustrious journalist but a businessman who, against tremendous odds, kept afloat and saw flourish The State newspaper, which he and his brother, N. G. Gonzales, founded.

But if he were alive today, Ambrose Gonzales might find himself a bit bewildered that he was chosen to the South Carolina Business Hall of Fame. He took pride in his journalistic accomplishments, but he was aware that he was sometimes a soft financial touch, although he rightly prided himself on his ability "to turn a sharp financial corner."

Ambrose Elliott Gonzales was born May 27, 1857, in Paulo Parish, South Carolina, the son of General Ambrosio José and Harriet Rutledge Elliott Gonzales. His father was a brilliant and adventurous Cuban revolutionary general who battled the oppressive rule of Spain. His mother was the daughter of an erudite Lowcountry planter, William Elliott.

But he grew up in the poverty spawned by Reconstruction, learning early the work ethic. The Civil War had been costly to the Elliott and Gonzales families. William Elliott died in 1863, and Sherman's troops destroyed the Elliott family plantation home, Oak Lawn.

Jobless and broke after the war, his father tried several unsuccessful enterprises, including farming at devastated Oak Lawn and operating a sawmill. He took his family to Cuba in 1869 to accept a college teaching position. However, his wife contracted yellow fever and died after a brief illness.

After the death of his wife, the general returned with his six children to Charleston, where they were reared by their grandmother and their mother's two sisters.

By age 15, Ambrose was already known for his manners, scholarship, and his blend of practicality and idealism. He was a second father to his brothers and sisters. N. G. Gonzales, who was two years younger than Ambrose, helped his older brother by cutting wood, building fences, planting, and churning.

Educated mostly at home, Ambrose Gonzales managed brief stints in private schools in Virginia, Charleston, and Beaufort, where he early showed his business acumen by buying and selling poultry, cutting crossties for sale, and tending to matters at his family's plantation ruins.

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He and N. G. landed meager jobs as telegraphers at Grahamville, South Carolina—an experience that nudged them toward careers in journalism. And the brothers became Wade Hampton's first "Red Shirts" at Grahamville.

In 1885, he joined his brother at the Columbia bureau of the Charleston News and Courier, and as general agent, he rambled all over the state and emerged as a popular figure in small towns, where his story-telling capacity, his rich baritone voice, and his generosity became legendary.

In 1891, Ambrose and N. G. Gonzales founded The State as an outspoken Columbia

daily newspaper. In 1893, Ambrose became business manager, president, treasurer, and general manager of The State Company, as well as publisher of the newspaper. He retained these positions until his death.

The controversial enterprise struggled at first. It taxed Ambrose Gonzales' considerable financial skills to keep it going while his brothers, N. G. and William Elliott Gonzales, who joined the staff shortly after the paper started, concentrated on the news and editorial phases. N. G. Gonzales died January 19, 1903, four days after being shot by the lame-duck lieutenant governor, James Tillman, across the street from the State House. Ambrose was devastated. The day after his brother's death, he ended a signed editorial with these words: "With heavy hearts his work is taken over by those who loved him well, and in his name The State is pledged anew to the principles for which he gave his life." Ambrose Gonzales kept The State alive and crusading.

Gonzales never lost his interest in writing. He made a unique and lasting contribution with his famous sketches employing the Gullah dialect. Although he had appeared in a number of light operas, he never sang in public again after the death of his brother. Even so, he retained a keen sense of humor and an abiding interest in subjects ranging from farming to opera, while devoting 35 years to the growth and health of the newspaper, which became the state's largest.

If Gonzales had a fault, it was his excessive generosity. This quality, coupled with his loyalty and devotion to the state and to Columbia, involved him in many promotions to improve the city and state. He boosted all endeavors and subscribed to everything he could afford and some he couldn't.

The fiery William Watts Ball, who served as acting editor of The State and later as editor of the News and Courier, in 1932 wrote that Gonzales was "the most important and greatest South Carolinian since Governor Hampton, though South Carolinians do not yet know it."

In his own biographical sketch, written at the request of his editors, Gonzales dwelled on his writing far more than on his business leadership.

On July 10, 1926, the day before he died, he heard bad news about his farm. He replied: "I am the most hopeful man in the world. If I knew I were to die tomorrow, I should plant seed today." Gonzales died July 11, 1926. He never married.

He was inducted into the South Carolina Business Hall of Fame in 1986.

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Gonzales.html](http://www.knowitall.org/legacy/laureates/Ambrose%20Gonzales.html) >