

**George Fearing Hollis Papers**

**1852 - 1903**

**MSS.471**

**Court Martial of Acting Ensign Charles Sawyer III  
- Contains a handwritten copy of charges brought  
by Hollis, as commander of the USS Fernandina,  
against Sawyer for neglect of duty and language  
unbecoming of an officer and subversive of good discipline**



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(Copy)

U.S.S. *Fernandina*

St Catharine's Sound, Ga,

March 17<sup>th</sup> 1865.

Charges and Specifications of Charges in  
the Case of Acting Ensign Charles Sawyer 3<sup>rd</sup>.  
U.S. Navy, preferred by Acting Master com<sup>d</sup>  
Geo F. Hollis, U.S. Navy.

Charge First

Language unbecoming an officer and subversive  
of good discipline.

Specification:— In this, that on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of March,  
1865, the said Acting Ensign Chas Sawyer 3<sup>rd</sup>, then  
serving on board the U.S.S. *Fernandina*, when  
asked by the Executive Officer, Acting Ensign B.  
H. Chadwick, if he had wound the clock, replied:  
No; and I'll be damned if I wind either the  
clock or chronometer.

Charge 2<sup>nd</sup>

Neglect of Duty

Specification 1<sup>st</sup>: In this, that on the 15<sup>th</sup> of  
March, 1865, the said Acting Ensign Chas Sawyer,  
3<sup>rd</sup>, then serving on board the U.S.S. *Fernandina*,  
during the absence of his commanding and Ex-  
-ecutive Officer on duty, failed to have the chron-  
-ometer wound, thereby allowing it to run forty eight  
(48) hours without winding.

Specification 2<sup>nd</sup>: In this, that on the 15<sup>th</sup> day  
of March, 1865, the said Acting Ensign Chas  
Sawyer 3<sup>rd</sup>, then serving on board the U.S.S.

Navy Department.

Washington, April 25 1865

Sir

In the case of Acting Ensign Charles Sawyer 3<sup>d</sup>  
the Department will prefer charges as soon as he shall have  
reported his residence - All the intrepes named by you are  
noted and therefore it will cause less delay to have the case brought  
before a Court at New York than to send the accused and  
his and the government intrepes to the Squadron - You will  
inform Rear Admiral Dahlgren of this course proposed, in answer  
to his order to you of April 16 1865 -

Very Respectfully

G. Welles

Secretary of the Navy -

Acting Master

George F. Hollis

USS "Frimandina"

Philadelphia

Comd<sup>r</sup> Hull

Flag Ship "Philadelphia,"  
Charleston Harbor, S.C.,

April 6th, 1865.

To Acting Master

George F. Hollis,

Commanding U. S. S. "Fernandina."

SIR,

You will please place under arrest Acting Ensign


Charles Sawyer 3<sup>rd</sup>, of U. S. S.

"Fernandina," upon the Charges and Specifications  
of Charges, <sup>preferred by you, a</sup> copy of which is herewith enclosed, and which you will  
cause to be handed to him at the time; with directions to report to

Commander Wm. Reynolds, President of a Naval

General Court Martial, on board the U. S. S. "New  
Hampshire," for trial. The trial will take  
place as soon as practicable. Have  
the witnesses also present.

Respectfully,



Rear Admiral, Commanding  
South Atlantic Blockading Squadron.