

Today in Columbus History: On Wednesday, May 20, 1857, in the *Times and Sentinel Tri-Weekly*, there was an ad recruiting local agents to sell Singer Sewing Machines. By 1859, local merchants Ellis & Mathis (D.P. Ellis) were selling them. Isaac Merritt Singer had invented the Singer sewing machine in 1850; it could sew 900 stitches per minute. The Singer family actually has a Columbus connection. Isaac Singer had over 20 children. One of his sons, named Paris, had an affair with dancer Isadora Duncan and had a child with her. Paris also had a legitimate son named George Farquhar Singer, who, curiously, ended up in Columbus in 1930 (WHY?), where he lived with his family at 2011 Wildwood Ave. In 1940, George and his family lived just around the corner at 1916 Forest Ave. For both those years, his occupation is listed as "none." By the 1950s George had moved to the Daytona area, where he died in 1955. Sadly, George's son Francis Merritt Singer (b. 1923) was killed in a motorcycle accident in Columbus in 1948. Buried in Linwood Cemetery, Francis was the great-grandson of Isaac of sewing machine fame. Thanks to David Brady for pointing out his grave.

Compiled by Callie McGinnis, Muscogee Genealogical Society

Our snippets of Columbus history are usually based on a few days-worth of searching through the most popular sources for Muscogee County history. Meant to inspire readers to explore more about Columbus history, they are not exhaustive dissertations on the topic and may contain mistakes. If you have corrections or additional information, feel free to share them with the group.

Clipping from Georgia Historic Newspapers (GALILEO).

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An 1865 model of a Singer sewing machine (from files of the BBC).



Singer's tombstone in Linwood Cemetery, Columbus, GA. From Findagrave.