

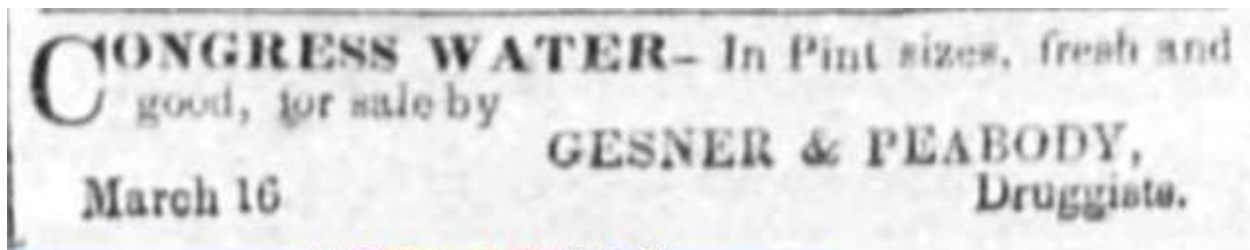
Today in Columbus History: In the July 6, 1851 issue of the *Columbus Enquirer*, an ad appeared for "Congress Water," being sold by Gesner & Peabody, Druggists. Congress Water came from Congress Spring in Saratoga Springs, N.Y. The spring had been named in honor of John Taylor Gilman, a New Hampshire representative to the Continental Congress. The story goes that Gilman was a member of a hunting party that "discovered" the spring in 1792. In 1802 it was purchased by Gideon Putnam, who realized the restorative powers of the spring water. The next owner was Dr. John Clarke, an Englishman reputed to have opened the first soda fountain in New York City. Clarke, with his partner Thomas Lynch, began bottling "Congress Water" around 1826. Later, when he married the widow Eliza White, Clarke's business became Clarke & White. Eventually imitations of "Congress Water" began appearing on the market -- products that were deemed dangerous by Clarke. Hopefully, Gesner & Peabody were selling the real deal!

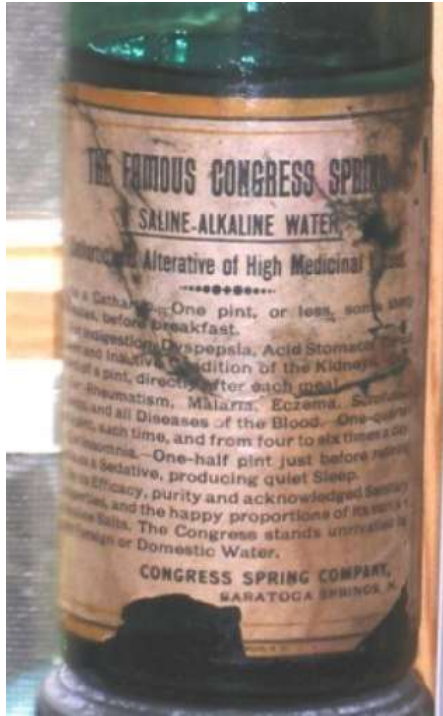
Compiled by Callie McGinnis, Muscogee Genealogical Society

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).

<https://gahistoricnewspapers.galileo.usg.edu>





A later bottle of Congress Water -- from Antiquibottles.net

TO SOUTHERNERS,
Drink
Drink of Congress Water.
Prepared at the Springs of Saratoga, N.Y.

We are reliably informed that several waters, under the name of "Saratoga" water, and others, under the name of "Congress" water, are extensively imported upon the public in the Southern and South-western States, where persons buying these articles desire and think they are purchasing "Congress" water, &c., whereas at Saratoga there are waters of all kinds, from Congress down to ditch water; and the articles imported in this manner on the public are mostly without exception, entirely worthless, and often dangerous to persons desiring the effect of Congress Water, the effect of them being entirely different from that of the genuine Congress Water, frequently producing griping pains, vertigo, &c., sometimes resulting in various permanent difficulties, by weakening the digestive powers and destroying the tone of the stomach and bowels, when rendering a mild case of dyspepsia insupportable—the effect being in no wise different from that produced by saline cathartics dissolved in ordinary water—which Congress Water produces neither griping or injurious effect in any case, however debilitated the patient may be, it being tonic, as well as cathartic. The Congress Spring as is well known, is the spring, which during sixty-three years past has built up the reputation of Saratoga, yet some have contrived the name of the spring with that of the place—thus affording the opportunity for counterfeiters to list worthless articles upon the public on the strength of the reputation obtained by the Congress Spring, in a long series of years. The injury thus inflicted upon the public and ourselves is double, for in taking these spurious articles, and finding different effects or injurious effects from their use, they in future refuse the genuine Congress Water, supposing that they have already tried it. It is not a sufficient guarantee of its genuineness that it is in bottles and boxes, bearing our names, as the old bottles and boxes are greedily bought up by counterfeiters for the purpose of filling them with their worthless article and selling it as Congress or Saratoga Water; but you may be certain that the mark is blotted, as is the neck of every bottle of genuine Congress Water, viz: "Congress Water—C & W."—if without these words, it is a worthless, dangerous counterfeit. As to the cheap waters called Saratoga powder, Saratoga salts, &c., they are not only worthless, but injurious—most passing even the victim of the common Southern grocer of the cheap. That it is impossible to form Congress Water artificially, we have the authority of the celebrated chemist, Sir Humphrey Davy, as follows:—"It is impossible to reproduce the ingredients as to make an article of equal quality, the effects of which will be the same as the natural water." On seeking us we will send you list of prices, sizes and packaging, and by ordering from us direct and some kind for the amount ordered, you can have it safely forwarded to any part of the world. We solicit our readers, to buy the genuine Congress Water only, of reliable persons, and to examine the labeling of the cork brand.

CLARKE & WHITE,
The Proprietors, Saratoga Springs, and No. 57, Broadway, New York City.

Clarke's warning to Southerners about buying fake Congress Water (1851). From the Library of Congress.