

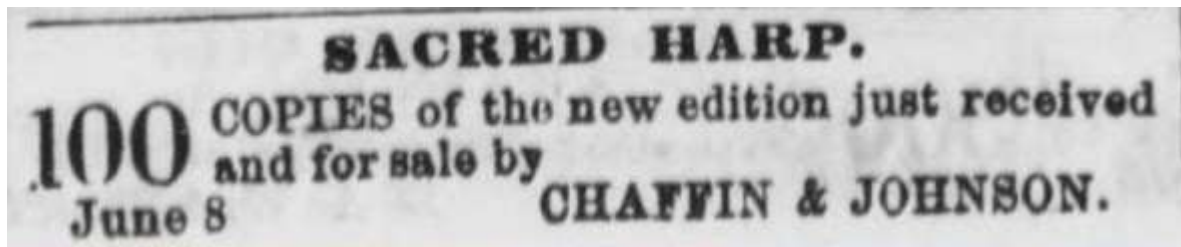
Today in Columbus History: On July 24, 1860, the *Daily Sun* carried an ad for the newest edition of a popular book being sold by local booksellers Chaffin and Johnson: *The Sacred Harp*. First published in 1844, this was a special hymnal compiled by Benjamin F. White (of Harris Co., GA) and Elisha King (of Talbot Co.). The music was transcribed using specially shaped notes that could help the readers identify where the note was on the scale. Sacred Harp singing is also known as shaped-note singing or fa-so-la singing. At a Sacred Harp singing, the first verse is usually sung using the appropriate syllable for each pitch (fa-so-la). King died in 1844 and White came out with 3 other editions during his lifetime (d. 1879). The book being advertised is the 3rd (1859) edition. Sacred Harp singing is still popular in the South and parts of the northeast. If you ever have the opportunity to attend a Sacred Harp singing, you will never forget the sound of it!

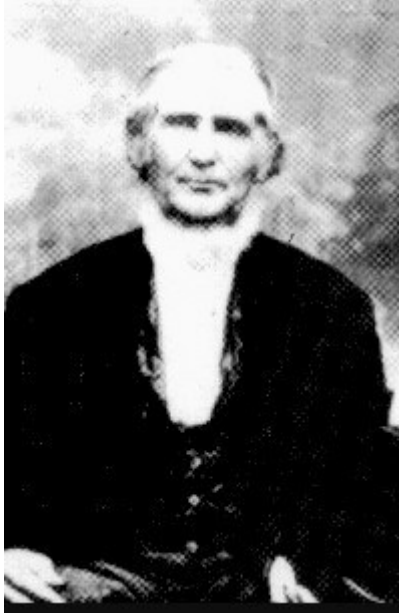
Compiled by Callie McGinnis, Muscogee Genealogical Society

*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>





Benjamin Franklin White, main author of "The Sacred Harp," the book that helped popularize shaped-note singing.



White' historic marker on the square in Hamilton, GA.



Listen to this short piece performed in 2019 at the Jefferson Co. Courthouse in Alabama. Sacred Harp singings can be small or large -- from 20 people to 1000. Singers sit in a square, divided into sopranos, altos, tenor and bass. a leader stands in the middle. Note that they sing the first stanza as fa-so la. It's always a cappella. Sacred Harp sounds great in a wood paneled room.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8rU5GVu5ohc> .