

Today in Columbus History: On August 10, 1833, a notice was published in the *Columbus Enquirer* by one John Stedham warning the public not to honor a fraudulent note for \$1000 that was being circulated. The note was allegedly from Stedham payable to Ben Hawkins and John Milton, whose signatures were on it – along with Stedham's. These three men were all players in the Creek Indian Removal. Stedham (sometimes "Stidham" was of white and Indian parents. His Creek name was Eolo and he was headman of Sawokli Town (Lower Creeks). Stedman had walked away from the meeting at which William McIntosh signed the 1825 Treaty of Indian Springs (for which he was later murdered). But in 1826 Stedman was one of the Creek chiefs who did sign the Treaty of Washington (finalized in April 1826). For his part in this, he received \$10,000 – in 1826. He was seen as a "Creek elite." So, in 1833, when he placed this notice, he was a wealthy man. The next year, Stedham left the area with 530 of his people, headed to the Indian Territory.

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>

**NOTICE.**  
**I** John Stedham of the lower Creek Nation do hereby forewarn all persons from trading for a Note of hand assigned by me to Ben. Hawkins, and I think witnessed by Mr. Milton for one thousand dollars as the consideration for which the said Note was given together with the Note was fraudulently obtained and I am determined not to pay it.  
**JOHN STEDHAM,**  
August 3 11 2t 9 Creek Nation July 30 1833



## John Stidham or Eolo (Creek)

John Stidham, often called Eolo or John Stedman, was a well-respected Muscogee Creek leader of mixed race who traced his lineage back to Denmark. He traveled to the capital and sat for a portrait by Charles Bird King at the request of Thomas McKenney after signing the 1826 Treaty of Washington, which overturned an earlier treaty that had ceded the Creek nation's territory to the United States with no reparations.

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Henry Inman

American, 1801–1846

*John Stidham or Eolo (Creek)*, ca. 1831–1834

Oil on canvas

Gift of Ann and Tom Cousins, 2017.117

Portrait at the High Museum, Atlanta.



Chief William McIntosh (1778 or 1825)

Father-in-law of Benjamin Hawkins



Rebecca McIntosh Hawkins (1815 – 1886)

Wife of Benjamin Hawkins (married in 1831)

here were two Benjamin Hawkinses: one, the famous Indian agent who lived on the Flint River and died in 1816, and the one mentioned in this notice, a mixed white/Indian, who served as an interpreter and was married to Rebecca McIntosh, Chief William McIntosh's daughter. This Benjamin's father was a white man named Stephen Hawkins, who had married Sarah Sarah Grierson, the daughter of a Scottish Indian trader and his Indian wife.

Note that Benjamin's father Stephen had a sister named Eliza, who was one of William McIntosh's wives. And, Benjamin's brother Samuel had married another daughter of William (by a different wife): Jane McIntosh. Samuel was killed along with William after the Treaty of Indian Springs debacle, and Benjamin moved quickly to Indian lands in Arkansas. He returned to east Alabama in 1828, to try to get other Creeks to join him. Then he returned home, Eventually he moved to Texas and was murdered there in 1836.

There are no portraits of Ben Hawkins, Here are his father-in-law and wife.



John Milton was a Columbus attorney, who was involved in land speculation in Alabama after the Indian Removal. He killed Joseph Camp in a duel in 1833, and though acquitted, he left town. Milton ended up in Florida, eventually becoming governor. For a good biographical sketch on Milton, see: <https://twoegg.blogspot.com/.../91-governor-john-milton...>