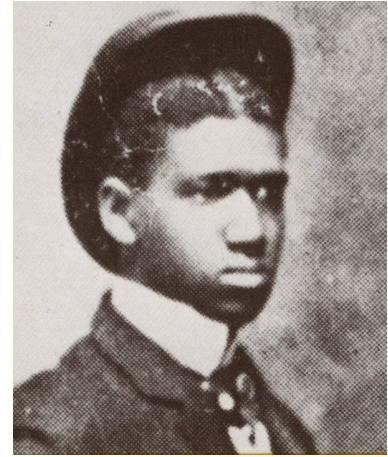


John Stark and Ragtime Originators

- John Stark (1841-1927) was an ice cream salesman, travelling organ and piano salesman, music store owner, then music publisher and printer
- best known for publishing and promoting the music of Scott Joplin (also James Scott, Joseph Lamb and Arthur Marshall)
- Opens a music store in Sedalia MO and in 1899 publishes *Maple Leaf Rag*
- came up with the term "classic ragtime" – meaning more sophisticated compositions than the bar-room ragtime of “fakers”
- He said: "Play every note of this number just as it is written and don't add any notes or flourishes. There is a meaning in every hue, and faking kills it."
- Most often, a composer sold a composition outright to the publisher and gave up any copyright claims but Stark offered a royalty
- Reportedly he paid Scott Joplin a one cent royalty on *Maple Leaf Rag*, which ended up selling more than one million copies (royalties of \$10,000)
- James Scott is said to have had perfect pitch and as a child could name not only single notes being played but all the notes played in a chord
- Known as “the Little Professor” – he was 5’ 4” and appeared to be absent-minded
- In 1906, James Scott met Scott Joplin in St. Louis who introduced him to John Stark. “*Frog Legs*” is the first rag Stark bought from Scott and it became a hit



James Scott (1885-1938)

- ❖ born in Neosho, Missouri, the son of a former slave from North Carolina
- ❖ In 1904 (age 19) employed at a music store in nearby Carthage, demonstrating pianos and showcasing popular songs
- ❖ performed at local concerts and the movie theater
- ❖ Over a 20-year period, he would publish more than 30 rags
- ❖ *Frog Legs* (1906) age 21

