

estate. He sold the land on August 19, 1918 to Robert Murphey for the bidding price of \$12,650.00. John Alexander Steger was Madison County's last Confederate Soldier. He died in Birmingham, Alabama and is buried beside his wife, Mary Ella (Simpson) Steger, at the family cemetery in Ryland, Alabama across the street from Shiloh Methodist Church.

The land apparently did not stay with Robert Murphey long for it was sold to a wealthy Black man by the name of Frank Jacobs. The Jacobs family lived in the area before the Civil War as free men.

Frank Jacobs also owned the Dickson-Graham-Rankin plantation. This was the property of Margaret Ann (Dickson) Simpson's parents, James Dickson and Keziah Wood. James Dickson entered Madison County, Alabama before February of 1818. On that date, he purchased 79.78 acres in the West half of the Southeast quarter, Section 14, Township 5, Range 2, West.

The fact that Jacobs family members were classified as "Mulatto" but were free during the time of the Civil War makes it reasonable to assume a White male ancestor. This could explain financial backing that enabled the Jacobs family members to own a significant amount of land. Dennis Simpson noted (e-mail 4/27/05) that Dr. William Simpson, Hopkins Lacy, Thomas Austin and William Robinson founded Ditto Landing, which was near the town of Liberty back then. William Simpson died in 1816, and Austin and Robinson both died in 1819 [Lacy purchased their interest]. Dennis Simpson then added: "Thomas Austin's widow married Joseph G. Jacobs, who I believe was the white father of Frank Jacobs." [The name Frank Jacobs occurs in the generations of the Jacobs family prior to the Frank Jacobs of Pond Beat who has been introduced in this manuscript.]

Combining Archival and Ethnographic Information--Speculating. Having reviewed information from Dennis Simpson, the researcher studied the interview of Lizzie Ward, who she recalled being descended from a Jacobs, and wrote the following speculation:

This study has found that many of the well-known families of Pond Beat and Mullins Flat descended from the union of Pearlie Jacobs and Alex Joiner. [Alex Joiner was the son of William Timmons (White) and Luisa, Timmons' slave, who gave Alex the name of Joiner when she later married "a man named Joiner."]

Lizzie (Bessie) Ward, born in 1900, a daughter of Alex Joiner and Pearlie Jacobs, who passed away at the onset of the 21st century only months after she was interviewed, told the researcher that Pearlie wasn't White but was "set aside as a free nation." Lizzie Ward, a "Black" woman whose complexion was so light that she more accurately could be described as White, had the warm and kindly disposition and manner that fits the image our society has long associated with that of the ideal