

Jesse Patton Dead

Jesse Patton, the well known colored liveryman, died at his home on North Pine street last Friday night, of consumption, aged about 40 years. Jesses had been in the livery business in Florence longer probably than any other one of that calling, and was widely known. He had many friends in this community, who sympathised with him in his later misfortunes, and will be sorry to hear of his death.

WHEN YOU WANT

 **STYLISH : RIGS**

BE SURE TO SEE...

Jesse Patton

Before Giving Your Order.

Rubber Tired Buggies
and Polite Drivers

Drummers wishing to go in any direction from Florence will do well to call on me.

Jesse Patton.

(Left) Newspaper Clipping about Mr. Jesse Patton (*Florence Times*, Friday, August 5, 1910 via Florence-Lauderdale Public Library) (Bottom Left) Ad for Jesse Patton's Livery (*Florence Democrat*, May 11, 1900 via Florence-Lauderdale Public Library)

Blacksmiths

A profession closely associated with the stables and significant to all parts of life was the blacksmith. Every town needed a blacksmith, and Florence's prominent blacksmith of color was Hilton Key (c.1832-1895). A native of Virginia, Mr. Key was once a slave of one of Florence's prominent families. This may be where he gained his skills in blacksmithing and carpentry. After Emancipation, Key took on contracts, including one by the county in 1872 to repair the windows of the jail. In 1886, Mr. Key opened a blacksmith shop; previously, he had a stand on the corner of Tombigbee and Court streets. Hilton Key and Margaret Hale (born c. 1846) were married in 1868 by Rev. William Wise Handy (W.C. Handy's grandfather). The couple had at least four children., and smithing ran in the Key family. His son, Green Key also became a blacksmith. Hilton's brother, George Key, lived in his house in 1870 and was also a blacksmith. The 1913 Florence City Directory lists a Charles Key with a blacksmith shop at 121 South Seminary Street – perhaps another relation. In November 1891, Key's daughter, Katie (1873-after

(Below) Notice for Hilton Key's Blacksmith Shop (*Florence Gazette*, Saturday, June 12, 1886 via Florence-Lauderdale Public Library)

To the Public.

I have again opened a Blacksmith Shop, at my old stand, on Tombeckbee, near Court; and would solicit the patronage of the public. Horse-shoeing and other work in my line done well, promptly and cheaply. All iron-work in the wagon or carriage line well done: I am here to stay.

HILTON KEY.

1913), married fellow Florence businessman, Jesse Patton, livery stable owner. Hilton Key died on April 23, 1895 of a stroke at 65 years old.

Restaurants

Segregation was the status quo for much of the South after the Civil War until the late 1960s. While providing services such as grooming and cooking were acceptable and common for people of color, establishments such as barbershops and restaurants were segregated. It was not socially acceptable for white people to use the same implements and utensils as people of color, prompting barbershops and restaurants, among other places, to segregate their services. A so-called "Negro Restaurant" was run by people of color, for people of color. There were at least three of these restaurants in Florence in the early 20th century. One owner of a Florence restaurant for people of color was Abraham "Abe" Streiter (1840-1893). Prior to opening the restaurant, Mr. Streiter had been a laborer. His restaurant was located on the Stafford Block of East Mobile Street with several other African American-owned businesses.

(Below) Newspaper Clipping about Mr. John Taylor (*Florence Times*, Friday, November 9, 1900 via Florence-Lauderdale Public Library)

Dropped Dead.

John Taylor, a worthy colored man who kept a restaurant and grocery on the corner of Court and Tombigby streets, dropped dead in his place of business on Friday afternoon last in his little store. He was a worthy man and had the respect of all our people. His sensational death drew many people to the scene.