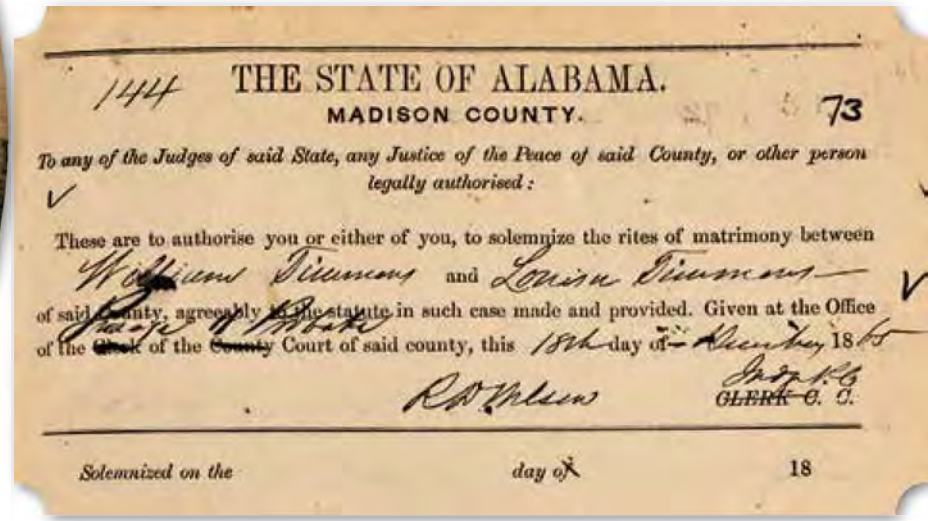


(Far Left) Luther Timmons Joiner, Son of William and Louisa Timmons, with His Wife Maggie Rooks and a Niece (Ancestry.com, Courtesy Dr. Joiner) **(Left)** Kate Timmons Joiner Lacy, Daughter of William and Louisa Timmons (Ancestry.com, Courtesy Dr. Joiner)



(Top) The Marriage License of William and Louisa Timmons, 1865 (Ancestry.com) **(Above)** 1900 Federal Census Showing William and Anna Timmons (National Archives and Records Administration via Ancestry.com)

56	21224	William Timmons	Head	10	76	Aug	1837	60	70	37	Alabama	South Carolina	South Carolina	1861-2-0-0-5	0	3/4	3/4	3/4	0	7	20
58		Anna E	wf	10	77	July	1837	60	70	29	Alabama	South Carolina	Virginia			3/4	3/4	3/4			
59		Elizabeth	Daughter	10	78	Feb	1877	23	20	3	Alabama	Alabama	Alabama			3/4	3/4	3/4			
60		Eugene	son	10	72	Nov	1872	7	5		Alabama	Alabama	Alabama	at school		2	3/4	3/4	3/4		
61		William H	son	10	76	June	1874	4	5		Alabama	Alabama	Alabama			3/4	3/4	3/4			
		Irma R	Daughter	10	78	Feb	1878	2	3		Alabama	Alabama	Alabama			3/4	3/4	3/4			

be followed in the census records. In 1900, they were living together in Whitesburg. The census records that they had been married for 39 years, indicating they were married in 1861, four years before William’s marriage to Louisa. However, there is no marriage record for Annie and William. The census also records Annie as having had six children, but only four are known: Kittie Quay (1861-1862), Eugene (1865-1870), John H. (1868-1899), and Sophie (1870-1962).

Given the dates of birth of all children known to be fathered by William Timmons, the information is confusing. It appears that William and Louisa had two children, then William married Annie and had a child. After Emancipation, William and Louisa were married for a short time. But if all the birth dates are correct, William continued to have a relationship with both women for years. Following the anti-miscegenation laws, Louisa married William Joiner. The 1870 census records Louisa Joiner,

35 years old, living with William Joiner, 50 years old. However, the Joiner family of Pond Beat are truly the Timmons family of color of Pond Beat. Also in the household are her daughters Mary Joiner (William Timmon’s) and Sarah Joiner (possibly William Joiner’s). Zebedee and Alexander live in the household as well, they continued to go by the name Timmons at that time. Living two households over from William and Louisa Joiner are William and Anne Timmons.

This family history may have been known by some of the descendants of prior generations. However, past generations may have suppressed this family history, either intentionally or otherwise. Relationships like William and Louisa’s were not always looked upon favorably, as

evidenced by the fact that Louisa herself tried to conceal her children’s parentage by taking another man’s name. Furthermore, William did not leave anything to his children with Louisa in his will. This may have been because, while not explicitly illegal, it was exceedingly difficult to leave inheritance to children of color in the early 20th century. But, there is arguably evidence that William tried to take care of his children during his life, such as providing them with land, in order to avoid such troubles that might arise from a probate court.

As early as 1869, William Timmons sold land to William Joiner, Louisa’s new husband and neighbor to the Timmons. Timmons also sold land to former slaves Elisha Joiner and James Timmons, who in 1870 lived on either side of William Joiner. These three men bought 55 acres of land for \$11.60 per acres. Another former slave, Peter Timmons, purchased 100 acres of land from Timmons for \$900. At the time, this was a fair price. Although it was not uncommon for former slave owners to sell portions of the plantation to former slaves, even in Madison County, what stands out about William Timmons is that he sold land at fair market values to both white people and people of color.

While the records are too incomplete to know whether the Timmons-Joiner children owned land or when they obtained it, there are some clues in the census records. By 1910, Kate had married Wyatt Lacy, and they owned a farm in south Madison. By 1920, John Timmons Joiner and his wife, Emma Jacobs Joiner, were farming cotton on their own land. Whether or not Alex obtained land is unclear, but two of his sons, Claudie and Percy, became prominent landowners in Pond Beat in the early 20th century.

“We’re Related Somehow or Another”

Many of the families from the Pond Beat/Mullins Flat area are connected through William and Louisa Timmons. Their children brought together, at minimum, the Joiner, Jordan, Lacy, and Burn families through marriage. Three of the descendants that gathered at Ms. Jordan’s house in the summer of 2018 can trace their ancestry to the Timmonses.