

Ancestral Etchings

by Thomas Holmes Timmons

“Ancestral Etchings” is the opening chapter (pp. 11-13) of *Loving Memorials: Beyond the Valley of the Shadows* by Thomas H. Timmons, Pentecostal Publishing Company, Louisville, Kentucky, 1914. This volume consists of several dozen brief sketches (“etchings”) of the lives and deaths of Timmons’ friends and acquaintances (including some children). The inscription reads: “To my daughter Mrs. Mary Eunice Irving, this book is affectionately dedicated.”

My father's ancestors were of English origin. The great ancestor of my paternal grandfather was Rev. Wm. Turner, of Scotland. He was born in 1640. Under the pressure of persecution in Scotland and Ireland, the family emigrated to America and settled in Worcester county, Maryland. My great-grandfather, Zadock Turner, was one of the descendants of Rev. Wm. Turner and was born in 1729. He was a soldier in the Revolutionary War and fought with General Washington in the battles of Brandywine and Trenton and was in the campaigns of Philadelphia and New York and was present when the British surrendered at Yorktown. He is buried in Sparta, Georgia, and his grave is unmarked.

Zadock Turner was the father of Sabra Turner. Sabra became the wife of Abigah Timmons. During the last decade of the 17th Century this couple with a colony, emigrated to Georgia and located in Hancock county. My father, Rev. Wm. Timmons, was the oldest son of this couple and was born in Hancock county, Ga., January 18, 1799. My father was a holiness man of a high order and under his preaching Rev. W.C. Dunlap of the Georgia Conference sought and found the blessing of perfect love. He [Wm. Timmons] was married twice. After the death of the first wife he was married to Mrs. Mary B. Ellison, who became the mother of seven sons.

- First, Jeremiah Norman, born June 14, 1836, and died in infancy.
- Second, Robert Abigah, born in Heard county, Ga., August 20, 1837. He entered the Methodist ministry when about 21 years old, in Alabama. He was a man of conspicuous ability in the pulpit and became one of the strongest leaders of his Conference. His ministry of 43 years was marked with wonderful results. On the 8th day of April, 1904, he died in great peace in the city of Gadsden, Ala., leaving a wife and one son, Mr. J. E. Timmons, of LaFayette, Ala.
- Third, Zadock Norman was born in Coweta county, Ga, March 14, 1839. He lived to the age of 17 years and 20 days. He was stately and handsome and was marvelously gifted in vocal music. The death of this son from a brief and painful illness broke my father's heart.
- Fourth, was the author of this volume.
- Fifth, Hamil Cato was born in Coweta county, Ga., Jan 18, 1843. He served four years in the bloody war of the Republic, was severely wounded at the battle of Missionary Ridge, November 25, 1863. He suffered the loss of an eye but became proficient in the practice of medicine in spite of his disabilities. He was a fine singer and served his church faithfully as a steward. He died the 15th of April, 1912, in Atlanta, Ga., leaving a wife and one daughter.
- Sixth, Benson Ellison Lane was born in Coweta county, Ga, June 22, 1845. Of this brother his life, character, labors, and translation an extended account is given elsewhere in this volume.
- Seventh, Dr. Floyd Clark was born in Corinth, Heard county, Ga., April 11, 1847. In his early years he developed remarkable mentality and his educational opportunities were of the very best. He was an honored graduate from Emory College. He taught and served as a pastor for 14 years. Bishop Pierce said of him, "He is the best combination of teacher and pastor that I have ever known." After mature deliberation he determined to give himself wholly to the pastorate and was transferred by Bishop McTyeire to the Texas conference where he rendered service in high stations with conspicuous ability and phenomenal success for 18 years. He was a member of the Ecumenical Conference in London in 1902. Under the pressure of excessive labors, his health gave way and he returned to his native Georgia to linger awhile and die. After a hard fight for life, he fell asleep on Sunday morning, August 16, 1908, leaving a wife, three sons, and one daughter. The body of this noble brother rests under the sod and the dew at Monroe, Ga.

My mother's maiden name was Cato. She was born in South Carolina. She was a wise and loving mother. Amid all the checkered scenes and trying experiences of life her faith in God was firm. She died in peace at the age of 72 years.