

I Remember Old Tuscaloosa

By Fred Maxwell

THE FIRST avenue east of the Alavet Apartments on Thomas Field of the University of Alabama campus is named Jackson Ave. and has been so shown on the official maps of Tuscaloosa for many, many years. This avenue starts at 10th St. and runs south to the railroad right of way.

On this avenue lived Delaware Jackson, a noble and well known black woman who was recently recognized and honored by the City of Tuscaloosa by the naming of the new HUD apartments erected just south of the old Castle Hill School on 10th St. — the Delaware Jackson Apartments. This was a worthy honor.

But there is another citizen of sterling character from this area whose name I have not heard mentioned in a number of years and whose memory should not be forgotten.

It is Sam Daly. Sam operated a farm in Ralph. His brother Ralph Daly lived on a small farm (about one acre) located in the rich bottom land at the foot of Castle Hill. This farm plus the several residences contiguous to it was well known as Daly's Bot-

tom. Both Ralph and Sam were noble black men of character and I feel sure that their work and good deeds overlapped.

Sam Daly's vocation was farming and he was diligent, energetic and was considered an excellent farmer. But Sam had a second vocation — he owned and drove his own city "hack" in Tuscaloosa. This horse drawn vehicle was a two-seated carriage with a canopy top. In some other cities such an outfit was called a "cab" but in Tuscaloosa it was generally known as a "hack." It served a similar function as today's taxicab.

Sam Daly headquarters in town was generally near the McLester Hotel whose guests were frequently in need of local transportation. He also met most of the trains in hopes of picking up a fare. I frequently met up with

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Daly and we usually exchanged more than just a simple greeting such as "hi" or "Hello." I liked him and he seemed to like me. He had a horse and carriage and I had a goat and wagon so I guess I felt that we were in the same business. We held some interesting conversations.

But it is Sam Daly's avocation that I want to emphasize in this article.

Sam Daly was really concerned over the young black boys who had transgressed the law and were brought into court, tried and received the judge's verdict. Sam would attend such trials and if he felt that the boy was a first offender, and just needed a steady hand and better home conditions, he would ask the judge to parole the offender to him and let the boy come live at his home and farm in Ralph. In most cases the judge was glad to do this and sometimes a judge would call

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Sam and ask him to accept another boy.

Sam Daly gave these boys a new lease on life with a good clean environment and opportunity to earn and learn. He taught them responsibility by paying them for work on the farm and letting them buy their own clothes, schoolbooks and other necessities with their own money. He taught them to realize their debt to society and how to be good citizens.

I have heard it said that not one single boy that was paroled to Sam Daly was ever brought back into court for transgressing the law. I have also heard that these parolees totaled more than 50.

I feel that there will be many stars in Sam Daly's crown and that most of them were earned in his avocation.