

I Remember Old Tuscaloosa

By Fred Maxwell

A casual ride anywhere around Tuscaloosa will reveal many good public eating places and many small hot dog and barbecue stands. Many are brilliantly lighted and sparkle with new and efficient equipment and sanitary features, and they all seem to be very popular.

Compare this with the period of, say 1900-1920 in our city. The best known "eating places" included the following four:

1. The McLester Hotel, located at corner of 6th St. and 24th Ave. This was Tuscaloosa's best, serving breakfast, lunch and dinner.

2. The Busy Bee restaurant, located in the east (one-story) part of the Alston Building on 6th St. and 24th Ave. In addition to regular meals the short order department operated from dawn to late at night.

3. Mr. Willingham operated a very small "hut" place between the curb and the sidewalks located first at the Brown Department Store corner, 5th St. and 24th Ave., and later at the

Kress store corner, 5th St. and 23rd Ave. His hot dogs and barbecue sandwiches were excellent.

4. The Whole-Hog-and-Biscuit was operated by W.H. (Bill) Rohrer. It was located on the east side of 24th Ave. between 6th and 7th Streets. The Court House was located on what is now the Alston Building corner and the Diamond Theater on the corner of 7th St. and 24th Ave. The Court House moved to its present site about 1907 and Bill Rohrer moved to the southeast corner of 7th St. and 24th Ave. where Pure Oil filling station now is located.

A great many out of town people were served by the Whole-Hog-and-Biscuit while attending to business at the Court House. But a large amount of trade came from school age children who have an insatiable appetite and patronized this place especially before, during and after the picture show.

So "you just paid your money and took your choice."