

I Remember Old Tuscaloosa

By Fred Maxwell

THE steamboat landing or wharf between the two bridges on the Black Warrior River served Tuscaloosa for many years.

When Locks 10, 11, and 12 were completed a new and better wharf was developed just above the "pump-house" (for city water supply) and was named "White's Landing."

The local street car system when extended to serve Holt developed an amusement complex consisting of a dance hall, swimming pool, dressing rooms, etc., at White's Landing in order to increase street car traffic. This amusement area was named Riverview and this name has prevailed ever since.

The facilities at Riverview to handle river freight were greatly improved and/or augmented to handle the increased traffic both from the steamboats and the tow of barges.

The City of Tuscaloosa erected a warehouse and installed a 15-ton crane, or derrick, for loading and unloading.

The Tuscaloosa Railway and Utilities Co. installed a spur track to the river bank and warehouse thereby connecting railroad to river. The crane served boat, railroad car and warehouse in any combination.

Large steel containers were obtained to handle cargo such as sugar, flour, grain or other freight that needed protection. They were fabricated so that four of them could be placed on a railroad flat car and give it the dimensions or configuration of a box car. As an example, a container could be loaded with sugar (or any other commodity) at St. Louis and shipped by boat to Tuscaloosa, be transferred to a railroad flat car by the crane, and thence (along with three other containers) routed to Atlanta or any other destination served by rail.

The Tuscaloosa area profits by having river transportation available on account of its low freight rates. An unseen bonus is derived by the lower railroad freight rates that are given when they compete with water rates.

* Riverview is now deserted and dilapidated.