

Everyone in the area knows the big white house where J.B. Harris lives and that, back in time, it was Charity Cooper Lee and her husband who built it up on the hill. Back in the days of Charity Cooper Lee, what is now the Harris place was a plantation with slaves. The row of small log houses just northwest of the house is said to have been slave cabins back then. Sharecroppers live in the cabins now. Back in Lee's time, this is probably where the slaves that served the big house lived.

The garage, which is north of the house, is the former plantation carriage house. The small set of cement steps just setting there, leading to nowhere—that's what people used to assist them in stepping up into the high carriages they would pull up beside it.

Ten or so small houses are on the Harris place. John Blackburn (a white man) is one of Sam's sharecroppers. The house that he lives in is built of rough planks, about 12 inches wide. The planks are vertical, with 3-inch strips nailed over the cracks between the boards. The roof is tin. The walls inside are papered with heavy wallpaper. It serves to insulate a bit. It's a solid color with no pattern. The house has five rooms, which is larger than most of the houses, but John Blackburn has eleven children. Sam furnishes John with mules, and he gets half of what John grows. Some people say that Sam splits the cost of fertilizer and seeds with his sharecroppers.

Sam has about a thousand acres, with 600 in cotton, corn, and other crops. He has 10 or 15 acres in cantaloupes, and he and Millburn raise sweet potatoes, which they store in the front part of the basement under the big house. They've

got a heater down there, run by coal oil, which they run at a certain temperature until the potatoes are dried out, then they take them to market. They dig in September and take them to market around Thanksgiving. So, Sam is a truck farmer among other things.

Sam also has a combine and a hay bailer. When he's ready to do hay, he brings the bailer up, takes the wheels off, and blocks it so it is stationary. The hay feeds into the hopper. The men lay the hay on a slide. They have to shock the hay on poles so it will dry out before they bail it, or it will mold. The hay is cut flat with a 16-foot-wide hay rake, pulled up, and stacked around a framed [braced] 8-foot long pole in the ground, using the slide or runner. The results are a three-sided pyramid. The hay will stay like this until spring without rotting; however, sometimes logs are put around it, because the cows will eat a hole in it.

Most old plantations had a steam driven mill. Sam had one by a pond, but he quit using his and has a big old tractor with a belt drive. The tractor has a power take-off on the side where each wheel is. If anybody brings logs, Sam parks the tractor and blocks it. Everything is a barter system. He mills logs for a percentage. The sawmill is on a side road close to the big house. That was the old slave quarters road. It goes all the way back down to the river.

Sam also uses the tractor to run the gristmill. People bring their corn to Sam. If they don't want to wait for it to be ground, he weighs it and gives them a percentage from meal he has already ground. He uses a scoop about the size of a gallon bucket to put the meal in a bag for them. Sometimes another fellow