



A photograph of Paul and Lincoln Johnson, brothers who worked at the U.S.N.P #2, often emerges when looking for African American workers for the TVA in the Shoals. The caption for this photograph reads: "Paul Johnson, of Tuscumbia, has progressed since 1935 through six classifications to carbide-handling foreman at the TVA nitrate plant. He is the first negro to have this job. He is chairman of the negro auxiliary of the Operating Engineers' Union (AFL). Lincoln C. Johnson, also of Tuscumbia, Paul Johnson's brother, has risen from concrete laborer to sub-labor foreman. He is vice president of the Hod Carriers' Union (AFL). Both have excellent attendance records at the nitrate plant."

The 1940 federal census confirms that Paul Johnson is a 26-year-old living with his wife on Mulberry Street in southeast Tuscumbia. He and Sallie Mae rent a house; he is noted as a foreman for the TVA and she owns a beauty salon. Lincoln Johnson is L. C. Johnson on the 1940 census. He is 30-years-old and rents a house with his wife, Louise. The census only states that he works for TVA, but neglects to mention a position. The Johnson brothers grew up with a large family on a farm on 6th Street in Tuscumbia. Their parents, Clement and Bettie Johnson owned their farm since at least 1910 to 1940, although his father no longer farmed the land by 1930, but most likely rented it out.



**(Above)** Paul Johnson and His Brother, Lincoln. Nitrate Negatives. Circa 1942. Records of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), Record Group 142; National Archives and Records Administration – Atlanta. **(Below)** 1920 Federal Census Excerpt Showing Johnson Brothers in the Household of Their Father, Clemmons Johnson, Who Owned a Farm (National Archives and Records Administration via Ancestry.com) **(Bottom)** 1940 Federal Census Excerpt Showing Paul Johnson as "Tennessee Valley Authority Foreman" (National Archives and Records Administration via Ancestry.com)

53	1089	10	15	Johnson	Clemmons	Head	M	13	44	no	yes	yes	Alabama	Mississippi	Mississippi	yes	Home	Home	00	11
54				Bettie	C	Wife	F	13	43	no	yes	yes	Alabama	Alabama	Alabama	yes	Home			
55				Allice	S	Daughter	F	13	19	3	yes	yes	Alabama	Alabama	Alabama	yes	Home			
56				John	A	Son	M	13	17	9	yes	yes	Alabama	Alabama	Alabama	yes	Palmer	Railroad	Stag	W
57				Willie	B	Daughter	F	13	14	3	yes	yes	Alabama	Alabama	Alabama	yes	Home			
58				Lillie	C	Son	M	13	10	3	yes	yes	Alabama	Alabama	Alabama	yes	Home			
59				Paul	F	Son	M	13	5	3	no	no	Alabama	Alabama	Alabama	yes	Home			

39	508	1273	7	Johnson, Paul	Head	M	July 26	M	No 4-4	Alabama	Some place	No	Yes	-	-	40	Foreman	Tennessee Valley Authority	610	16	17	52	1620	No	39
40				Sallie Mae	Wife	F	July 24	M	No 10-1	Alabama		No	Yes	-	-	24	Beauty Specialist	Owner	700	17	13	52		No	40

KEY

- COMMUNITIES
- CEMETERIES
- CHURCHES
- PLANTATIONS
- SCHOOLS
- OTHER

\* Indicates a Historical - Non-Extant Resource

## 24 ■ North Alabama Recording Studios (NORALA)

Quin Ivy, music producer and owner of NORALA and Quinvy Studios, began as a record store owner and WLAY DJ. He established North Alabama Recording Studios (NORALA) in Sheffield on 2nd Street in 1965. One of Ivy's first and biggest stars was Percy Sledge, a young African American hospital orderly from Leighton. It was at Ivy's studio in 1966 that Sledge recorded the hit "When A Man Loves A Woman." Once Ivy shared the recording with Rick Hall of FAME Recording Studios, connections were made with Atlantic Records. The song ended up #1 on the Billboard Hot 100 chart. Sledge made Ivy so successful, that he was able to upgrade his studios



from the egg carton-lined NORALA to a full-equipped studio by 1968. He named this new studio Quinvy. NORALA no longer stands, but an Alabama Historical Society marker is near the site.

**(Left)** A Label for a Vinyl Record Produced by NORALA (Roots of American Music Trail, Musictrail.una.edu)