

Also: Sam Schaudies, colored, is an excellent boot maker, but has not learned the art of pruning trees. Thursday he got up in a mulberry tree to saw off a protruding branch, and seating himself securely just where the limb forked, proceeded to saw it off between where he sat and where it left the body of the tree. Result: After descending about twenty feet, Sam hit the ground, broke his arm, cracked his neck, and awfully strained his backbone.

(Above) Newspaper Clipping from *The Montgomery Advertiser*, February 24, 1880 about Samuel Schaudies (Newspapers.com) (Below) Abbie Robinson Schaudies Holding Tulie Ophelia, Portrait Commissioned by Samuel Schaudies (Schaudies-Banks-Ragland Collection)



originally immigrated from Prussia. By the mid-1800s, F. O. Schaudies had settled in Huntsville, Madison County where he set up shop as a boot and shoe maker. The 1860 slave schedule shows that F. O. Schaudies owned five slaves in Huntsville. One

of them was a 13-year-old boy, this may have been Samuel. Although it is not known whether it was typical of Schaudies to teach his slaves his trade, he did teach Samuel the skills needed to be a boot and shoemaker. Sometime in the decade that followed Emancipation, Samuel married his wife, Abbie Robinson, and moved across the river to Decatur, Alabama. By 1878, Sam Schaudies had opened his own shoemaking and repairing business as evidenced by a newspaper ad. In the ad, he specifically stated that he was taught by F.O. Schaudies of Huntsville.

When the Schaudies family settled in Decatur, Samuel and Abbie rented a cottage on the corner of Wilson and Sycamore streets. A previous owner was an African American man named Robert Chardavayne, a fellow boot and shoemaker. A white attorney purchased the house from Chardavayne and according to Dr. Ragland, "vowed that no black would ever live in that residence again." The Schaudies were

successful in obtaining the property because Abbie Robinson Schaudies was able to "pass for white." This house became known as the Schaudies-Banks Cottage and has been owned by an African American family to the present day. The Schaudies-Banks Cottage still stands – a historic home of Decatur – it has five rooms and originally faced Sycamore Street. Later a Victorian-era addition facing Wilson Street was built for Abbie's daughter, Ida Mae Schaudies Moseley Bowen.

Samuel Schaudies died in 1881. He drowned in the Tennessee River. His body was never recovered, however, there is a marker in the Decatur Cemetery, Cowan Section, next to the grave of Abbie Robinson Schaudies and their daughter, Ida Mae Schaudies Moseley Bowen. Also, in the Schaudies-Banks family plot is the burial of Ida Mae's son, Curtis Allen Moseley. He was a soldier in the First World War. When he came back to the States, he moved to New

York City and participated in the Harlem Renaissance. His sister, Collen Moseley Ruffin, and Curtis Allen were friends with W. C. Handy. Collen and her husband W. L. Ruffin met Handy in the Tri-Cities of Colbert County where Ruffin was the first African American physician in Tuscumbia.

Matthew Hewlett Banks (1844-1919)

The Banks family has been in North Alabama since the 1820s and Decatur since 1830. The history of the Banks of Decatur begins with a white, slave-owning family from Virginia. Several brothers moved to Tennessee and North Alabama in the early 19th century. One of these brothers was Lawrence Slaughter Banks (1803-1881). Lawrence was known as Colonel Banks for his service in either the Confederate Army or Alabama State Militia. He came to Madison County, Alabama in the 1820s and was settled in Morgan County by 1830. Although he was appointed

Justice of the Peace for Morgan County between 1830 and 1841, Lawrence Banks could not be found on the 1840 census. The two subsequent censuses record L. S. Banks in Morgan County. Between 1850 and 1860, Banks was a slave owner, although not a large planter – he owned four or five slaves before Emancipation. It is believed that Lawrence S. Banks fathered children with an unknown slave woman. One of those children was Matthew Hewlett Banks, born a slave in 1844.



(Above) Matthew Hewlett Banks (Ancestry.com via the W. S. Hoole Library, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa) (Left) Advertisement for Tickets to a Show at Lyceum Theatre. Note that Tickets for People of Color were Sold at One of Hewlett Banks Businesses, His Restaurant on Banks St., 1914 (Newspapers.com)

LYCEUM THEATRE
SATURDAY NIGHT, DECEMBER 12th

THAT ETHIOPIAN CARNIVAL OF FUN
Breaking All Records

The Smart Set

40 PEOPLE --IN-- 40 PEOPLE

"His Excellency The President"

Seats on sale for white people at Masonic office: For colored people at Hewlett Banks Restaurant, Bank St.
PRICES 25c to \$1.00