

Alton's Black History: The namesakes of Taylor Street

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ALTON - Taylor Street in the incorrectly-named "Mexico" area of Alton was named for a couple who brought food to the area.

Edward and Mable Taylor operated a grocery store in that area after moving to Alton in 1905. Edward Taylor was born in Halifax, Nova Scotia in 1886, and Mable Taylor was born in Ridge Prairie, Illinois in 1882. Edward Taylor was brought to the area to help build a bathtub foundry for Nelson's Foundry in Edwardsville, Illinois. According to *20th Century African American Leaders in Alton*, foundry owners were surprised their help was a man of color from the far north.

During the operation of the grocery store, Edward Taylor worked at Duncan Gas Maker, the glass works and the steel mill.

Taylor Street was named after the couple after Edward Taylor gave some of the front yard of his grocery store to the City of Alton in order for it to build a street. That street gave access to five families to receive mail directly from the U.S. Postal Service instead of having to receive their mail at the grocery store.

A candidate for mayor at the time recognized the Taylors' contribution to the city, and responded by naming the street in their honor.