

FROM THE DESK OF
ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL
AND INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE
IN THE WORLD

9/29/86

Eileen,

This man is Albert Sammis. He was the son of John S. Sammis, one of the leading planters and businessmen in Duval County before the Civil War. Albert's mother was one of the slave women on the Sammis plantation. When news of the pregnancy was brought to the attention of Mrs. Sammis (Mary Kingsley, the daughter of Zephaniah Kingsley, Jr., and Anna Madgigine Jai), the expectant mother was freed and sent away. The child, however, was raised by John and Mary Sammis. at their Arlington home/plantation.

Albert thus grew up at Strawberry Mills, one of his father's plantations, perhaps at the home that still stands at Noble Circle. When in his teens, Albert was apprenticed to Mr. R. Biggs, a blacksmith in Jacksonville. During the war Sammis volunteered for Union service in late 1862, in the First regiment of loyal South Carolina ~~of~~ volunteers. The 1st S.C. later became the 33rd regiment, United States Colored Infantry. It was the first regiment mustered into the Union Army during the Civil War (first black regiment), and contained many former free blacks and slaves from Northeast Florida. Albert Sammis served briefly as Colonel Thomas Wentworth's Higginson's orderly, specifically during the time when the First SC occupied Jacksonville. After the war Albert returned to Jacksonville and served for a while as a constable.

*His son is pictured on the
flip side of my album.*

Don Schaefer

