

## LD SANDY



Sandy was a beautiful Collie dog. I don't remember when we got him, but I do remember that Daddy got him from one of his customers on his milk route in Atlanta. I would guess it was about 1938 or 1939. Sandy was a dog everybody loved. He was a perfect dog for a boy growing up on the farm. He followed me everywhere and he was everybody's friend. Together we covered not only the farm but the whole community just roaming the fields and woods.

He loved most to go to the pasture with any of us. He wanted to chase the cows. It is natural for Collie dogs to chase cows I guess. The cows would be late coming to the barn for milking in the summer time and we would have to go after them. He would watch for us to start down the pasture lane and here he would come. We would have to scold him to keep him from making the cows run, for the cows utters were filled with milk and it was not good for them to trot or run from the pasture to the barn. He learned that after a while and then he would just walk behind the cows with his tail down and would turn frequently and look at us to see if thing's was going the way we wanted. But if we wanted any of the cows brought to the house other than at milking time all we had to do was just call Sandy and point toward the cows. He was a big help whenever any of the cows got out of the pasture and we had to find them and drive them back into the pasture or to the barn lot.

Sandy was also very good at catching big rats. We always had big rats around the barns and smokehouses. Occasionally Daddy or Grandpa would decide to tear up the smokehouse floor and dig up the dirt under the floor to try to catch or kill the rats and destroy their den. Sandy was right in the middle of that and he was fast as lightening, and because of his skill we would usually have pretty good luck destroying most of the big rats

Some years later Dad brought home another dog we called Jeff. I will talk about him later. But as I grew up and was permitted to start hunting, first with a B-B gun, then a single shot 22 caliber rifle, and later the double-barreled 16 gage shotgun, I wanted hunting dogs to chase rabbits. I raised a fine pair of hounds, which is a story in its self. But Sandy was not a hunting dog, and was not good to have around while trying to train hounds to hunt, chase, and track rabbits. I would make Sandy stay at the house and if he followed me any way I would scold him and send him back. I always felt bad because I knew he did not understand why I did not want him to come with me. He always came with me when I would go to the creek fishing. But Sandy would chase a rabbit only as far as he could see him and then he would come back to me. The young hounds would see and hear him and they would follow him back to me. The hounds needed to learn what was their nature, which was to chase the rabbit when they could see him, but if they lost sight of him, then they should search for the rabbits scent and track him until they "jumped" him again. Then continue the chase until the rabbit circled back to the general area where he was first found, and hopefully would come within range for a fair shot.

Sandy usually slept in the garage where we kept the car and later the truck, the tractor, and a lot of junk. He got old as all of us do. But dogs get old a lot faster than people. As a youngster you don't pay much attention to that. The sad part was Old Sandy lost the use of his hind legs, so he would just drag himself around. I have later read where some people have had dogs that had the same problem and they built them a little cart affair with two little wheels replacing the hind legs - I wish I had known to do that. Even in that condition he would always greet you with his ears perked up and a happy face. Man (and boy's) best friend is like that, and Old Sandy was one of the best to the whole family.

The dogs were never allowed in the house on the farm, as were the cats. Jeff also slept in the garage. When we would throw their food out to them (that's how we did it on the farm. they ate table scraps, we never heard of dog food). Old Sandy would whine because he could not get to his, and we would have to take his food to him in the garage. He stayed in the garage most of the time as he became more feeble and helpless. On sunny days he might crawl out into the warm sunshine.

One day I missed Old Sandy and I asked Mom if she knew where he was. She never looked up and said, "Grandpa couldn't stand to see him suffer any more so he got rid of him". I said, "What do you mean got rid of him"? Well son he took the gun and took Old Sandy to the woods and shot him. He's better off, he won't have to suffer any more. I left the house and cried. I later came to realize it was probably the merciful thing to do. Nobody but Grandpa had to guts to do it. That's how things were done back then on the farm.

I still miss Old Sandy.

Thomas H. Ewing  
(My own story)  
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**Melba-Old Sandy- Deloris- Pap**