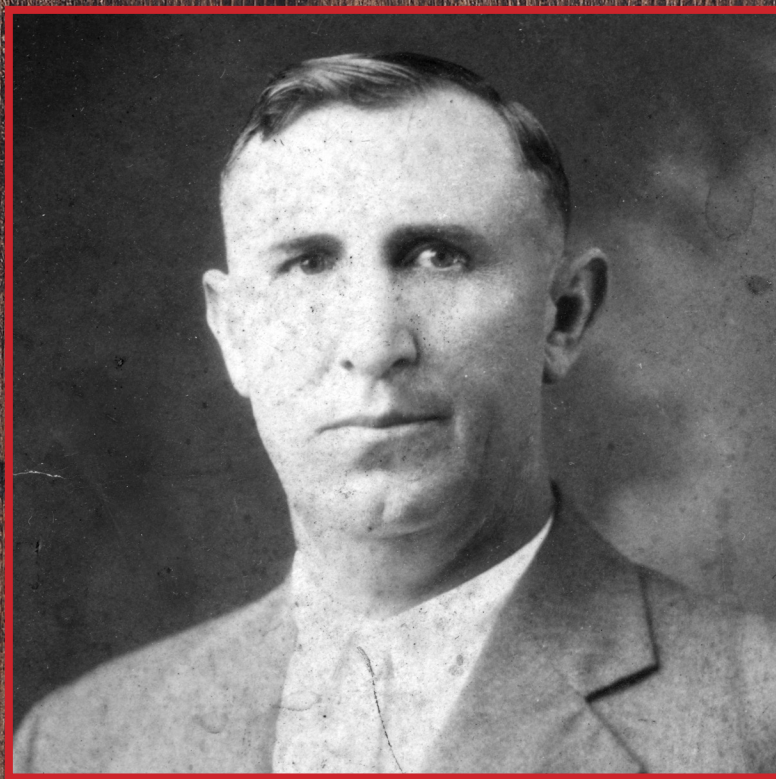


BIG BOB GIBSON



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In the early 1920's, Bob Gibson served barbecue from a makeshift table made of oak planks nailed to a large sycamore tree in his backyard. Fresh out of his hand-dug pit came smoke and smells that drew people from miles away. With a 6' 4" frame and weighing close to 300 pounds, his stature and charismatic personality made it easy to understand why friends called him Big Bob.

In 1925, Big Bob Gibson started a family barbecue restaurant in Decatur, Alabama, that has lasted has lasted 100 years and 5 generations. He was the most important figure in helping to craft the barbecue landscape in not only North Alabama, but in the entire state. Alabama has 29 barbecue restaurants that have been in business for over 50 years, and more barbecue restaurants per capita than any other state. Many of these successful restaurant beginnings can be traced back to the pitroom of Big Bob Gibson's, where barbecue prodigies took what they learned and started their own smoke-filled heritage. In the 1950's all five of Big Bob's children chose barbecue as their life passion. His lineage was responsible for 10 different barbecue restaurants across North Alabama.

Big Bob created his own style of real "pit barbecue." His large brick coffin-style pits were flanked by two chimneys to control airflow and heat. Burning hickory coals were shoveled under the cooking grate, through holes in the bottom of brick pit. His smokers had a dirt floor that would absorb grease. Every week the saturated soil was shoveled out and replaced with fresh dirt. This guaranteed the depth of his direct-fired barbecue flavor, while preventing grease fires.

Besides his cooking techniques, Big Bob's biggest contribution to the barbecue world is Alabama White Sauce. The tangy peppery flavor of his original sauce, both enhanced the taste and protected whole chickens from drying out after slowly smoking on the pit for over 3 hours. Now you can find this versatile sauce gracing restaurant menus, and grocery store shelves all over the world.

His restaurant, Big Bob Gibson Bar-B-Q, was in the first induction class of the Alabama BBQ Hall of Fame. The cooking methods, techniques, and recipes of Big Bob himself, made it possible for the Big Bob Gibson Cooking Team to rack up 18 World BBQ Championships in meat categories such as pork shoulder, ribs, chicken, brisket and sausage.

The flavor of barbecue in the South would be much less rich without the skill and inspiration of the legendary Big Bob Gibson.