

white potatoes came early. Sweet potato gathering time was in August. We'd bed them out in the winter. Sometimes that would be under the house. People usually didn't have a cellar. Some houses were on the side of a hill and high in one place and low in another. Some high, some low, depending on where they were built. People would scrape the dirt back and build a box from ground to the floor of the house—a box so the chickens and cold air couldn't get in. Most of the time they wouldn't rot.

Dad had his own stock. He had cows. He'd sell the calves. We had milk, and butter was churned. Dad would butcher a hog every year and we made sausage. We had a hand grinder. Dad made a meat box. You get some salt, rub the meat down good and put it in the box. Once in a while you'd rub it down again. When it was cured, you'd take it out and hang it. Most people would find a place in the kitchen. Some people had a smoke house.

Fishing. When asked about fishing, McKinley Jones said:

We'd go fishing. We had homemade poles. Dad hunted for rabbits. He shot rabbits and quails, but he never killed a lot of squirrels.

Washday. McKinley Jones described washday. He said washing clothes was the women's task. The clothes were washed in the back yard in a big pot setting on some rocks. They lived on the bank of Indian Creek, so buckets of water would be brought from the creek and poured into the big pot. Then a fire was lit under the pot. A rubbing board and lye soap was used to get the clothes clean. They made their own soap, but once made it lasted a while: "We didn't have to make it too often."

Social Interaction in the Pre-Arsenal Communities

When the researcher talked with Reverend Jones in August of 2005, at the end of her tenure as the Staff Archaeologist at Redstone Arsenal, she discussed some of the statements other elderly Black people had made regarding the inequities, and sometimes abuses, they had suffered in daily life in the community in the years prior to World War II (and its aftermath). Many people would mention inequities, but they also would say, "We all got along."

The researcher also discussed what she had been told by the people she had interviewed with Professor Robert Sigler (White) at the University of Alabama. He teaches a course in cultural diversity and focuses on race relations. He said that in the time period being discussed, "everyone knew the rules," so there was a mode of behavior that was known and accepted by everyone (both Blacks and Whites) which facilitated social interaction. Thus, "they all got along." While there is no doubt the "rules" of behavior and social interaction between the races were known by the community, the researcher questioned the statement because of the word "accepted." The professor agreed that this was