

tempting home canned fruit my youngest aunt Maggie would be dressed in one of Mama Francis' fur coats made out of monkey hair waiting to jump out at me and scare the living daylights out of me. Down I'd scurry all the way to the front door, across the porch and out to the fruit orchards where if I was lucky my Uncle James Horton would grab me up and console me.

For one little boy, growing up an only child I had the biggest family this side of the Bible. My mother was a Horton. Her parents Everett T. and Francis Lacy Horton were wonderful grandparents to me. Mother Clara was their oldest child but she had plenty of younger brothers and sisters who all became devoted aunts and uncles to their first little nephew. There was James Horton, Booker T. Horton, Spencer E. Horton, Leona Horton, Celester Horton, Cebelle Horton and Maggie Horton. All of my aunts were beautiful and all of my uncles were handsome. They were all very light skinned and intelligent too.

My father, John W. Burns hailed from an equally large family. When I knew him Grandfather James Peter Burns was married to his second wife, Amanda Lanier Burns. She had one son, Jeremiah M. Lanier, who was half-brother to my father and his brother Oscar Burns and James Peter Burns II. She had one daughter, Ophelia Burns, who was half sister to his sisters aadie [sic], Dora, Elixia, Betty and Agerian Burns.

With so many aunts and uncles, I was assured enough cousins to play with. Uncle Oscar, Aunt Lixa and cousins Jabo, Robert, Taylor, and Grace lived only a few fields and streams away. The path between the two houses was well worn. In each yard, Uncle Oscar and my dad put a pole in the ground with a plank across it, with seats on each end and a large iron bolt in the middle holding everything together, allowing someone to push it around and around. This wonderful contraction [contraption?] was called a flying ginny. I got many a fall from it because I would go so fast for so long that I would be drunk and swimming in the head. It was easy to slide off, especially if the direction was abruptly changed.

Much of our play was with nature's elements. Being little and close to the ground we spent a lot of time there. Our games of leap frog would often end in a search for frogs so we could watch them jump and swim and race them to see which was the