

areas where he cut saw logs, and swamps where he cut tupelo blocks.

He can point out the trees in the NASA area that mark the spot of the Center Grove Church, which was dismantled and moved to the corner of Jordan Lane and Mastin Lake Road where its congregation is still active.

He can show you his “Lover’s Lane” near building 5681 that led to the house where his wife Emma lived when they were courting. They raised seven children, six of whom, he notes proudly, have graduated college while a seventh attended technical school.

In 1979, the Hortons held a family reunion. In researching family history, the Hortons found lines of kinship to the Jacobs, Burns, Joiner and Lacy families. The 1987 reunion brought together all of these families. Geraldine (the daughter of Ovoy Horton) noted, “If you start with Jacobs, you will pull in all these families.” [Evidence for this is found in the Alva Jacobs section.] Geraldine stated that some people had treated their lineages as somewhat of an embarrassment over the years, but her father Ovoy urged his children to take pride and learn about how they came about. She said, “Some said to leave it alone and keep it quiet, but he always wanted us to talk about it.”

Geraldine’s statement that lineages had sometimes been treated as an embarrassment over the years easily can be understood by talking with older people from the Black community. The reference pertains to White males who sometimes had children with Black women because the Black women were not able, either physically or economically, to refuse or resist the physical intimacy.

The teaching to stand proud that came down from Ovoy to his daughter Geraldine was, undoubtedly, taught by other Hortons to their children. Everett and Yancy Sr., as well as their peers in the Jacobs and Love families, owned land, worked hard, and supported their communities. Adolphus Love gave the land for the school in Mullins Flat and Yancy Horton Sr. donated the land for the school in Pond Beat, but they lived in the days when White men were addressed as “Mr.” and Black men were called “Uncle.”

In talking with people during the interviewing process, Yancy Horton Sr. was mentioned by a number of former residents of Pond Beat and the other nearby communities on what is now the arsenal. It seems everyone, both Black people and White people, knew Yancy Horton. James Long’s father was the manager for Schiffman & Company land in Pond Beat. The Longs lived down the road (now McAlpine) to the south of Yancy’s home.

James Long has said, “We were taught to call all Black people older than us Uncle and Aunt. Yancy Horton was on the board of the co-op. I saw him and said, “How are you, Uncle?” He said, “If I was your damn uncle, you wouldn’t claim me.” In the era when Black men were expected to step off the sidewalk (to the dirt and sometimes muddy streets) when a White man walked by, Yancy’s making such a reply reveals his character and could be an indication of his status in the Pond Beat community.