

Food for the Family and Canning. In the garden the family grew tomatoes, sweet potatoes, some white potatoes, string beans, carrots, okra, rutabagas, cucumbers, collard greens, and beets. Willie said her father had an orchard and grew apples, pears, and peaches. In addition, the family would get on a wagon and go blackberry picking. She said, "It's a wonder the snakes didn't eat us all up!"

Willie's mother, Ellen Lacy Joiner, "canned everything." She recalls her mother canning "some 300 cans [glass jars] of stuff." Willie said some people didn't can as much and would bring the food they grew around to sell. If they had enough to sell, her mother would sometimes buy it to can. Many people made gardens and sold vegetables. Willie said that a lot of people didn't have the "tools" to can. Willie said: "Everybody that had the land to grow it had a garden and grew lots of food."

Willie said everybody had chickens. Some people, but not too many, had turkeys. Farmers had hogs, and some had a cow. Her family had a milk cow. Some of the milk was set down in the house to clabber. That would be used to churn butter.

Hogs were killed in cold weather. Willie said:

The meat was salted down after it was cut in squares. It stayed under the salt to cure then it was put in the smoke house. The middling meat was hung up. You cook the fat down and have lard to cook with. Hams would be the lean. You put them in an airtight can. The neighbors would come and help. Then everybody [would] eat together.

Making Molasses. Percy Joiner also raised sugar cane. He made his own molasses. He had a mule to pull the crusher. They raised corn to feed the mules.

Hunting. Percy didn't hunt much, but his sons got rabbits and squirrels. Rabbits were plentiful. They also got possums. Willie said possums tasted good, and "you put candied yams around them when you served them."

Marriage to William Horton

Willie Joiner married her first husband, William Horton, at the age of 18. William Horton was the son of Mattie and Connie Horton. She had known the Horton family all her life. When she married William Horton, they lived on a farm with his mother and father, Mattie and Connie Horton, but not in the same house.

Willie commented that Mattie and Connie had quite a few children. William's parents and his grandparents were their closest neighbors. She remembered William's grandfather Yancy Sr. and that his wife was Sophie Jacobs. She commented that Yancy was Pearl Higgenbotham's grandfather (see Pearl Higgenbotham interview).