

[Note: The tradition of transporting on the river goes back to the 1800s, a few decades before Claudie's return from World War I. Lavonne Myrick provided the following information: The great grandfather of Mary Cobb Morris was the first station attendant at the Hobbs Island Depot. Two paddlewheel steamers docked at the depot—the Huntsvillian and the Guntersvillian. Men loaded wagons with their cargos to be hauled and traversed dirt roads to reach the depot. The roads turned to mud when it rained. The men carried long wooden poles to pry the axels out of the mud. The Mercury and Chase railroad had boxcars 40 feet long. The boats were 200 feet long, and two or three boxcars were put on each side. The trip to Guntersville was about 20 miles long. For further information, Myrick recommended a book entitled *History of the Railroad* by Singleton, a local Madison County author.]

Walter Joiner Described His Home. Apparently, Parthenia Wynn Joiner Horton and Connie Horton added on to the three-room house originally built by Claudie Joiner. Adding rooms as the family grew was customary, and Connie had children by his first marriage. When Walter was asked to describe the house where he'd lived, he said:

There were three bedrooms, dining room, and a kitchen. We had fireplaces, but most of the heat came from a wood stove that heated the kitchen and the dining room. Most of the houses were built like that.

[Did you cook in the fireplace?]

Usually only when you wanted a snack. You would put the sweet potatoes in the hot ashes. You could also make popcorn in the old popcorn poppers. You could roast peanuts in the fireplace, also. Those were the types of foods that would last all winter. There wasn't anywhere to go, so people would do that.

Walter commented that back then, people used long, flat, wood [burning] heaters. They used them for cooking and for heat. The door was in the end. The heater was about four feet long and about two feet wide. It had eyes on it and you could cook on it. The eye was a circular piece that could be removed from the top surface of the stove. The cooking pot would be set in the opening, exposed to the fire when the eye was removed.

Parthenia bought a refrigerator. It was powered by kerosene. Walter said, "It would keep a lot of food." Many people would buy 100 pounds of ice from town or a wagon that came around. "Lots of times" a peddler would come through in a grocery truck to sell groceries to them as well. This was called a rolling store. Walter said, "We had a garden with lots of vegetables, and everyone had one to two cows."

Parthenia and Connie Horton had a generator. So they had some "electric lights." Walter said only a few people had electric lights. The generator had 17 glass batteries in it. They would put a quart of gas in the tank, and it would run from the time they started it to 10 or 11 p.m. It would keep the batteries charged. What Walter described was what people called having "Delco lights."