

First you made the sausage [ground up the meat] and put it in a cotton sack. They were about two-pound, long shaped packages. You cut up flour sacks to make the sacks [to put the sausage in]. You smoked the sausage if you had a smoke house. If you didn't, you cut up the sausage in slices and fried it. I am sure she fried it before she put it in the jars, because I remember seeing cooked out lard in the jar. I don't remember how she sealed it, put it in the canner, I expect. When you were ready to eat it, you took it out and fried it.

Other Aspects of Daily Life

Tobacco. Helen's mother Ruby and most of her sisters, as well as Ruby's mother, dipped snuff. Helen said many mill workers used snuff because they couldn't smoke in the mill. Snuff came in tins at first; later it came in glass jars. The jars were a bonus. Helen's mother bought Brouton snuff, "Both ladies and men used it." Helen said her Grandma Rector (her father's mother) thought snuff was a nasty habit.

Helen said that her grandfather raised tobacco. He hung it in the barn and dried it, and then he crumbled it, and put it in a pipe. He grew it only for his own use. Helen's daddy rolled Bull Durham; he always had a sack in his pocket. "About the time the war [WW II] started, ready-roll came out." Helen said her parents became tobacco farmers in the 1950's and 1960's. It was lucrative. You made big money on an acre and a half back then.

Grandma Webster Grew Corn and Raised Chickens. Helen said her Grandma Webster grew corn, and it was kept for the mules. There wasn't enough to feed it to the chickens. She'd have to trade her eggs to the peddler. She had to trade for salt. She bought coarse salt by the pound. [She probably couldn't afford refined salt.] She had to buy flour, but she'd take corn to the mill and get corn meal. Helen said, "When the corn came back from the mill you could eat it, but you had to sift it to get the pieces of husks and trash out. You could throw that out for the chickens." Helen's grandparents lived out in the area where Hampton Cove is. She said there was a store and a gin across the mountain where Hampton Cove is now, "right out there is an intersection, curve in the road, and then a bend to the left. The road goes to Guntersville."

They Moved Back to Mill Village

The Rectors had been required to move out of mill village because they would not sign the pledge saying they would not join a union. Helen's father was on one side of the union issue and his mother on the other. Helen was not sure which of her parents was for the union and which was not, but one thing was certain, her father would not be told what to do.