

### **Aunt Katie Johnson Murphy Remembers:**

Meal times were special; that is when we all got together. It was always a pleasant, quiet hour. Our main meal was dinner at noon, but supper was also pretty big too. We never knew how many people would be there as everyone was always welcome, family and friends. We always stopped whatever we were doing when the dinner bell rang, washed up and went to the table. We could not begin eating until everyone was present.

After Papa said the blessing, the food was passed around and then we ate. Our conversations were always pleasant. If someone had done something bad, it was not discussed during the meal. No one left the table until Papa got up, walked behind Mama, patted her on the shoulder and thanked her for a very good meal.

On holidays the whole family came over. It was really fun with all my nieces and nephews there. They got to eat first – in the kitchen. Then they went out to play while the "grown-ups" ate in the dining room. The kids got in trouble once but that is another story, which I am sure one of them will tell about.

My second fondest memory is of the horses. Papa bred them so there were always lots of mares and colts. It was very enjoyable to watch the colts romping in the pasture. Sometimes it seemed like they were playing "Follow the Leader."

As we did not have television in the olden days, we had to find our own entertainment. I learned to love nature. Papa tried cross-breeding Shetland ponies with regular horses for a small breed of gentle horses. Shetlands are mean! I was allowed to claim one as my very own – until a buyer came along. My favorite was Charlie – he was mine the longest.

I rode horses until I was about 16 when I had two accidents and decided to give it up. The first accident occurred when my saddle broke while my horse was running. I fell off and landed on my head. I ended up in the hospital with a concussion. The second accident was not as bad. My horse walked into the pond, stopped and rolled over. I was able to get off but lost both my shoes.

I remember that late in the afternoon we would sit on the front porch in the rocking chairs. Sometimes Mama would tell us ghost stories, especially about Fling Down. The house may not have been haunted but those stairs surely were.

Sometimes, while sitting on the porch, we would count cars on the Big Road, later known as the Atlanta Highway. There would always be lots of cars on Friday nights and especially when Auburn had a football game. Children today may doubt it but somehow we got along well without television. I am thankful for my memories of the old home place where I grew up. ©