

COBB, CARLETON NANCY.

INTERVIEW

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Hazel B. Greene,
Interviewer,
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Interview with Mrs. Nancy Carleton Cobb.

I was born in Newton County, Arkansas, in 1881 and was sixteen when my parents, Frances Hibben Carleton and J. I. Carleton, loaded up their two wagons with their worldly possessions, hitched one team of mules and one team of horses to them and set out for the Indian Territory. The "land of opportunity" it was called. We had been hearing so much of this wonderful country, and it really was wonderful to us. It took us twelve days to make the trip, but we had a wonderful time, and of course we had some hardships too, due to rough and bad roads, swollen streams, etc. The scarcity of bridges delayed us, too, but all in all we enjoyed the trip. It was just cool enough to be pleasant, being October. We brought along a coop of as pretty Buff Cochin chickens as I ever saw. They were great big yellow things. We'd turn them loose at night and they'd just scratch, and sing and cackle, and stay right there close and roost on the coop.

As we came over the prairie where Hugo is now, the sage grass was so high that it brushed our wagon beds

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along the sides of the scarcely traveled roads, and prairie chickens flew up in flocks. When we got down to Goodwater at Uncle Tom Hibbens', the cotton fields were white, and the boys went right to picking cotton at fifty cents per hundred. At that they made money, because there were so few things that we needed to spend money for and the things which we bought were cheap. It was so fine that they could pick lots of cotton. Uncle Tom Hibben built us a little house and we lived there one year. Then we went to the Robert M. Ralston place and lived on it three or four years, then my sister and I each married. She is Mrs. Mattie McDode and has never had any children. I have three children. My sister lives out about Rose Hill place.

Times surely have changed, Granny Oakes was living then. Those were the good old days, we had lots of fun. In summer we would have protracted meetings that would last two and three weeks at a time. Folks would come from far and near.

The meetings held at Goodwater served as family reunions, too. Goodwater was the old home of so many

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of the Oakes, that when they'd have camp meetings, just a lot of the Oakes family would come to it and camp. There were camp sheds and cabins. Mr. and Mrs. Will Oakes of Grant and Mr. and Mrs. Tom Oakes of Atlas would usually bring two negroes to wait upon them. Women exchanged ideas of dress, and favorite pickle recipes, etc., and came with trunks full of clothes. They brought also their irons and the negroes were usually pretty busy keeping clothes in press and cooking good things to eat. The campers brought all kinds of good canned and preserved and pickled things, cakes, pies, etc., and it was no uncommon thing for them to kill a hog on the ground and barbecue it to keep it from spoiling, and the outside of the camp was usually fringed with clothes drying on the bushes.

The men swapped stories of crops and stock and talked of other things of general interest. The young couples courted: many a match was made at these meetings and occasionally a wedding would take place before the meeting was over. It was pretty hard on the babies, to be there in the heat with so many flies and mosquitoes, but children of the next size up seemed to enjoy themselves

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and the meeting always closed with a big baptizing. Among other songs which was a favorite, was "Manna from Heaven". I heard it the other day over the radio, and I nearly cried, it brought back such memories.

In the winter we had "sociables". These "old timey" kitchens were usually cabins built off a little way from the main house, and the older folks would turn the kitchens over to the youngsters for their sociables and candy pullings. We'd make molasses candy and pull it, and eat it. Then, too, we would sit around the fireplaces and roast potatoes and pop corn. We had lots of fun.

Mrs. Cobb now lives in Hugo, Oklahoma.