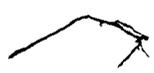




INDEX CARDS

Choctaw Nation
Grant
Freedman
Description of Rose Hill.



Interviewer, Hazel B. Greene,
June 16, 1937.

Interview with Mrs. Maude Hall Carter.

Born August 26, 1877,
Van Buren, Arkansas.

Parents Roland Hall, Missouri.
Lucy Ann Sims,
Missouri.

RECOLLECTIONS OF ROSE HILL MANSION.

Mrs. Maude Carter, matron over little boys at old Goodland Academy, has just been telling me of her life at Rose Hill Mansion. She said that, that was what it was called in those days.

She was born in Van Buren, Arkansas, August 26, 1877, in a large two and a half story, log house, which was made of hewn logs about 18 inches thick. That old house is still standing, about a quarter of a mile on the road out to the Sara Grove Church and cemetery. This Church and Cemetery was named for Mrs. Carter's half sister, Sara Woosley.

Sara Grove Church is two-story and the upper floor was used for the Masonic Lodge room, and it was called

the Lucy Lodge in honor of Mrs. Carter's mother. It, too, was built of logs.

Mrs. Carter's mother, before her marriage, was Lucy Sims. She was born in Missouri; her second husband also was born in Missouri. He was Roland Hall and was Maude Carter's father. He died three months before Maude was born and is buried in Arkansas.

Mrs. Hall had been married, prior to her marriage with Hall, to a man named Woosley. There were three children of that union, Sara, Willie and Nathan.

In 1905 Mrs. Hall married "Old Uncle Billy Pyron" at Fort Towson. They have both passed on and are buried at Doaksville Cemetery.

Hall was a Master Mason and Lucy Hall was a member of the Order of Eastern Star.

When Maude was nearly nine years old the boys "just got a roving spell" and wanted to go to Texas. They rented out their beautifully furnished old home in Van Buren and moved over to Witchersville to another one of Mrs. Hall's homes. These homes were splendidly furnished, home made rugs, marble topped dressers and

wash stands, four-poster bed and everything else to match those things. Mrs. Hall sold her home at Witchersville when they went to Texas but she never did sell the furniture in the home at Van Buren. Mrs. Carter doesn't know whatever became of that furniture. They wandered around in Texas for several months, then the boys decided that the Indian Territory was a good place to live so they came to Grant in the Choctaw Nation.

The railroad had just been through Grant about one year and to quote Mrs. Carter, "There was nothing there, not even a shed for a railroad station, just a platform. The station agent and family lived in a shack somewhere near. We lived in a one-room shack with a shed room. There was no church, no school, no nothing. We either had to buy our groceries at Goodland, about ten miles north of us or walk the railroad bridge across Red River to Arthur City, Texas, where the most of the stores were in reality just saloons; or we could go up to Garrett's bluff where there was a ferry and go across to Chicota, Texas. They sent me to Chicota to school and boarded me over there for four years because everything

was so dog-goned crude in Grant. I was ten years old when my brothers leased the Randell farm, which was a part of the old Robert Jones' estate, and the Rose Hill farm was another part of the same estate and they leased both.

"The Randell farm is about twelve miles southeast of Hugo and is located on Boggy and Red Rivers and the Boggy bends around in such a fashion to join the Red River that it forms an island. It is almost an island. There are just a few feet of land connecting it with the mainland. My brother Nathan and his family lived on the Randell farm and with the aid of a lot of negroes cultivated 335 acres of land. Those negroes were "Free" and had been given their '40 acres of land and a mule,' but were glad to work for wages. They kept three negroes steadily employed to do the feeding and chores around the place because they ran lots of teams, twenty-five or thirty I guess. My brother, Nathan Woosley, was overseer at Randell farm and brother Willie was overseer at Rose Hill farm, where he mother and I lived.

There were only fifty acres in cultivation then at Rose Hill, so we kept only five teams there and only two colored boys to do the chores and milking. We only kept two cows, too. These negroes lived in the old log cabin slave quarters.

"If any part of Rose Hill Mansion was of logs it was covered up. It looked like a frame building to me. There was a long porch all along the front, and big pillars. There was also a porch all along the sides and banisters along all porches. The double front doors had glass panels in them; there were also glass panels beside the doors of heavy plate glass all carved with figures and baskets of flowers. They say that glass was imported from England. A stairway of marble went up from the main big hall. The windows up stairs were of smaller panes than the ones down stairs, but they were large and wonderful for those days. And in all of the bed rooms there were marble topped dressers and wash stands.

"Marble mantels were above the fireplaces throughout the house, unless it was in the kitchen, and bronze and

brass candlesticks on all of them. There was one candlestick of hammered brass, made to resemble a stump and hammered to look like the bark. It would have held four or five dozen candles, and was about four feet tall, eighteen inches in diameter and each knot on it held a candle and the knots were all over it. The roots were on rollers. It was in the library and could be rolled from case to case of books. The bookcases almost lined the walls and there were still lots of books. My brother was a perfect bookworm, so he enjoyed lots of reading while we were there. The cases and furniture in this library were of black wood. I don't know whether they were supposed to be mahogany or walnut or what. The chairs were great big leather tufted things, and the chairs in the dining room were the ladder back style with leather seats. That furniture in the house was of that dark color.

Another stairway went up from one of the front bedrooms, and still another went up from a pantry in the kitchen. That one was for the exclusive use of the servants, who lived over the kitchen- maids and housekeeper. Of course, the negroes lived in the slave quarters. So it was called the maid's stairway.

"There were about 15 rooms in that house. Some of them were locked and never opened while we were there, and we were there four years. I wanted a lot of times to go into them, open a window or something, but mother always reminded me that those things in there belonged to the owners and that they locked the doors to keep others out. Mother also said that what was in those rooms was none of our business and that we would not be quite honest if we prowled in them. The negroes could not be hired to go near them. They thought them haunted. Those locked rooms were in wings that had been added to the original house. We never had any idea what they contained. The attic was full of furniture too. Lovely, massive old pieces. The dining room suite was massive, as were also the four-poster beds and bed room furniture.

"The library and main hall were profusely hung with fine paintings. The most of them were supposed to have been done abroad. They had portraits of all the Presidents of the United States up to that date. One night, it was cold as the Dickens. I heard an awful crash down stairs; then I knew that the "ghosts" were loose and tried to get

my brother to get up and go with me to see what it was, but he said he would not because it was so cold but I accused him of being scared. I slept with my head under cover the balance of the night. Next morning we went down stairs and found George Washington flat on his face on the floor.

"Out in the corner of the yard was the family cemetery. Those tall tombstones stood out there like sentinels. On moonlight nights they looked 'spooky' There were about four marble slabs laid flat on top of that many graves. Then there was one marble mausoleum, some of the Jones' occupied it.

"We had four great big wash pots; then there were some bigger ones which had been used to make salt in, so we heard. I've been told that they are still there in one of the yards.

"The way I remember it the Robert Randells lived in Dennison, Texas. They had a daughter who I understand is still living. Robert Jones had been long dead when we moved to Rose Hill and the story went that he was killed some way, at Garrett's Bluff, and buried at the Randell home place out in the garden.

"I just don't know why the Indians buried in the corner of their gardens, but they did.

"The reason we left Rose Hill and the Randell farms was because of overflows. Each spring the boys would have to plant the crops over from one to three times. There came three overflows the last year we were there. We had to leave that lovely home and move into a shack, as compared to that, but we did. The market for our crops was Paris, Texas, and it was hard to get over there. My brothers put in a ferry there at the edge of the farm. If it was ever named I did not know it. Chicota, Texas, was just across from the farm.

We moved to old Bennington. Then we had Caddo for a market for our crops. We stayed there one year. Then moved to the railroad station of new Goodland. You see the school is Old Goodland.

"At sixteen I married E. Lee Carter from Murfreesboro, Arkansas, a school teacher, and he died May 14, 1926 at Fort Towson and is buried at Doaksville cemetery. Five children were born to us: Henry, who lives in California; Roy, who was killed in France and is buried at Paris, Texas;

Grace Everidge, now living in Muskogee; Otis, who died when a baby, and another infant, buried at Doaksville.

"As I said before there were long porches along the sides of Rose Hill Mansion with banisters all along. One overseer by the name of Shoemaker was there before we were. One day he had been out to the water shelf and had washed his hands, had come just inside the dining room door and reached for a towel and was standing with his back to the door when someone shot him in the back. They evidently came to the edge of the porch or nearly so because the wound was so large. The porch was about twenty feet wide.

"People told us that that lovely furniture was hauled away piece by piece, just stolen when the house was vacant, from time to time.

"After Mr. Carter and I moved to Doaksville, Mother taught school there for several years, and then at new Fort Towson.

"A brother of hers, Captain B. F. Sims, was once stationed at the old Fort Towson. He said when he brought his troops through Paris, Texas, in time of the Civil War,

there was one general store and postoffice, a blacksmith shop and a new railroad but not even a church and that the merchant there freighted goods from Doakville by ox wagons. The goods had been shipped up the river in boats to the mouth of Kiamichi and to Hooks' ferry. He said also that it was all prairie northwest and west of the old Fort Towson. It is timbered now.

"My husband, R. L. Carter, for years bought furs, hides, snake root, etc., for Julius Haas and Lowenthal of Antlers, but in later years was in the banking business at Fort Towson."