OLD TIMERS OF SABINE COUNTY

by VIRGIE SPEIGHTS

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grandfather stayed in Louisiana long enough to marry Elvie Salter. Her father, A.T. Russell, was born in the Isla community north of Milam. Her mother was Ellen Steele of near Hemphill, whose ancestors lived at Toledo Bend near Hadden's Ferry.

Mr. Causey attended a one-room log school which was called Hickory Hill and was located a bit north of the J.B. Bohannon place. Teachers he remembers are Miss Lillie Speights, Miss Anna Watson (later Mrs. John Dent), Drew White, who married Miss Dora Speights, and Miss Nora Goodrich. He later went to Milam where Mrs. Causey got most of her schooling. She said the most outstanding teacher they ever had was Miss Goodrich (later Mrs. Steigig).

The most fun of their young days were the singing schools held each summer and the square dances. Mr. Causey was an accomplished fiddler and in great demand at these affairs. He still has his violin which he got from the late J.W. Arnold, who bought it off a steamboat which came up the Sabine to Pendleton.

Mrs. Causey, one of six children, has one brother living in Houston, Steele Russell, a sister, Mrs. Ida Bragg of Low's Chapel community and a half sister, Mrs. Willie Dorsey, near Milam.

The Causey's have two children, Ross Causey of Jacksonville and Mrs. Lillian Gorman of Houston. Ross and his wife, Hazel, have two children, George and Kay Causey, and Lillian and her husband, A.J. (Jodie) Gorman, have one son, Tony Gorman.

MRS. SUDIE HALBERT WILSON

December 5, 1963

Mrs. Sudie Halbert Wilson was surprised on her 83rd birthday recently when friends, neighbors, and relatives dropped by bearing gifts to wish her happiness and a long life.

Born near Milam, Mrs. Wilson has lived there all her life until the last nine years when she has made her home in a neat two room apartment in the home of Miss Vera Buckley, where she is an immaculate housekeeper and an expert at growing flowers. There is always a row of colorful flowers on the porch shelf, chrysanthemums at present.

Mrs. Wilson loves visitors and delights in telling of the fun of growing up in the county. One of 16 children, she was the daughter of William Washington and Mary Allen Halbert, whose ancestors landed at Plymouth Rock, wandered southward by way of North Carolina, to arrive in Texas in the early 1800's.

There was hard work in farming in those early days, but there were high spots, too. There was fishing, hunting, swimming, and during the summer, singing schools were such a lot of fun, says Mrs. Wilson. She also enjoyed helping her mother with the spinning, weaving, knitting, gardening and caring for the chickens. Early she learned to knit her own stockings and sweaters and those of her brothers.

They would walk almost everywhere they went, but sometimes her father would hook up the ox-wagon and they would ride in style with four oxen pulling the loaded wagon. She and her mother would take the eggs to the store in Milam and trade for calico and trimmings for Sunday dresses, or for other little luxuries which they were
not able to raise on the farm.

They were a religious family and always went to church on Sunday. Her schooling was at a little one-room school called Fox Hill and her teachers included Volney Vickers, Brittain Allen and Miss Lena Harris, all deceased now. She walked to school, but when the creek rose, she would spend the night with her best friend, Bam Williams (later Mrs. Ben White, now deceased). When the creek went down, Bam would return the visit.

Benches carved from logs were used as seats, and the reciting class went to the front bench. There were few books, no playground equipment, no fancy lunch rooms and lunches were carried cold from home in a syrup bucket; but there was still joy in learning during the short terms, during the winter when no crops were begging to be tended. About the first of May, they had what they called, "Childrens Day" when the whole school would line up at her brother Joel's place and with flag bearers leading, marched grandly to the school. She said she and Bam were usually the ones to carry the flags.

At the age of 15, Mrs. Wilson left her brief childhood to marry W.G. Wilson and settle down to the job of rearing five children, by herself after 1908 when Mr. Wilson died. There was lots of hard work, heartache, and plain weariness, but somehow she managed on the farm. When they all grew up, she tried living with first one and then another, but she likes having her own treasures about her; and since her health is excellent, and she is quite able to take care of herself, with friends dropping by, children and grandchildren visiting and Mrs. A.T. Seales, who lives across the street, always ready to visit. She is happy and content with bits of her own furniture, her mother's Bible, and her mother's picture on the wall in a beautifule carved frame.

Her wedding was at the home of her parents, with the wedding supper at the home of the Craig Wilsons, her in-laws. She recalls hog-killing time, with gallons of cracklings being cooked into soap, made with lye leached from hardwood ashes. Eggs sold for 5¢ and 10¢ a dozen.

Mrs. Wilson has four brothers living, Levi and Clyde Halbert of Milam, John Halbert of Dallas and Sam Halbert of Beaumont, two half brothers, Willie Halbert and Ralph Halbert, both of Milam and one half sister, Mrs. Virgie Nethery of Milam.

Her children are Mrs. Willie B. Johnson of Archibald, Louisi-ana, Mrs. Gracie Jones of Zavalla, Mrs. Bertie Mackabee of Arkans- sas, Melvin Wilson of Hemphill and Levi Wilson of Milam. There are 21 grandchildren and 21 great grandchildren.

MRS. MATTIE EARL DAVIDSON GANDY December 19, 1963

Mrs. Mattie Earl Davidson Gandy, who will celebrate her 89th birthday Monday, lives alone in her apartment at her home in Hemp- hill where she has lived since 1912. She is quietly serene, seldom leaving her home, but is able to do some of her work and take care of herself.

Born December 23, 1874 in Sabine County, Mrs. Gandy is the daughter of the late Pedras Phillip and Malvina Parr Beddoo Dav- idson, and one of nine children. She was brought up in Milam.
and brother-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Will Bradshaw in Brookeland, where a justice of the peace, Will Berryman, was waiting to perform the ceremony."

"We set up housekeeping nearby, but about 20 years later, rumors of $18 a day lured us to West Texas to pick cotton. By then we had a Model T Pickup, so we loaded it up and set out. Boxes and sacks were piled in the back with our clothes and such-like. On the way, two sacks were lost and on the way to look for them, we met another car bringing them to us."

We just stayed two years. Wages were high all right, but so was living. We found out the land was no greener over there," she chuckled.

Mrs. Cooper lost her husband in 1963, but she still has 10 of her 13 children left. They are Miss Floy Mae Cooper, Miss Macil Cooper, and R.L. Cooper, all of Pineland, Mrs. Blanche Armstrong of Loeb, Mrs. Jewel Nerrin of Doucette, Adrian Cooper of Austin, Odis Cooper of San Antonio, Elton Cooper and Marvin Cooper of Port Arthur, and Doyle Cooper of Houston. She also has two sisters, Mrs. Clarence W. Iles of Hemphill and Mrs. Benjamin Hiram Bryan of Brookeland, and brothers Lewis Worth Martin of Leesville, Louisiana, and Robert Lee Martin of Pineland. There are 17 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren and one great great grandchild.

LEVI THOMPSON HALBERT

Levi Thompson Halbert was given a bang-up 90th birthday celebration Sunday, March 1, 1964, which was in contrast to the quiet birthday celebration held last year. He seems to have completely recovered from the illness which plagued him then, and his only worry is getting his garden planted. No longer able to do the plowing himself, it worries him that it is so hard to find anyone else to do it.

The day began with his son, the Rev. Basil Halbert of Epps, Louisiana preaching at the Sunday morning services at Bethany Baptist Church at Milam, where Mr. Halbert is a member and where all nine of his children were converted to the Baptist faith.

His daughter, Mrs. I.o. McIlhaney of Lubbock and Mrs. Lollie Gunn of Nacogdoches, sang a duet, and Mrs. Barbara Jean Slaughter, his granddaughter of Liberty sang a special solo.

Born near where he now lives, in Sabine County, Mr. Halbert is the son of William Washington and Mary Frances Allen Halbert, whose ancestors were prominent in the early days of the United States as well as of Texas. The earliest Halberts and Allens landed at Plymouth Rock, coming to Texas by way of North Carolina.

The clan, gathered after church at the home place where a daughter and family, Mr. and Mrs. Turner Mills and children live, for a sumptuous feast, provided by the children.

The afternoon was spent at the home of L.T. Halbert, Jr. and his family, which is in sight of the home place. There an open house was held with granddaughters, Nina Beth Browning and Jeannie Mills serving cake and punch. The cake designed by a daughter-in-law, Mrs. L.T. Halbert, Jr., depicting the theme of his life, featured a barn, cattle, horses, and a tractor, on plowed ground.
These were enclosed by a rail fence. Mr. Halbert was delighted. A very successful farmer and cattlemen, Mr. Halbert joyously filled his life with his home, his church, and his family and has prospered abundantly. The harvest has been plentiful in all directions and phases of his life.

Mr. Halbert was one of 16 children, five of whom survive. He has one sister, Mrs. Sudie Wilson of Hemphill and three brothers, John Halbert of Dallas, Sam Halbert of Beaumont and Clyde Halbert of Milam. After the death of his mother, his father married Mary Elizabeth Smith, daughter of Rev. Edward and Mary Jane Smith, and there were three children, all living near Milam, Ralph Halbert, Willie Halbert and Mrs. Virgie Nethery.

On November 14, 1895, Levi Halbert married Miss Mary Ann Armstrong, also a member of early East Texas pioneer families who came from Georgia. Nine of their eleven children survive. They are the Rev. Basil Halbert of Epps, Louisiana, Mrs. H.C. Davidson, Beaumont, Mrs. Rufus Miller and Mrs. Lollie Gunn of Nacogdoches, Mrs. Joe McIlhaney of Lubbock, Mrs. Biddie Browning, Mrs. Turner Mills, and L.T. Halbert, Jr. of Milam, and Porter Halbert of Bronson. All were present for the celebration.

Out of county guests were Mr. and Mrs. W.T. Parmer, Mrs. Lee Teetes, Miss Lelia Davis and the Rev. and Mrs. Johnny Campbell, all of Nacogdoches. Out of county grandchildren and their families were Dr. and Mrs. Bill Halbert, Teague, Mr. and Mrs. George Levi Halbert, Fort Worth, Mr. and Mrs. George Slaughter, Liberty, Mr. and Mrs. Johnnie Varner, Nacogdoches, Mary Kate Halbert, student at Baylor University, and Mary Ann Halbert, student at Stephen F. Austin College.

A very special guest was Lum Hammock of Hemphill, a lifelong friend who will be 90 years old March 28, 1964. They both seemed to really enjoy the day, talking of bygone years and times.

Mr. Halbert has 27 grandchildren and 36 great grandchildren. Mrs. Halbert died May 13, 1958, after 63 years of marriage.

Still a strong character, Mr. Halbert is patriarch of the family, holding it together, is mentally alert, interested in the present and the future, and full of tales of the past, when he was a farmer, merchant, sawmill operator, gin operator, and enjoyed fox hunting and fishing, log rollings, and chimney daubings.

COLUMBUS WASHINGTON (LUM) HAMMOCk  April 16, 1964

Columbus (Lum) Washington Hammock was honored on his 90th birthday, Sunday April 5, 1964 at his home in Hemphill with a family dinner and open house in the afternoon. His daughters-in-law, Mrs. L.C. Hammock and Mrs. C.D. Hammock, both of Hemphill, prepared the feast and guests included the sons and all of their families, Mr. and Mrs. L.C. Hammock, their daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Jimmy Thomas, Mr. and Mrs. C.D. Hammock and children, Hammock's daughter-in-law, widow of a deceased son, Kenny Hammock, Mrs. Rosie Hammock, and her granddaughter, Kena Witten.

Mr. Hammock, born in Milam, on the redlands, was the son of Columbus Hammock, also a native of Sabine County, and Amanda

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