

[Mrs. H. C. Gates]

[?]

FORM A Circumstances of Interview

NAME OF WORKER Frederick W. Kaul Louis Rollins ADDRESS Hastings, Nebr.

DATE October 1938 SUBJECT Folklore

1. Name and address of informant Mrs. H. C. Gates, (colored)
2. Date and time of interview Oct. 1938, 3 hours
3. Place of interview at home West 21st St., Hastings, Nebr.
4. Name and address of person, if any, who put you in touch with informant None
5. Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you

None

6. Description of room, house, surroundings, etc.

Place about one block away from other buildings, sparsely settled neighborhood. Old house, one story, 5 rooms, unpainted, clean inside. House surrounded by other buildings, such as barn, grainary, chicken house, poultry and hog fences, pump well, electric lights.

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FORM B Personal History of Informant

NAME OF WORKER Frederick W. Kaul Louis Rollins ADDRESS Hastings, Nebr.

Library of Congress

DATE Oct. 1938 SUBJECT Folklore

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT Mrs. H. C. Gates Hastings, Nebr.

1. Ancestry Negro

2. Place and date of birth Lexington, Mo., Oct. 4, 1865.

3. Family Lives alone

4. Place lived in, with dates Lexington , Mo., 1865 to 1903 Hastings, Nebr., 1903 until present time

5. Education, with dates Passed 8 grades in public school in Lexington, Mo.

6. Occupations and accomplishments, with dates

Housekeeper and home maker

7. Special skills and interests

Likes gardening, poultry raising, farming, housekeeping

8. Community and religious activities

Baptist, does not attend service unaccount of distance to church. Has good knowledge of the bible. Is sincere bible Christian.

9. Description of informant

5 foot 2 inches, 140 lbs. , black. Very active, agile, physically mentally elert for her age.

10. Other points gained in interview

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Simple living and hard working woman, always happy and cheerful.

FORM C Text of Interview (Unedited)

NAME OF WORKER Frederick W. Kaul Louis Rollins ADDRESS Hastings, Nebr.

DATE Oct. 1938 SUBJECT Folklore

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT Mrs. H. C. Gates (colored) Hastings, Nebr.

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MY BELIEFS IN WHEN TO PLANT, MAKE SOAP AND BUTCHER

"I plant according to the signs, using an almanac. Anything that makes on top of the ground, I plant in the light of the moon or in the signs of the upper part of the body. The calender days indicate what signs are connected with each day.

Anything that makes under the ground, I plant in the dark of the moon or in the signs of the lower part of the body. The calender shows what days with signs of the lower part of the body. It always helps if you plant by the signs.

If you make soap, you should make it in the signs of the upper part of the body. When the sign is below the waist, your soap shrivels up.

We always butcher whenthe sign is inthe upper part of the body. Then your meat is pulp and firm. If you butcher in the signs of the lower part of the body then your meat is dry and shriveled." As told by Mrs. H. C. Gates, (colored) Hastings, Nebraska INTERVIEW WITH MRS. H. C. GATES, (colored) HASTINGS, NEBRASKA " I was born Oct. 4, 1865 at Lexington, [?] I have lived on this place [28?] years. I moved to Hastings in 1903. I have no relatives here except by marriage. I have one child living in Evanston, Ill. He was born in

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1866 and is 52 years old. My younger child is dead. My husband died in 1927. He hauled and farmed for a living.

He drove a spotted horse and bay for many years. My husband's two brothers lived on South Lexington Ave., near the old slaughter house. I was 73 years old on the 4th of Oct. [1938?]. I was married Nov. 18, 1883.

My dad belonged to the church. I didn't at that time. My husband and I knew each other when we were kids. We went to school together. When he grew up he farmed a piece of land besides dad's farm at Lexington, Mo. We got to love each other. You know love is the greatest thing. It was love that made God give his only begotten Son to save us. Love! He was willing to go thru fire for me. I wanted him. I was always scared of water, but I would have gone thru a big stream to have him.

Dad didn't want us to get married. He wanted me to stay home. It was custom among the black folks that the girl would give notice to the parents when she wanted to marry and who. Then the young man was to request the parents for the girl. I know dad didn't want me to marry this young man. I was afraid dad might whip me if I would ask him to let me marry this young man before I was 18. [?] I made up my mind to bundle up my things and go away with the train, of dad would turn me down. But I didn't ask him until I was of age. Dad did everything to get me to go to church but I didn't go with him until I wanted to ask him for my husband. The church was ten miles from home. We drove with the wagon. Dad made me ride behind him. I thought here's my chance to ask dad to let me get married but everytime I got ready to ask him I couldn't speak. My tongue seemed to get tight, then I would wait a little while, then I would make up my mind, I will ask him now. If he will whip me I will jump off the wagon. After sometime I really said, Pa I`m going to get married. At first Pa never said anything. After a long pause he said, Girls that get married have to go into the wash tub. He never said anymore.

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Now when I got home and told the young man that I had asked Pa, he then got on a horse and rode to the pasture and got off his horse and fell on his knees and prayed that the Lord would help him to get me. Then he went to dad and asked dad for me and dad said he could have me.

This was the custom of my time among the black folks in Missouri.

Dad bought me a wedding dress but he wouldn't pay the dressmaker for making it. So my Auntie made it for me. It was uptodate, blue, not much trimming and went to my ankles. It lasted a long time, I wore black high shoes. My husband wore a black suit. We had a stylish wedding.

I wasn't a Christian then, my husband was a Christian. We got married in the church in the country, ten miles from home. It was on Sunday after the preaching was over at noon. The people were tickled that we won out. It was a large wedding. All the black folks were there. Auntie gave the wedding dinner. She had told us she would furnish everything but the turkey. She gave the dinner wedding at Grandpa's home in Lexington, Mo. My husband bought a big turkey.

On the wedding day it was the custom for folks to wish us "Much Joy". Dad wished me much joy but he didn't do it with a free good will. It was a very dry wish of joy because he didn't want us to get married.

You know they used to "Chivori". In Missouri they did it too. Old bachelors got an awful "Chivori". Young people were not bothered. They didn't "Chivori" us.

After we were married we started to farm for ourselves at Lexington, Mo. We put in a garden and corn. He sure knew how to raise corn. He was a good farmer. In 1903 moved to Hastings. "