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Ora Carpenter came to Florida from Vermont in 1842

My principal knowledge of my great-grandmother, Ora Carpenter, and his descendants and antecedents is from my mother's Bible, from *History of Volusia County, Florida* by Pleasant Daniel Gold, from Amos B. Carpenter's 1898 *Genealogical History of the Rehoboth Branch of the Carpenter Family in America*, and from recent visits to the Osteen Cemetery.

**Ora Carpenter Filed Florida Land Claim in 1843.**

My mother's Bible records Ora Carpenter, born Oct. 26, 1817 and died March 17, 1902. He was born in Vermont. His wife, Antonia H. Masters, is recorded as born Nov. 7, 1827 and died May 19, 1893. They were married Feb 25, 1844. Other records state that Ora Carpenter, a single man, came to Florida in May of 1842 and filed a claim under the Armed Occupation Act on July 21, 1843 for land four miles above Lake George and received a permit on the same date. It was the southwest one half of Section 28, Township 19, Range 32 in Volusia County.

*History of Volusia County* places Ora Carpenter in Old Enterprise (about one mile south of the present day Enterprise) in 1854, where he was connected with cutting live oak for the Government. It also places him a "few years later" as the lighthouse keeper at Cape Canaveral. It also states the he later lived in New Smyrna. He was one of three families in New Smyrna when it was bombarded in July, 1863. He and his wife were buried at the Osteen Cemetery located about four miles north of Osteen.

Ora Carpenter descended through nine generations of Carpenters to William Carpenter of Rehoboth, Mass., who arrived in America on the ship *Bevis* in 1638. His grandfather, Johnathan Carpenter Jr. (born June 19, 1757) of Randolph, Vermont, served in the Revolutionary War under Captain John Paine.

**CHILDREN OF ORA & ANTONIA CARPENTER**

1. FANNY FRANCES, b. Dec.14, 1844; d. Sept.4, 1909; m. John H. L. Botefuhr.
2. ORA D., b. ca. 1848
3. ANNA W., b. March 28, 1849; d. Nov.8, 2912; never married.
4. VIRGINIA ROSA, b. July 30,1854; d. Aug.26, 1910; m. 1) \_\_\_(?) Ruff; 2) Elisha hatch
5. CHESTER C., 1858-1930; m. Eliza Sheppard.
6. MARY ELLEN, 1864-1927; m. William Lowe.
7. GEORGE M., born 1865.
8. BENJAMIN F., b. Oct. 6, 1866; d. May 15, 1920; m. Della Hart.
9. BETTY W., b. 1870; m. Henry E. Masters.
10. WALTER C., 1872-1927; m. Serena Griffis
11. JANE M., who died young.

Ora Carpenter had 11 children. My first personal knowledge of the Carpenters relates to his daughter, Fanny Frances (Carpenter) Botefuhr, my grandmother. This was when I was about four years old. This would be about 1908 or 1909. At that time she was living alone in what was then considered a large house in the south part of Osteen, Florida.

### Childhood Memories of Grandmother's House

My memory of grandmother's house is really based on wandering through it in later years on my way to and from school. In these later years (about 1912-16) it was known as the Blauvelt house and said to be haunted. It had been a very nice, rather large, two-story house, but was vacant for a long time and had become dilapidated. It was in good repair and there were many roses as well as other flowers in the yard when grandmother lived in it. There was a vegetable garden which my grandmother tended and I can remember taking large heads of cabbage home with me. My most vivid memory of my grandmother is the fresh bread and homemade doughnuts and cruellers that she always had when we visited her. I can also remember her teaching me my ABC's and the multiplication table even though I was not old enough to start school.

My grandmother's funeral was attended by the largest crowd of people I had ever seen. My mother's Bible records that she died Sept. 4, 1909. She married John H. L. Botefuhr and had two daughters, Hannah and Doris.

### The George Carpenter Homestead

George Carpenter lived at "The Carpenter Place" located on the west side of the Carpenter Lake. I have always assumed that it was the original home site first settled by the Carpenters in Osteen. I have no facts to support this assumption except that it appeared aged even in 1912 while the other houses of the Carpenter families had a newer look. Its age was particularly reflected in the fruit trees. For instance, Uncle George had a large number of pecan trees in full bearing. He also had a good sized orchard of mature pear trees. There were very few orange trees on this place and they were partly dead. I often heard the remark that they were killed in the big freeze of 1894-95. However, Uncle George owned a large grove--about 120 acres--of citrus fruit on the opposite side of the lake. This grove was in the peak of production and all the trees in good condition. It was referred to as the "George Carpenter Grove."

Getting back to the "Carpenter Place": There was the main house, which was two-story with two large rooms and a lean-to kitchen downstairs. Bedrooms were up-stairs, but I was never allowed up there. There was a large barn and stable. The central barn was long enough to house a wagon and a buggy end-to-end, with a hay loft overhead. Stables for horses, mules and hogs were on each side. I cannot remember him as having a cow. There was another building referred to as the packing shed. This was a shop for making orange packing crates, as well as an orange grader. Uncle George did all manner of carpentry. At one time, he made crates for others as well as for his own use.

There was a large corn field on this place. He also raised kaffir corn and sugar cane in another field near Osteen. I always thought Uncle George was rich because he gave presents to me and my brother Ezekiel on our birthdays, Christmas, etc. I believe he was a bachelor as I never heard of a wife or children.

Ben Carpenter married Della Hart and they had four children? Frank, Leila (who married a Williams), Earl, and Ralph, who died young.

### Honest-to-Goodness Cowboy in a Pickup Truck

Chester Carpenter married Eliza Sheppard. They lived in an isolated area about three miles northwest of Osteen and north of the railroad to Enterprise. Reid Ellis had a farm fairly near them. Kirby Osteen also

owned a farm in the same area, but did not live on it. Chester raised sweet potatoes, corn and sugar cane and had a good size vegetable garden as well as livestock for his own use. He had five children: Willie, Jane, Charlie, David and Elizabeth. Jane married Carl Carlson and lived in DeLeon Springs. She now lives in Michigan. Willie is married and lives in Sanford. He is a real "honest-to-goodness" cowboy, but does all cattle chasing in a pickup truck. He says he has to chase cattle rustlers quite often.

Walter G. Carpenter married Serena Griffis. They are both now dead and buried in Titusville Cemetery. Leroy was their only child. He was born Feb.3, 1903 and we played together often. Walter had a government job and they lived in a comfortable Osteen house on about 10 acres. They had a vegetable garden and lots of flowers. Aunt Serena liked violets and roses. A haw tree in their yard bore cherry-size fruit tasting like apple; it was supposed to be a native of the Orient. Leroy married Grace Morgan, worked in a Titusville hardware store and was County Commissioner several years. Leroy's son, Walter, owns an insurance agency in Titusville, Florida.

Rosa Carpenter married a Mr. Huff and they had two boys, George and James, who later settled in Sanford. Mr. Huff died and Rosa later married Elisha Hatch. She and Hatch and the two boys lived on a small farm about a mile south of Carpenter Lake near the present road to Lemon Bluff. When I first visited them I was about six years old and the boys were about 10 to 12 years older than me. Hatch had about 10 acres in peach trees and several more acres on which he raised corn and field peas. His favorite was the conch pea, which is white and cooks up to be creamy tasting. Aunt Rosa died in 1910 and Hatch married my mother in 1912. George and James had moved to Sanford before their mother died.

Anna W. Carpenter never married. I think she kept house for her brother, George, part of the time.

Betty Carpenter married Henry E. Masters and they lived in Miami. I remember seeing her only one time when she came to Osteen on a visit.

### *The Lowes and Their Two-Part House*

Ellen Carpenter married William Lowe and they had three boys and a girl: Charlie, Willie, Fred and Grace. Willie's real name was J. Westley. I knew this family best of all my relatives because they were my nearest neighbors and we kids worked and played together nearly every day. Their house was divided into two parts. One part, facing the lake, contained a living room, a back parlor, two bedrooms and porches, or verandas, on front and rear. The other portion contained a combination kitchen and dining room, an additional bedroom, a large porch and a storage room. The dining room was furnished with a long table with a bench on each side. There was a cane bottom chair at each end. Uncle Will sat at one end and Aunt Ellen at the other. We kids spread out along the sides. The two buildings were joined together by a walkway consisting of two planks supported about a foot above the ground.

They had a picket fence around the lot and it was always being painted. Their barn and stables were across the road from the living premises. They had a large grape arbor in the yard and we spent many Sunday afternoons in its shade. They owned about 80 acres in this location. Some of it was in orange grove, but most of it was planted to corn. They had several interesting trees. One was chinaberry. Another was called a banana shrub even though the tree was over 20 feet high; its blossom was about

an inch long, yellow and smelled like banana. They had a Chinese persimmon with fruit shaped like a beefsteak tomato, and a Japanese persimmon with oval fruit a little bigger than a large lemon. The fruit from both trees was delicious.

They also had about 40 acres a mile away where they raised sugar cane, sweet potatoes, and all kinds of fresh vegetables. They also kept a few head of cows, horses, mules and hogs.

### *A Grandmother at Age 31?*

Grace married Reid Ellis when she was 14 years old. They moved to Sanford, where he owned a butcher shop. Grace and Reid had a daughter who married at age 15 and so Grace became a grandmother when she was about 31 years old, which was quite unusual in our small community.

My grandmother, Fannie Botefuhr, had two children, Doris and Hannah Antonia, my mother.

Doris Botefuhr was born May 11, 1885, and died Jan. 29, 1934. She married a Mr. Brooks and had one child, Robert. They were divorced and she married William Joseph Cohen and had three more children: Elsie, Elmer and William J. Cohen. Joe Cohen was a commercial fisherman, spending most of his life around the lakes of the St. Johns River from Lake Harney to Lake George. Robert Brooks Cohen was in the auto radiator repair business in Sanford.

### *Our Great-uncle Becomes Our Step.-father*

After Murray's death, we three went to stay with Uncle Joe Cohen who Doris had married after her divorce from Brooks. We stayed with them for a while and then Ezekiel and I were placed in the Methodist Orphanage in Enterprise. Our mother stayed with the Cohens until she married Elisha Hatch on Aug. 20, 1912. Hatch had been married to Aunt Rosa and I had always known him as Uncle Lige. It seemed strange to have an uncle for a step-father. Zeke and I were returned from the orphanage and lived with Uncle Lige, who was now our step-father.

Hatch was a saintly man, spending much time listening to mother read the Bible and religious pamphlets. We were about two miles from Lemon Bluff and the St. Johns River. Zeke and I spent much of our free time along the river fishing and just loafing. Hatch was born Aug. 3, 1848 in Madison County, Florida, and died Aug. 5, 1927. He was buried in Osteen Cemetery.

My mother married Jasper (Bang) Allman sometime after Hatch died and they lived in Osteen until she died Nov. **20, 1944 while I was in the military service** in Hawaii.

### *Retired Army Colonel*

I went to work for Kirby Osteen in 1917 and he later sent me to Beelars Business College in Deland. In 1919, I went to St. Petersburg to work with Harry Osteen in a grocery store and seldom returned to Osteen. I later joined the Army and retired as a Colonel in 1957. I now live in Miami, Florida. My son, Thomas Zeke Clifton, lives in Naples, Florida.

Ezekiel went to work for Leonardys in Osteen and joined me in St. Petersburg in 1921. He later owned successful automobile businesses in Tampa, Jacksonville and Miami. He had three children: Robert Bernard, Judith Gayle and Ezekiel Orey. They all live in Cocoa, Florida. Ezekial died June 1, 1961 and is

buried in the Osteen Cemetery. In his tombstone is engraved a hunting gun and a quail, with these words: "Initiative, Daring, Independence, Rugged Individualism. To live in the Hearts We Leave Behind Is Not to Die." Many years ago I was visited by two carpenter ladies from Vermont. They told me how we were related and about our ancestors. I had no interest in genealogy at the time, but now wish I had recorded their names and information.

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#### ANCESTRY OF ORA CARPENTER

*Ora was the son of Chester and Hannah (Kendall) Carpenter. The line is:  
Ora , Chester, Jonathan Jr., Jonathan, Ephraim^, Ephraim, William, William-  
'- of Rehoboth, Mass.*

*Data on the Chester Carpenter family appeared in Vol.V, No.4 of THE CARPENTER JOURNAL. An article on Jonathan Carpenter, who was imprisoned in England during the Revolutionary War, is in Vol.V, No.3 of THE CARPENTER JOURNAL*