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Mrs. Betty Carter - Folkhealer

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Folk Medicine

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Mrs. Betty Carter will be ninety in May of this year. She sits each day by the window in the front room of her home in Fountain Run, Kentucky; the telephone also sets by her side within easy reach. Mrs. Carter has spent the last few years in a wheelchair and has a lady, Monna Yokley, sit with her day and night and cook her meals.

When I ask Mrs. Carter about her life she said that she had been Betty Beam before she married Lacy Carter on the 30 day of Noverember in 1918, at hte afe of twenty-three. It was at the age of twenty-three that Mrs. Carter received her gift of healing.

Mrs. Carter says that it was a gift from a man who ask to spend the night at her house. She gave him a meal and a place to sleep. "He told me he didn't have any money, and I told him I didn't want any money from him, just because I helped him," explained Mrs. Carter. Mrs. Carter went on to say that he said he would give her a gift worth more than money. "He ask me if I had faith in God, and I said I had plenty of it. He then said he thought I would help a lot of people with the figt nad that I was never to accept money or payment fot helping people or it wouldn't work." Mrs. Carter has never accepted payment of anykind- "Not even a thank you"- though on occassion she does get a hug or kiss. "It wouldn't be right to accepr payment for heoping someone in need and besides I con't do the healing; the Lord does that-not me." I ask Mrs. Carter where the man was from, and who was he?

She said that he was from across the water, and his name was George Vall, and he was a Catholic from the country of Germany.

"The man was about to die and had to pass the gift on to someone else before he died and I'm supposed to pass it on to someone else who has the faith before I die."

I asked her if she had found that someone; she said she had not but she wasn't ready to give up her right to the gift yet because it made her feel good to feel she was helping someone, and two of her children both want the gift, but she can only give it to one of them. and she hasn't decided which one if either.

Mrs. Carter also claims that she doesn't have to see the person to heal them, and stresses once more that she does not do the healings herself. In her words, "I don't do it, the Lord does it. I don't do nothing myself, I can just have faith and He will do the work."

My next question was- How do you proceed to heal someone of warts, goiters, or stop them from bleeding? Mrs. Carter could not tell just how she does this because it would break her right to the charm. But she did say that she uses the Bible and a lot of faith, and in Mrs. Carter's words, "If I could tell people, the people without faith would believe and have faith. She explained that it was all done the same way and that it was real simple.

Mrs. Carter told of two previous case histories as to the authenticity of her healing abilities. One was of a bad

case of warts on a man ger son Ench worked with at the telephone company. The other is of a woman who was hemoraging to death in the hospital.

The first man had warts so bad that it disfigured his face and body. Ench ask him if he would like for him to call his mother to get rid of his warts and the man said to call her. Ench called his mother gave her the name of the man who was disfigured with the warts. Mrs. Carter says that she was told by her son that the man had lost all of his warts within the month. The man sent word by Ench that he was to tell his mother that he (the man) owed her a million dollars, becasue that is how much better he looked.

The second occassion case was of a women in the hospital about to hemorage to death. The story goes that the doctors had done all they could for her and didn't know what else to do. Someone who knew Mrs. Carter called her and told her the ladies name and what her problem was. Mrs. Carter believes that with the help of Lord she saved the woman's life. Mrs. Carter was later at the hospital when a woman came up to her and asked if she was Betty Carter and when Mrs. Carter said that yes she was, the woman proceeded to hug her and started to cry. "I asked her why she was hugging and ctying on me for and she told me that she believes she would have died that day (the day of the phone call) if I hadn't stopped her from bleeding to death."

Mrs. Carter told of a phone call she received just the

other day about taking some warts off of a man and she laughed as she remembers the call, which was from a boy's mother who had heard of Mrs. Carter. According the boy's mother the warts where on his butt. Mrs. Carter laughs once more because she has never heard of warts being therebefore.

When asked how many goiters she had cured; Mrs. Carter said she had stoped the growth of three, though she does not and cannot cure a person of goiters she can stop it from growing and more.

Mrs. Carter then went on to say that she sometimes has to try three times before it works on some people. "By the third time it takes all I've got to give it and if it don't work by hte third time it never will on that person because they don't have faith."

According to Mrs. Carter it does not work on doctors either and when I asked her why not she said doctors didnot have faith in that type of healing.

Mrs. Carter's method off healing is widely accepted in monroe County and the surrounding area. Mrs. Carter is old by anyone's standards, and she knows she will be dying soon. At the age of ninety she has been healing people for sixty-seven years and people still came to her for hedp. Mrs. Betty Carter to this day has the faithe manitioned so often before. She is not knowledgeable of any form of hypnosis and is not out to trick anyone.

One can not watch Mrs. Carter Heal someone but one can see the results of that healing. But does it realy matter "how"

she does it, is it not good enough that she does do it. It seemed to bother Mrs. Carter that she could not tell the "how" of her healing but remained firm that she could not for its charm would then be broken. Mrs. Carter did state ~~that~~ in a very wise evaluation of man -- "Whatever you believe, that is what is."