

CONGRAN, SAM.

INTERVIEW 9841

52

- 3 -

Form A-(S-149)

BIOGRAPHY FORM  
 WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION  
 CONGRAM, SAM. INTERVIEW  
 Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

9841.

Robert W. Small.

January 12, 1938.

Field Worker's name \_\_\_\_\_

This report made on (date) \_\_\_\_\_ 193 \_\_\_\_\_

Sam Congram.

1. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Nardin, Oklahoma R.F.D. #1.
2. Post Office Address \_\_\_\_\_ 3 miles south of Nardin.
3. Residence address (or location) \_\_\_\_\_ September 26 1855.
4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month \_\_\_\_\_ England. Day \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_
5. Place of birth \_\_\_\_\_ Sam Congram. England.
6. Name of Father \_\_\_\_\_ Mary Martin Congram. Place of birth \_\_\_\_\_ England.
7. Name of Mother \_\_\_\_\_ Place of birth \_\_\_\_\_
- (Other information about mother \_\_\_\_\_)

Notes or complete narrative by the field worker dealing with the life and story of the person interviewed. Refer to Manual for suggested subjects and questions. Continue on blank sheets if necessary and attach firmly to this form. Number of sheets attached \_\_\_\_\_

CONGRAM, SAM.

INTERVIEW.

9841.

Robert W. Small,  
Investigator,  
Jan. 12, 1938.

An Interview With Sam Congram,  
Nardin, Oklahoma.

I was born in England, September 26, 1855, and with my parents, came to America in 1869, settling in Lake County, Illinois. In 1892 I moved to Sumner County, Kansas, where I resided until the opening of the Cherokee Strip in September 1893. In the Run I started from Hunnewell, and rode a good horse in that memorable race and staked the northeast quarter of Section 7, Township 26 North, Range 2 West, upon which place I have made my own home continuously to this day.

My claim was situated in a rich farming country, the stream of Deer Creek ran through it. After erecting a small one room frame house upon my claim, I dug out a place in the bank of the creek for a shelter for my horses, covering the same with straw which was hauled from Kansas. I was hard pressed financially when I came to the new country and worked at everything I could get to do to help sustain

CONGRAM, SAM.

INTERVIEW.

9841.

-2-

myself and family. I assisted a neighbor in setting out some young peach trees by taking a team and plow and plowing a furrow in the sod soil, then taking the young peach trees and placing them at proper distances in the furrow and plowing another furrow of sod to cover the roots of the young trees. They were left without further work or attention. I obtained 125 seedling peach trees which I planted in the same manner and I never lost a single tree in this manner of transplanting; the trees thrived and in due time produced an abundance of fruit of good quality and flavor. Young trees planted in that manner at this time would not survive the first season. The earth does not contain the moisture it then held and that so much of the soil has been broken up and the grass, weeds, timber and all forms of vegetation have been killed out to such an extent that the moisture will not stay in the soil as it did in its virgin state.

The first school taught in the district was held in a dugout on Deer Creek and the patrons of the district had to furnish seats for their respective children to sit on at school. I went into the timber with my axe, saw and a

CONGRAM, SAM.

INTERVIEW.

9841.

-3-

few other tools to work with and made a seat for my two children to occupy. Every man was privileged to make any model he wished to build; it is needless to say that a great variety of home-made models were in evidence. Mrs. Hunter taught the first school at a salary of \$20.00 per month. Sunday school in the community was first held in a private home until a schoolhouse was built.

Horses and mules were about the most profitable stock a farmer could raise in the early days in this country. I have known young mules to sell at weaning time for as much as \$150.00 each, and if more stock of every kind was raised now there would not be so much complaint about over-production of grain on the farm. The country needs more grass and more stock to eat it, less tractors and expensive farm machinery that keep the farmers broke trying to pay for them. The argument of using a tractor to make two blades grow where one grew before, also takes two more acres of soil that should remain in grass and help grow some stock that the country needs so badly.

CONGRAM, SAM.

INTERVIEW.

9841.

-4-

I have served my township as Trustee in the early period and have always taken a lively interest in local politics.

In my opinion people do not have that friendly and neighborly feeling for their fellow man that the pioneers exemplified in their every day conduct. In the early days I never thought of locking the doors to my house when I went away or locking the barn door against prowlers and seldom was anything lost in the neighborhood.

My wife and children have lived on our claim by themselves for periods of as much as nine weeks at a time when I would be off at work trying to make enough to maintain life on the claim until we could raise crops sufficient to tide us over. One summer when the hot winds had destroyed a very promising corn crop, a few ears which grew in a very low tract of land were pulled and the family looked forward to having a feast of roasting ears for one meal; just a few minutes before mealtime some weary and destitute travelers, driving a team that looked almost lifeless, stopped at their place and, after a brief talk

CONGRAM, SAM.

INTERVIEW.

9841.

-5-

or explanation of their circumstances, were invited to stay and partake of our noon meal, to which they heartily agreed. When the visitors had finished their meal no evidence of roasting ears was visible except the bare cobs around their plates and our oldest little boy lamented very much because he never got to taste of the delectable food.

One time when I was away from home at work for <sup>such</sup> a long period of time that my wife ran out of anything to eat a man came to the house wanting to get a load of wood. She told him that he could get the wood but that she would like to get a little money for it as she was out of anything to eat and the man told her that he would give her enough to buy a sack of flour for a load of wood. She accepted the offer and he gave her fifty cents and she was glad and she went to the store and bought a sack of flour, then sat around the store for several hours waiting for a bunch of men to leave who had gathered there, after which she told the storekeeper that she was out of anything to eat and that her husband was away at work and that if he

CONGRAM, SAM.

INTERVIEW.

9841.

-6-

would let her have groceries he would pay for them as soon as he returned. The storekeeper told her to take anything in the house that she needed. She took what she needed most and went home with a light heart.

We have been married over sixty years and are enjoying good health and are unusually strong for people of our age. We live on the old homestead that I drove a stake on that sultry, dusty September day in 1893, when civilization in those parts moved swiftly to some chosen spot and broke ground for the foundation of a new, great agricultural empire.



CONLEY, JOHN H.

INTERVIEW

13488

60