

Notice of Copyright

Published and unpublished materials may be protected by Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S. Code). Any copies of published and unpublished materials provided by the Western History Collections are for research, scholarship, and study purposes only.

Use of certain published materials and manuscripts is restricted by law, by reason of their origin, or by donor agreement. For the protection of its holdings, the Western History Collections also reserves the right to restrict the use of unprocessed materials, or books and documents of exceptional value and fragility. Use of any material is subject to the approval of the Curator.

Citing Resources from the Western History Collections

For citations in published or unpublished papers, this repository should be listed as the Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma.

An example of a proper citation:

Oklahoma Federation of Labor Collection, M452, Box 5, Folder 2. Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma.

INDEX CARDS

Ranching-Lease District
Suggs Ranch
Washington Ranch
Cattle Drives
Roundups
Indians-Comanche and Kiowa
Railroad

BIOGRAPHY FORM
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field Worker's name Warren D. Morae.

This report made on (date) April 22 1937

1. Name Mrs. Cassia Suggs Brown

2. Post Office Address Ryan, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) _____

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month _____ Day _____ Year 1867

5. Place of birth Texas

6. Name of Father John Suggs Place of birth Brownwood, Texas.

Other information about father Rancher, came in 1881. One of Suggs brother

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 5.

Interview with Mrs. Cassie Suggs Brown.
Ryan, Oklahoma.

My father, J. W. Suggs, came from Mississippi. He was born in 1839. Cal and J. D. (Iker) Suggs came here ten years before my father did. When we left Mississippi, we settled near Brownwood, then came to old Spanish Fort near Red River.

Cal and Iker, my uncles, first settled on Mud Creek when they came into the Territory. They sold to Bill Washington and moved out here in 1872. My father, being a family man, didn't move about as Cal and Iker did. They were not married.

The Suggs ranch was bounded on the east by the 98th Meridian, and ran north past Duncan, west to Lawton and south to Red River. It was a strip of land thirty by forty miles, Walters, Oklahoma, being about the center.

I have seen as many as fifteen hundred saddle horses in a corral at one time. They drove their cattle to market over the Chisholm trail before railroads came through. On the Suggs ranch there

-2-

were as many as one hundred men working at one time. On the drive they had a chuck wagon, "a large one, covered, with a place in the front for the cowboys' bedding rolls. Fastened to the back, was the cabinet like affair with pigeon holes for the supplies, salt, pepper, sugar, flour, grease, and others. This was fixed so when the cover was let down the pieces of board that held it up made the legs. They used tin plates. They did their cooking in big kettles. Their coffee was made in wash pots. When the boys slept, it was on the ground under tarpaulins. There were no houses, they always slept in the open in all kinds of weather. We couldn't get lumber and what houses were built were out of logs.

Hogs ran wild so we had meat besides beef. They kept dogs to bay the hogs, and while the dogs held these hogs the boys would slip up behind and kill them. I have made up a bolt of canvas for sausage many times.

-3-

When they started one of these drives, it would sometimes take three months to make the trip to Kansas City. It would be six months at a time before Mother and I would see another white person outside of ranch hands. We were the only white women there.

A man wouldn't dare get off his horse around cattle or shake his slicker for it would cause a stampede right off.

Cowboys always dreaded storms. The horns drew electricity. In riding herd one man rode one way and another rode the other way. They would meet at a certain point and then turn back. Singing cowboy songs was a necessity then and not a form of entertainment as are those sung now over the radio. It quieted the cattle.

There were no gardens and no crops.

Men wore leather chaps to keep the tall grass from wearing their trousers so much.

-4-

My father stayed six miles north of Sugdon, about where Waurika is. My mother, being the only white woman on the ranch, was a mother to all the cowboys.

We had Comanche and Kiowa friends. Quannah Parker was at our house many times. The first Indian I ever saw, father brought him in and he ate dinner. Father gave them beef. Our songs were made theirs. They never harmed us at any time, however, they would come, pitch tepees and dress with war paint and use their war dances. They wore very little clothing or none at all.

We thought civilization had come when the railroad came through. People came. There was a pay school started. Church started, services were held under the shade trees. I took up Home Mission work. I drove one animal a thousand miles into places that it seemed no one had ever been before, over trails that seemed almost impassable. It was hard to get

-5-

people stirred up and out to church. Our first Baptist preacher was Brad Hays and our Methodist was McClannahan.

Of course where there were settlements, cemeteries were. Perry Grove was the first.

Mr. Centerberry, Suggs' foreman, was buried in the Baldwin Cemetery near Ryan.

The reason there are no business houses near the railroad is because of the overflow. Ryan is built with the hill.

The first school in Ryan was Presbyterian and all of the faculty was Presbyterian.