

GRACE, BEN P. INTERVIEW.

#8277122

INDEX CARDS:

Choctaw Nation
Brooken

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

Field Worker's name Florence Duke

This report made on (date) June 11, 1937

1. Name Ben P. Grace

2. Post Office Address Stigler, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) _____

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month March Day 11 Year 1862

5. Place of birth Mudtown, Arkansas, Washington County

6. Name of Father James M. Grace Place of birth Arkansas

Other information about father He served four years in Confederate army

7. Name of Mother Josephine Grace Place of birth Arkansas

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 _____.

LIFE OF BEN P. GRACE

BY

Florence Duke, Field Worker

June 11, 1937.

Mr. Grace who lives in Stigler, Oklahoma, County of Haskell, was born the 11th. day of March, 1862, at Mudtown, Arkansas, Washington County. At the time Mr. Grace lived in Mudtown, there was only one store and a post office from where they received their mail. He received his schooling in Mudtown, and like most other places in that time and day, he went to school in a little log cabin.

At the age of fifteen he left Arkansas to go to West Texas, leaving his folks behind. Mr. Grace was married to Miss Josephine Campbell in Belton, Texas, and from there, with several other families, Mr. and Mrs. Grace came to Oklahoma in covered wagons, taking several days to make the journey. They settled at what is now known as Broken, Oklahoma. Together they started building their homes and soon had a community started.

There were eleven children born to Mr. and Mrs. Grace, all of whom are living at this time. They are: Mrs. Calvin Tidwell, Quinton; Mrs. Mary Vernon, Muskogee; William Royal Grace, Wewoka; Author Grace,

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Stigler; Mrs. Jim Painter, Stigler; William Bryan Grace, Stigler; Mrs Henry Puckett, Holdenville; Ben Grace, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Mrs. Dr. Cartwright, Chanute, Kansas; Leo Grace, Ada; and Doyle Grace, Eufaula. This large family had a big get-together every year at their father's home here in Stigler, until the death of their mother December 12th, 1934. Now they have their reunions here and there.

Mr. and Mrs. Grace joined the Cumberland Presbyterian church while in Texas. When they came to Broken, there was only one church to attend. The first service in the Broken church was held by Brother Atkins. During the sermon he says he can yet remember big poker games going on, on the outside under the trees. He also states that most of the men who attended church were wearing guns.

After losing his wife he and two sons lived together, and he does his own house work, and goes to his daily work every day. He has his own blacksmith shop in Stigler and has had for several years.

While I was talking with Mr. Grace in the Blacksmith shop he went to the back of the shop, where he has an old desk, and brought out an old Bible of his

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mother's. He states that it is over a hundred years old. In this I find the dates of birth of all his brothers and sisters, as follows: Manervia Grace, born July 6, 1848; Permilia Jane Grace, May 22, 1851; Marcilia Jackson Grace, born October 2, 1853; Mary Elizabeth Grace, 28, 1856; James Merily Grace, born January 14, 1860; Ben Price Grace, born March 10, 1862; Robert Marshall Grace, born May 15, 1866; Maggie Malinda Grace, born January 15, 1869; Emil Catherine Grace, born November 11, 1872; Joseph Grace, born March 30, 1877.