

GROGAN, MARIA JONES.

INTERVIEW

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

GROGAN, MARIA JONES.

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Field Worker's name Ethel V. Elder.

This report made on (date) December 29, 1937. 193

1. Name Maria Jones Grogan.

2. Post Office Address Waurika, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) 228 North Meridian Street.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month September Day 25 Year 1857.

5. Place of birth Harrisonville, Munroe County, Illinois.

6. Name of Father Edward Jones. Place of birth Wales.

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother Cecelia McCalley. Place of birth Ireland.

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 _____.

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Ethel V. Elder,
Investigator,
Dec. 29, 1937.

Interview With Maria Jones Grogan,
228 North Meridian St.
Waurkia, Oklahoma.

My father, Edward Jones, was born in Wales and my mother Cecilia McCaulley, was born in Ireland.

My father came to this country in 1852 and after he had secured work in Baltimore he had my mother join him. Later they moved to Illinois and I was born in that state. My parents had four children, two boys and two girls.

I was eleven years of age when we left Illinois and came on the train to Missouri. There were three more families who had come before we did, and we were all more or less neighbors in Missouri again. My father came a long time before we did and bought a farm consisting of one hundred acres from Butler-Bates Company. We lived there over fourteen years and farmed, later spending some time in Texas and Kansas.

I first started to school when I lived in Harrisonville, Illinois, and then in Missouri. The building was

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a small frame building with only one teacher for all the different grades. I finished at this school and then went to Butler Presbyterian Academy, finishing there for my teaching career and taught school eight years at the different places in the public schools; then went to Kansas with my people and taught two years there and then when the family moved to Texas I taught two years there.

In 1886 I met my husband, a very handsome young man named R. P. Grogan. We were married and moved to Gaines-Texas ville, and ran a store there but later my husband came over to the little place of Sugden. Then there was only a lumber yard and a very small drug store at Sugden. Mr. Suggs built the first house that was ever built there for a residence. My husband bought a ranch consisting of twelve hundred acres from a Mr. Thompson and ran the farm part of it for about two years and then put in a mercantile store in Sugden and ran that about eight years. I did not move over with Mr. Grogan for a while after he first came to Sugden as my children were small then and I stayed at Byers and he would ride his bicycle back and forth on Saturdays and Sundays.

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One day when we were living in Sugden, Juanah Parker and his wife came in town on the train and they wanted to see Mr. Suggs on some business deal, but Mr. Suggs was out of town and they asked my husband if they could stay all night at our house, so they did. They were dressed in their long blankets, moccasins, etc., they were very nice. Then after that there was about fifty or more of the Indians that came down there and camped in our pasture for weeks at a time. There was always one woman in the bunch who could sew so the women would buy yards and yards of bright materials for their mode of dress and as she could run the sewing machine, I let her use my machine to sew on and how appreciative they all seemed to be. They all liked to dress well and wear their fancy blankets all the time, too.

Texas

After we left Sugden we went back to Byers and put in a mercantile store there and lived our last few years together there until Mr. Grogan passed away two years ago. We have had six children in our family, some have passed on. I am making my home with my daughters here in Waurika, Mrs. Donald Stewart and Mrs. Olin Bidings.

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CHURCHES.

My husband helped build the first Methodist Church in Byers and helped move the first Baptist Church from Benvanue to Byers. Reverend Finis Crutchfield and the Reverend Tom Morris were among the first preachers that I can remember.

MILITARY ROADS.

There was a Military Road from Fort Sill through Benvanue to Jacksboro that was used for military purposes to Fort Sill a great deal.

STAGE LINES.

There was a stage line that carried the mail from Henrietta, Texas, to Elm Springs, that was the changing point for Fort Sill. The stage line came down from Fort Sill to Elm Springs, and the one that got there first would always wait for the other and after the mail was exchanged they started back.

There was a post office at Sugden in the early days. When Mr. Grogan had his mercantile store there he was the

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first postmaster and then a Mrs. Boon took it over after he left. This place is not in existence now.

RAILROADS.

I saw the railroad that ran from Wichita Falls to Byers, Texas, completed on to Waurika which event was celebrated with a wonderful big picnic and barbecue. My husband furnished all the different kinds of beef that were barbecued and the pits were made in our pasture across the road from our house and they had their tables all fixed up on our front lawn under the grove of trees. There were hundreds of people there from everywhere in Oklahoma, Texas and other states. Speakers from Henrietta and Wichita Falls and from other places, too.

OUTLAWS.

One outlaw I remember while we lived at Sugden was named Jones (nickname Dog Face Jones). He got off the train, he was drunk and a Mr. Kellog from Oklahoma City also got off the same train. There were two saloons on a vacant lot, some distance from the depot called the 'Old Glory' and these men asked the night watchman where they

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could get some whiskey. Some words were exchanged between the drunk man and the night watchman, and the drunk man struck the watchman over the head with his gun and ran for the saloon. The night watchman fired at him left handed and as the drunk fell dead he fired his gun. The night watchman never was arrested or had any trial.

TOLL BRIDGES.

The Byers toll bridge was completed about 1914 and was built by stockholders and still is in use.

FERRY LANDINGS.

Jim Dunn owned and operated a ferryboat at the crossings called Dunns Ferry, he also owned one at Benvanue, on the old Military Road from Henrietta to Jacksboro and on to Fort Sill, which crossed Red River at the place where Byers crossing is now. (This was in Texas.)

FORDS.

There was a place down below Sugden and Terral called Ben Byers and Sugden Ford on Red River later was named Huffman Ferry.

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OLD CEMETERIES.

There used to be cemeteries at Benvanue and on the Old Stine Ranch that have long since been abandoned.

FURS.

My husband had a trading and selling point established at his store for the hides and furs that were brought in from all over this part of Oklahoma and part of Texas and he shipped them off to the refining places. He managed to get hold of some opossum hides and had me a neck piece and hand muff made and later he secured enough coon skins to have me a long coat made, which I still have.

SHIPPING POINTS.

Sugden used to be one of the largest shipping points for cattle. Cattle were also driven to Fort Worth, Texas, and to Kansas which would take weeks to make the trip over land.

OLD TIMERS.

Jim Dunn, George Byers, Mr. Ligen, Herrin, Loftain,
Jim Stine, Huffman, R. W. Grogan, John Burriss, Bob Gibson,

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and Mr. Suggs were some of the old timers I knew. Doctor Dyce was the first doctor that I ever knew when we came to Benvanue.

When we lived at Sugden my husband wrote all the news items up for the community and sent to Ryan to be printed in the Ryan paper for there was no other paper close to us.

We went to Henrietta and Gainesville, also Fort Worth, Texas, to do all our buying of merchandise and supplies needed on the ranch and elsewhere. When we lived at Benvanue we installed the first telephone there and then built our own private line to Sugden to our store there and every Saturday night before Mr. Grogan would start home he would call me to tell me so I would know about what time to expect him. The first telegraph exchange that came through ran from Jacksboro to Fort Sill for Government messages; this was operated a long time.