

Socorro County Historical Society, Oral History Tapes

Carrie Hughes interviewed by Gladys Long

I can't even remember the years when they used to mine out there at Rosedale. I know I was a small kid ----- the children that lived there, you know, and I was visiting them. (---) Hannah? would come up from San Marcial ---it was quite a town, you know, and headquarters for the Santa Fe and her father, a merchant, ran the store there and rented rooms --- the mine was workin' shifts ---*I can't imagine what was going on out there.* They run into pockets of gold and in blasting they would get so much fine stuff they decided they could put a mill which they did, and the company that was running the mine at the time ---.

What was the name of the company? ---and they'd ship it out of there -- and I guess Morgans?, I don't know.

Was there a railroad that came out there to Rosedale? No, they would have to go to San Marcial was the nearest railroad. Rosedale was just about south, you know.

Was the period of 1900 to 1910? Well, it must have been. They had a store, post office and a boarding house, a huge place.

Who ran the boarding house? Different women, but finally when it was built a fellow named Sherman. And Edna Fite? Site? taught school out there.

Is that Dean Fite's mother? Did she teach there after she got married? Yes, I think before that they lived in San Marcial. Then she had Dean and - when I first knew them, why she was the teacher, one of the teachers there at Rosedale.

Do you remember the names of the children who went there? Would they all have left this area? Well, there' be Fites and Brutons and ---.

Would Walter Bruton have been the son of the Brutons out there mining? (no answer)

Well, when did they stop mining out there? Well, when they run out of ore, I don't remember what year it was. A few men were looking for another pocket of it, you know, and years later, first one person then another would leave. *After it was abandoned? They kept on figurin' they ---.*

Was that where you grew up, Mrs. Hughes? No, I was born in Kelly.

How was that? You were born in 1895 over in Kelly. What was your father's name? McGee.

Did he come out here too, for the mines or what? He came from Darlington, Wisconsin (Ed. note: J. E. Smith family connection) with a friend. He was then mining at Winston and Chloride and the Apaches run them out of there. My father, they shot at him, and he had the arrow that hit him right in the rear here and just pinned him to his saddle, and they didn't dare stop so when they got down here at Pueblo Springs, that was a watering place, why, uh, they stopped and helped my dad off and got this arrow off.

Where is Pueblo Springs? Right down at the end of town here.

At the edge of Magdalena? Uh-huh. And let's see --somebody has a ranch there - who is it? I can't remember. I guess it would be northwest of town here. And it was the only place that there was any water at that time. That's where they all stopped to camp when they were travelling through. Towns were springin' up here and there, towns like Chloride and Fairview - different ones - and they were all gold crazy. But my father's friend went back. He wouldn't stay. And my dad stayed. He noticed lights up on the

side of the mountain there, and so when he was able to ride again, he rode up there. And Bill Eaton's father or grandfather, he was working a couple of (---) and they was shortin' out lead and so my dad thought it was pretty interesting so he stayed.

What did he do? Did he build his own home? Was he married? No. *When did your father marry?* He married a woman by the name of Sullivan and she was from Schenectady. I think they lived there and then they moved to --- in New York there.

Upstate New York? Yes, and one of the sisters developed TB she was about seven years old. My grandfather thought it was from livin' so close to so much rubber, so he takes my mother because she was the oldest of the family and took this little sick girl to Montana and he went to work in the mines and they stayed there and he heard about Albuquerque, New Mexico, bein' so good for TB. So he moved to Albuquerque and they stayed there for a while and they started prospectin' first in one place and then another in Kelly. And he came to Kelly my mother took care of my little aunt and she didn't last very long. And there was a neighbor, that her son he was 8 or 9 years old - he had it and the mother she had 5 or 6 children and she moved to Montana and she seen she couldn't follow here husband around in the condition - so whe just went back to her home - she didn't settle.

Was that Kelly or Albuquerque? No, that was back east.

Tell me more about your father and his life up in Kelly. He decided to stay there, and he opened up a grocery store and a saloon, a café, a meat market --.

And that was your father! That was my daddy, and they run three shifts, and you know there was 11 saloons in that little town. But my daddy died young - heart condition.

How many children did he leave behind? Just the three of us.

Was there a school up there at Kelly? Who was the teacher there? Oh they have different ones - Rayburn? Railroads? people, Claibourne? people Murray? people from Datil . I had rheumatic fever and I didn't get to go to public school. My daddy hired a little Mexican girl to see that I didn't jump rope or run around or play around, so she used to get me down and take my shoes off and I couldn't walk barefoot. That's the way she managed me. Then when I got older my dad sent me to a convent.

Where was the convent, Mrs. Hughes., -- San Miguel convent? Uh-huh, then he put me out to Las Cruces and I stayed there for three years.

When did you come back? What happened to your mother after your father died? She stayed on with the store in Kelly and helped take care of the bar for some time and she finally gave it up.

Did she move into Magdalena or what? No, she stayed in Kelly until she died. *Is she buried out there?* She's buried out here in the Magdalena cemetery. My daddy was shipped back to his mother. He was the only child Granny raised . They picked? over these little kids and they all drowned except for my dad.

Where was that? In Darlington, Wisconsin, that's where they lived. She was too crippled to travel with - well I guess it was arthritis.

What year did you move down to Magalena? Thirty-eight years ago.

Is that the year you were married? Oh, I was married sixty years till my husband died.

And what was his first name, again? Well, Kenneth.

So you were married when? I got married in 1912.

And what was he doing there? He was runnin' the horse that (--) the mine. The only time he ever worked was before we got married, and he worked a little while. He never would work for anybody. He always thought he was smart enough to go on his own.

Tell me more about him. He was a very interesting person. Well, I think everybody in the country that knew him respected him. We were the only family that they had to depend on when we had these depressions and at that time there wasn't any law and he'd shoot deer for these natives and they'd go get 'em and bring 'em in and skin them and take care of them, and then later on when we had another depression---

The first depression, was that in the 1880's? Was that in the 1900's? After you married him? The first depression was, well, whenever the mines wasn't workin' up there. It was a poor town because all of them was miners and that's the way they made their living. When the mine would close down, of course, they'd get up and leave. And when it would open up, they would come back. Anyone that was born or raised or lived very long in Kelly, I don't know if there was something about it, but it sure made them come back. It was a friendly town, had good times and my mother had, you know, a big horno, you know --.

A beehive oven. My brother, Ed, had to furnish the wood for it. She would put a red cloth on the line and that would tell all the neighbors to get ready for the next day they was going to bake bread. Everybody would get ready, you know. Well this old Mexican woman that handled the hornos, well she would bake the pies and cakes and everything and they would fill those tables in my mother's place from one end to the other. I was just a little kid, but I used to feel sorry for my brother - they were sure imposin' on him to furnish the wood for those hornos.

What was you little brothers name? Ed. And who was the third one? You, Carrie then Ed and Frank were the two children that your father and mother had. Where are they now? Did they stay here in this area? No, my brother, Ed, he went to the School of Mines for I don't know how many years and what was it he was studying. Engineering, I think. Well anyway, he run out of money and so he left and went to Mogollon and ---.

Did he graduate at the School of Mines? No, he did not finish- he didn't come back as he intended to.

Well, how did he make out in Mogollon? Was he quite successful? I think after he broke away from the school and everything and got to see the horsemen at the mines, he run the horse and he was fascinated with that and he just give up his idea of goin' ahead with an education.

And how about Frank? My brother Frank had cattle - he had a little ranch.

Where was that, outside of Magdalena? Yes east about five miles from Magdalena.

Well what did your husband do after he left Kelly? He operated these old workings. He had a lease on them, see. He'd get his men together and they would just go in there and get this ore out and ship it all the time. He did that for years.

Then when that gave out, what did he do? He just quit. He set down. Retired.

How long ago would you say that was? In '45 or '46. He and his brother were in business, but they were asking too much for parts and stuff. In Los Lunas, and they didn't pay anything and he got tired of it and he had made enough money. He quit.

Did he have a government lease? No, it was different properties he'd lease from the companies.

When did you build here? We didn't build it, we just bought it. We remodeled it and we tore off the old plaster and stuff so we was right down to the 'dobe and we lowered the ceiling and it would have been cheaper to have built a house.

It's very solid though. You don't get those plate glass windows any more. Yeah, and then he built the garage out there and I had the cellar fixed, but we didn't do it right.

I'll see you later.-----Tell me more about Magdalena? Was it flourishing? It was a good lookin' town. It had some very elaborate buildings. But these Greek used to start a restaurant. And they'd take out a heavy insurance policy and it would be no time until it burned down. Well, they burnt the town up. Finally they woke up to the fact that they was the ones that was just wreckin' the town. They wouldn't ranch or anything.

What were their names? Oh, I don't know.

Well, did they leave here? They had to leave here because they couldn't rent a place.

There used to be hospital there too. Yeah. It was two story over here. Upstairs was these people that take care of land and stuff.

An abstract office? I couldn't tell.

Well, tell me what's makin' Socorro grow? And you know who I say, is Dr. Coulson behind this movement I think. Well, he sure has helped Socorro.

Well now, Stirling Colgate who used to be President of Tech was responsible for the VLA deal here. And I think that' chiefly what's doing it. Dr. Coulson probably had something to do with it too, because he liked ---. He built up so many elaborate buildings that I think he has helped Socorro an awful lot.

Want to come back to Magdalena for just a l little while longer? I don't think it will come back. They would have to find new ore and they could, but they'll have to go too deep for it. They've been prospecting around all over the mountains there and they finally give it up as a bad job.

Now what did thy mine here when Magdalene was at its height? Lead, and later they mined zinc and it got to be quite a premium - high priced but they mined lead - they had several pocket of it and the Hardscrabble was running then when they first started and then they wound up with -- oh, I can't think of them all --sulfout? (sulfide?) --and that's a combination of lead and zinc.

Was there any coal mined around here? You know here is coal right out west here.

And how about the smithsonite mine at Kelly? Who operated that years ago? Who found the smithsonite? That green stone? Oh, there was different companies that had that mine.

Can you remember some of the names? The ones that run the store. I can't remember.

Was there any silver mined around here? Silver or gold? A little silver. There was always a little silver in ores that they shipped from here.

How about gold? Very little.

Who that was living in Kelly or Dusty has stayed on here in Magdalena? Well back in the smelter days, the smelter was in Socorro. And they used to haul their ore from here in wagons to Socorro to the mill down there.

Where would that have been? That was up over where I was born. My daddy, he got in on that. He had a bunch of wagons and horses and a place for them. And they had eating places all along the highway. Because, you see, the wagons were so slow.

How long did it take to go by wagon to Socorro in those days? Stores, too? Eating places and drinking places, because you see the old road used to go down Blue Canyon down

into Socorro and that's the way they used to take the ore. They'd take it to the smelter there in Socorro.

Where is South Canyon, Mrs. Hughes? Well, it's over among the pines - south here on the edge of town. There's a little mine up there now.

What kind of mineral ore do they get out of that? I don't know. I don't know those people. I know he's got a mill, and water - big tank - a well and they have electricity to run their machinery and stuff.

How many eating places were there in Magdalena in the early days about the turn of the century, about the time you got married? Who had the main stores at that time? Where did you get your groceries and your clothing? They have always had a lot of little stores and they had the Ranch Supply which was the place they've got that sewing place now. That was a big store.

Who owned that? It was (---) owned the building, but they had these machines in there having different things built, you know.

Well who had it in the beginning around 1912 or 20? Well it was an old man from Socorro that had his name on it - I don't remember he built it, he built the Caribou Cafe.

The Arizona Café, where would that have been? It would be about right here on the main drag.

Is the building still standing? Oh no. they burned 'em up. They burned over here where Nathan Hall has his bar. The Phillips 66 service station, well that was a two-story building where they had the café, jewelry shop, and meat market and another picture show. I know we had a picture show over here, but they had this other one on the main drag and they had the pool hall.

Was that the work of the Greeks, too? Yes, they burnt it all up.

You must be getting tired, Mrs. Hughes. I am.