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INDEX CARDS.

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Mission-Hill Side
Church-Valley Queen

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

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Field Worker's name O. C. DavidsonThis report made on (date) March 24, 19371. Name J. W. Bradfield2. Post Office Address Fort Gibson, Oklahoma3. Residence address (or location) Same4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month June Day 30 Year 18685. Place of birth six miles west of Noblesville, Indiana6. Name of Father Elijah D. Bradfield Place of birth IndianaOther information about father Was Northern soldier with Gen. Sherman7. Name of Mother Nancy Ellen Featherstone Place of birth UnknownOther information about mother Was of Indian descent-one-eighth**Cherokee Indian**

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 16.

O. C. Davidson
Field Worker
March 24, 1937

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Interview with J. W. Bradfield.
Fort Gibson, Oklahoma.
Father-Elijah D. Bradfield
Mother-Nancy Ellen Featherstone

I was born six miles west of Noblesville, Indiana, June 30, 1868. It was one-half mile from the LaFayette Pike by the No. 1 Schoolhouse and the Bray Tile Factory.

My father's name was Elijah D. Bradfield. He was born in Indiana, close to Westfield. He was a Northern soldier and was with General Sherman for eighteen months. He was not a volunteer as he did not believe in war, but was drafted. He was a Quaker, or Friend's minister. The Quakers were very much opposed to fighting. When he went to war he took his Bible with him and every day he went away somewhere and read his Bible and had prayer, many times taking other soldiers with him. There were several converted in the army under pap's preaching. He was never in a battle but was sent out several times, but because of being so far away from the battle field they would not get there in time to fight. He was sick part of the time and a part of the time he was nurse to other sick soldiers. He always said what kept him out of the battles was the way he was living.

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My mother was Nancy Ellen Featherstone Bradfield. She was of Indian descent. Her father was one-quarter Cherokee, making her one-eighth.

My parents were the parents of eight boys and two girls. Two of the boys died in infancy during the war. The names of the children who died were Alonzo and Alambert Eugany. Those living were: Elias Harvey, Elston E., James Wesley, or myself, Jennie Olive, William Roland, Elijah Albert, John Cyres and Tamer Ellen. Elston E. died a few years ago but the others are still alive. Elijah Albert was born during the time Peter Cooper ran against Hazen Wheeler for president and pap wanted to call him Peter Cooper but mother was afraid he might be slighted and so he was named Elijah Albert but was always called "Bud".

Pap was a farmer and minister since before I was born but he never preached for money. He went many times to preach when he really was not able to go but would not take pay for his services.

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In 1879, or when I was eleven years old, we came west to Chanute, Kansas, making the trip in a wagon and a carriage with one span of horses and one span of mules. We were thirty-one days on the road. We crossed the Mississippi, Illinois, and Missouri Rivers on ferry boats but crossed the Wabash River on a bridge. We crossed the Mississippi River at Hannibal, Missouri, but there was no town where we crossed the Illinois. We crossed the Missouri at Boonville, Missouri. I don't remember where we crossed the Wabash. About the main thing that happened that was exciting was at Springfield, Missouri. It seemed that someone was watching to try to break into the camp and get a team or try to steal other things. Two of the men in camp, one being my brother, Elias Harvey, watched all night with their guns in their hands to keep them away. There was always a big camp at night. Sometimes there would be from four to twenty wagons and these

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would always camp together. Wherever one wagon would stop, others would join them as the evening came on and by night there was a pretty good sized camp. People were sociable in those days and all camped together for company. There were lots of people moving and very few roads, and many went on the same road.

We never saw a full-blood or blanket Indian until we came to Chanute, Kansas. We rented a farm and farmed for two years in Kansas. Father continued to preach and we boys did the farming. He mostly filled appointments for a Presbyterian minister by the name of Alexander. After the first two years we went to Butler County, near Douglas, Kansas, and rented a place for one year. Then pap bought a place eleven miles east of Douglas consisting of two hundred acres. This was in 1885. We lived there until the Iowa and Sac and Fox country opened up when we came to Chandler, Oklahoma, and bought our relinquishment and contest

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off and filed. This relinquishment was nine and one-half miles northeast of Chandler and it was bought from a man by the name of Bishop. There were one hundred and sixty acres in the tract, ninety acres being bottom land on Dry Creek.

We cut logs and hewed them to build a house but before we got the house built there came a big snow storm and we went back to Kansas. Before we got home there came another big snow. We stayed in Kansas two months or until spring opened up. When the folks came back to Oklahoma they lived in a tent until the house was built. The logs were already cut and hewed them myself, and it did not take long to build the house. The house was 18 x 24 feet square and was a story and a half high. Jennie and I came into Oklahoma about Christmas of the next year after the Iowa and Sac and Fox run. This land was timbered land but the most of the timber had burned in a forest fire and we had to grub out the stumps. We broke the sod with six horses and used a twelve-inch plow.

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I was plowing one day and got down to file the plow. When I had finished filing the lay and started to get up, I saw between my knees a Copperhead snake about three and a half feet long. I did not need any help to get up. About the time I got up Art Harris came down by the fence on a horse on the run. He said, "Boys, let's go to Chandler. It blowed away last night in a cyclone." So we all went in to see the disaster. Chandler was riddled from Bell Cow Creek where the gin was on the northwest, on through the town to the southeast side and on into the country. The only buildings left were the jail and the Court House not torn down. I saw three corpse that had burned to death. People had tried to get them to go to a cave but they said, "We were here first." But that was what happened to them. Jim Woodward and his wife were both killed in the storm. His little girl was turned under a goods box and was not harmed. One livery stable with thirty-six horses in it was torn down and the horses

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were killed. Another barn with about the same number was done the same way. No trees were left standing with the tops in them. The storm carried an infant probably three miles and hung it in a tree unharmed. One man's arm was caught in a structure or between the 2 x 4's, and he begged the people to cut his arm off but no one would do it and he burned to death. There was an eight foot pine scantling that had been driven into the ground and it was dug out whole, not even splintered. It drove straw right through weather boarding. Some new wagons at the implement house were torn up. Some of the wheels were broken at the hub, some at the rim and some at the axle-tree. Wagons and buggies were torn up all over the town.

There was a lady preacher who had come to Chandler to hold a meeting. She could not get any hearing because the people would not come to hear the Gospel preached. She told them then that "inside of three months Chandler will be torn up by a cyclone." There

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was one man there who was an infidel. During the storm his boy came to the door and he would not let him in. After the storm this man said he did not like God Almighty's way of doing business.

I made two runs myself. They were in the Cherokee Strip and the Kickapoo run. My father saw one man killed at Arkansas City before the Cherokee Strip run. He thought it was time to go and being old he did not hear the man call him back and one of the soldier guards shot him. There were more people inside of the Strip who had already staked their claims than there were outside waiting to run. At the start everybody was shooting. People had the titles fixed up and their cattle and horses already in the Strip. There was no water there and I nearly died of thirst. It was the first time I was where I could not get a drink. There was more suffering there for water than I ever saw before. Some had canteens but most of the people would go and drink water out of Black

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Bear Creek which is north of Stillwater, Oklahoma, but I couldn't drink the water at all after we got to it. I remember the run for land in Oklahoma proper as my brother, Elston, got a claim there.

There was a Pole Toll bridge on Black Bear Creek but it cost twenty-five cents to cross it. The man who owned the bridge would keep the ford stirred up so the people couldn't cross it and they would have to cross on the bridge he had. There were no other bridges close by so this bridge was much in demand during the run. This was on the Santa Fe Trail.

When we went into the Kickapoo Strip one of the boys, Callie Fowler, killed a deer. We ate it, or tried to, for we were hungry. I have killed other deer, too. Once when we were building our house during our first trip to Oklahoma, I killed one while coon hunting one night. There were lots of deer in there at that time.

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I saw Foulkes kill Stone King in the south entrance into the court yard at Chandler, Oklahoma, but I do not remember the year. He fell with his head to the edge of the side wall and then Foulkes turned the other end of the gun and beat him in the head until the sheriff, Bill Tilghman, came down from the court house and took him to jail.

I saw Bill Ferris get shot at Ripley, Oklahoma, by Son Thomas, a negro. He was shot once in the wrist, once in the shoulder and once in the lip, but it never killed him. Then Thomas ran off into a weed patch and was followed by several with guns. They found him and put him on a horse and brought him back to town. Sheriff Hoyt at Stillwater was called to come and get him. As the people came back to town on the railroad track there were quite a lot of negroes there looking on and some one said, "Every negro in town is going to get what this man will get when we get him up town." The negroes

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went out of town by the hand-car loads and the only one left that night was an old negro who had been a resident there for many years, named Uncle Tom. There was no further outbreak and the sheriff came in about midnight and got Son Thomas. He was of the opinion that the negro would be dead by that time because of the high feeling among the people, but Mr. Sharum and the Methodist minister, Rev. Unkafer, kept them from any violent treatment of the negro.

I was married March 4, 1894, to Emma Dell Dobbs at Carney, Oklahoma. We had five children, one boy and four girls, Orla Ray, Estella Odell, Lavina Ellen, Gladys Emma and Anna Kate. My son is in the wholesale lumber business at Tulsa at this time and has been there for about ten years. Estella Odell is now Mrs. Hiles Plummer of Maud, Oklahoma. Lavina Ellen is Mrs. C. Q. Wilson of Pueblo, Colorado. Gladys Emma is Mrs. J. P. Whitten of Muskogee, and Anna Kate is now Mrs. Jess Wright, also of Muskogee.

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In the summer after I married, my wife and I started to Sedan, Kansas, for a visit. We camped one night just north of Pawnee. We had no water for our teams so we drove a few miles until we came to a pond of water. I got out of the wagon and dipped up a bucket of water and was watering one of the horses when two men rode into the pool and watered their horses. They rode out and about fifty yards away and two more rode in. When they got their horses watered they rode out about fifty yards and the first two rode on about the same distance and they stopped for two more to ride in and when their horses got through drinking they rode out and two more rode in. They were very courteous and tipped their hats to my wife and never said anything but passed the time of day. Then they all rode away. They were all armed to the teeth with winchesters and had their guns belted on. We found out a little later that this was the Dalton gang, the band of notorious outlaws. We drove on a little way

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and saw a prairie chicken outside of the road so I got my gun and shot it. This scared the team and they tried to turn the wagon over but everything soon got all right and we went on.

My wife's brother, Amos Dobbs, and I bought out a school quarter and moved on to it and built a log house. This was about a half mile west of my father's place. It was in township 16, section 36 of Lincoln County, Oklahoma. We had to build a house of logs and it was 14 x 16 feet square with an eleven foot room on one end that was fourteen feet wide. This house burned down just a few years ago. We had to clear the land. It was timber and grubs. Three of our children were born in this house, the three youngest.

I shot quail and shipped them until I had to ship them with a number tag. I remember of bird dogs setting cars loaded with quail at Guthrie. The quail would be shipped in coffins. When the

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bird dogs set the cars, the officers could catch the people who were doing this as it was against the law. I never worked any in the winter except to hunt quail. We would get \$2.50 a dozen for them. We went on to one man's place one time and he came out with an axe. He stopped, however, when we told him he had come far enough.

My father was closely associated with John Murdock, the pioneer minister who was a Missionary among the Indians for twenty-five years and who worked for a long time at Hillside Mission at Skiatook, Oklahoma. He rented pap's place for two or three years. This was long after he left Hillside Mission. He and pap organized monthly meetings at Agra, Union, Happy Hill, Kickapoo, Iowa Mission and other places. Pap and John Murdock, "Uncle John" we called him, worked together in the ministry for fifteen years or longer. During this time they built the church called Valley Queen, which is four miles southeast of Tryon, Oklahoma. This church stands there today.

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I hauled most of the lumber from Perkins in a wagon.

There is also a Valley Queen, schoolhouse, which stands across the road from it. Father went to Tecumseh to Quarterly Meeting and attended practically every meeting there. My mother and I were overseers in the Quaker or Friend's Church. Union School, which was used as a church and is known as Hardscrabble, also stands. It is located just a few miles northwest of Chandler.

Pap died in the summer of 1913. He preached at 11:00 A. M. and died at 4:00 P. M. John Murdock preached his funeral at Tryon, Oklahoma, and he is buried there. My mother died in 1906 and my wife died in 1904. They are all buried, side by side, in the old cemetery at Tryon, Oklahoma. Mother was sixty-seven and father was seventy-six at death.

Later I lived at Ripley, Oklahoma, which is about twelve miles southeast of Stillwater on the Cimarron River, for nearly five years, and I have now lived in or near Muskogee for the past ten years. I have

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a daughter at home with me, Ola June, about thirteen years old and a boy, James Wesley, five years old. I was married to my present wife, Cora Loftis in 1928. She has a daughter named Marguerite Loftis Russel, married to Eldon Russel, now of Fort Gibson, Oklahoma.