

GRAY, E. C.

INTERVIEW

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Linneaus B. Ranck
Interviewer
September 30, 1937

Interview with E. C. Gray
Higgins, Texas

I am a veteran attorney of Higgins, Texas, and was post master at this place at the time the Cherokee Strip was opened.

It is not lately that many people in Oklahoma at this time know that incident to the opening of the Cherokee Strip one of the registration booths was located about five miles north and about two miles east of Higgins, Texas, at the southwest corner of the Strip's area. This booth was duly established at that point on the boundary by authority of the Federal Government and maintained for several days for the convenience of those from Texas and the old Cheyenne-Arapaho country and any others who might wish to register and enter the Strip from the west and to file on homesteads. Not over fifty people registered at this booth and it was abandoned before the period for its maintenance expired because it appeared that there were no more people who wished to register.

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The day the man in charge of this booth abandoned it, he came to Higgins in the evening bringing with him all of his supplies employed in the process of registering prospective homesteaders. He brought with him among other things four large jute bags filled with blank and unused registration forms and deposited these four bags with me, with instructions to send them out of Higgins on the next mail train going the right direction. At that time though, a United States postal regulation was that since the Higgins post office was within three hundred feet of the railway station the postmaster there was required to transport all mail to and from the office, and mail trains. It so happened that I did not have time to deliver the four big jute mails on the mail train through Higgins that evening and before the next train carrying mail arrived, the man in charge of the booth received a telegram not to return the unused blanks. I then appropriated them to my personal use and they furnished me with plenty of scratch paper for the following ten years.