

GRAY, JEFFERSON DAVIS

INTERVIEW

#8005

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INTERVIEW

BIOGRAPHY FORM

GRAY, JEFFERSON DAVIS WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field Worker's name Alson J. Chase

This report made on (date) July 20, 1937

1. Name Jefferson Davis Gray

2. Post Office Address Woodward, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) 406 Texas Avenue

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month December Day 31 Year 1860

5. Place of birth Shelby County, Missouri

6. Name of Father Jesse Davis Gray Place of birth Maryland

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother Jeliza Elizabeth West Place of birth Missouri

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 2.

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Alson J. Chase,
Interviewer,
July 20, 1937.

An Interview with Mr. Jefferson Davis
Gray, Woodward, Oklahoma.

Jefferson Davis Gray was born in Shelby County, Missouri, in 1860. Finding his health failing, he decided to come to Oklahoma, thinking the climate here would help him.

So in January 1900, he loaded his family in a covered wagon, and came and located and filed on a one hundred and sixty acres, four miles west and one mile north of the present town of Woodward.

His belongings consisted of three horses, one cow and a very little home made furniture. He built a frame house, 12x14 feet, with a dirt floor, and a shingle roof.

His main crop was Kaffir corn which he sold for eighteen cent per bushel.

In 1901, he bought thirty-two head of fat cows for \$15.00 per head and kept them for breeding purposes.

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When he first came to Woodward County there were thirteen saloons in Woodward; one was located every other door up and down the street.

They did have Sunday Schools and in the spring of 1901 they attended the first County Sunday School Convention; about one hundred attended. In 1903, Mr. Gray helped organize the First Christian Church.

He was a charter member of the I.O.O.F. lodge which was organized in 1901. He later moved to Woodward and engaged in the Insurance and Abstract business.

He is a staunch Democrat and was Secretary of the Democratic Central Committee from 1908 to 1920. Mrs. Gray was Vice-Chairman of the Democratic Central Committee from 1918 to 1934.

Jefferson Davis Gray still resides in Woodward.