

Gray County, located in the southwestern part of the state, is the second county north from the Oklahoma line, and the fourth east from Colorado. It is bounded on the north by Finney county, on the east by Hodgeman and Ford counties, on the south by Meade, and on the west by Haskell and Finney. Practically the same territory that now constitutes it was described by the legislature of 1879 as Foote county. In 1881 an act was passed creating and bounding Gray county as follows: "Commencing at a point where the east line of range 27 west crosses the south line of township 21 south; thence west on said south line of said township to where said line crosses the west line of range 30 west; thence south on said west line of range 30 west to the south line of township 28 south; thence east on said south line of township 28 south to the east line of range 27 west; thence north on said east line of range 27 west to the place of beginning."

In 1887 it was bounded as follows: "Commencing at the intersection of the east line of range 27 west with the north line of township 24 south; thence south along range line to its intersection with the north line of township 30 south; thence west along township line to where it intersects the east line of range 31 west; thence north along range line to its intersection with the north line of township 24 south; thence east to the place of beginning."

In April of that year A. J. Evans was appointed census taker. According to his returns there were 4,896 bonafide inhabitants, of whom 912 were householders. The taxable property amounted to \$1,295,852, exclusive of railroad property. The governor issued a proclamation in July organizing the county. Cimarron was named as the county seat and the following officers were appointed: Sheriff, W. B. Marsh; clerk, G. C. Pratt; commissioners, J. G. Shoup, E. S. McClellan and Frank Hull. Prior to this Gray had been attached to Ford and Finney counties for judicial purposes. It had been settled for about ten years, though most of the inhabitants had come in 1885. Cimarron and Ingalls, the only towns on the railroad, were rival candidates for the county seat. The former had experienced a boom and had 1,000 inhabitants, a two-story school house, a two-story depot, 2 newspapers, 2

banks, a drug store and about 20 mercantile establishments. Montezuma, about 15 miles to the south, had a newspaper and entered the county seat contest, but later withdrew in favor of Ingalls, which gave the latter a much better chance at the election. The voting took place on Oct. 31 and both towns claimed the victory, Ingalls by 236 majority, and Cimarron by 43. The papers representing the two factions were filled with strong language, in some instances talking about shooting, hanging and tarring certain parties. It seems that a wealthy New Yorker by the name of A. T. Soule was interested in Ingalls and was accused of corrupting the election, while on the other hand T. H. Reeves, manager for Cimarron, was accused of buying the "equalization society" for \$10,000. This was an organization of men who had banded themselves together for the purpose of selling out to the highest bidder. Both sides were "armed to the teeth" and it became necessary for the governor to send out a detachment of militia to preserve the peace. The county offices were moved to Ingalls in Nov., 1887. The matter was taken into the courts and in 1889 a decision was rendered by the supreme court in favor of Ingalls. The fight did not end there, however, and after more litigation and trouble Cimarron finally won.

The first newspaper in the county was the New West, established at Cimarron (Foote county) in March, 1879. It was "Devoted to the Development of the Great American Desert." Since that time Gray county has learned to irrigate and the so-called American desert is being developed in a profitable way.

The surface of the county is rolling prairie. The Arkansas river crosses it in a southeasterly direction, and the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe R. R. follows the north bank of the river passing through Wettick, Cimarron, Ingalls and Charleston. There are 6 townships—Cimarron, Foote, Hess, Ingalls, Logan and Montezuma. The post-offices are Cimarron, Cave, Charleston, Colusa, Ensign, Ingalls, Hess, Jumbo, Montezuma and Post.

The farm products amount to nearly \$1,000,000 per annum. In 1910 the wheat crop was worth \$225,000; corn, \$146,000; other field crops brought the total to \$765,641; the value of animals sold for slaughter was \$65,471, and eggs and dairy products to the amount of \$35,000 were marketed.

The assessed valuation of property in 1910 was \$7,446,341. The population was 3,121, a gain of 1,857, or nearly 150 per cent. during the preceding decade.